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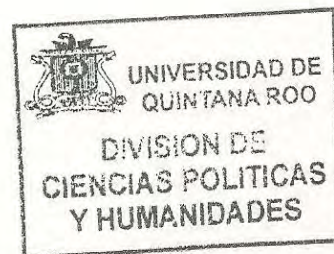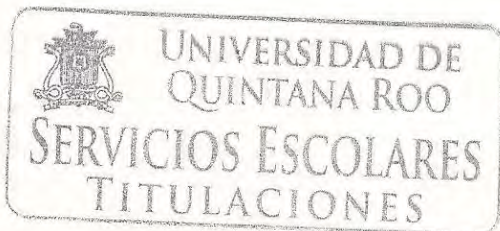# EFL Pre-service Teachers' Perceptions on their Práctica Docente I Teacher's Support

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Para obtener el grado de

Maestría en Educación: Mención Enseñanza del Inglés

PRESENTA

Ana Fabiola Velasco Argente

Directora de Tesis

Dra. Mariza G. Méndez López

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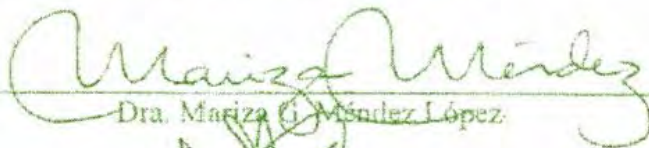División de Ciencias Políticas y Humanidades

EFL Pre-service Teachers' Perceptions on their Práctica Docente I Teacher's Support

Presenta: **Ana Fabiola Velasco Argente**

Trabajo de tesis elaborado para obtener el grado de

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Aprobado por

COMITÉ DE SUPERVISIÓN DE TESIS:

PRESIDENTE: _____
Dra. Mariza G. Méndez López

SECRETARIO: _____
Mtra. María Isabel Hernández Romero

VOCAL: _____
Mtra. Deon V. Hellington

SUPLENTE: _____
Dr. Alfredo Marín Marín

SUPLENTE: _____
Mtra. Carmen Báez Velázquez

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ii

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF CHARTS

ABSTRACT

In pre-service teacher education, mentoring is considered a significant component for professional preparation. Although it has successfully demonstrated to be highly beneficial for the teachers to-be, research has questioned the idea that mentoring relationships are always positive for mentees, as they tend to experience a variety of problems with their mentors; for example, experiencing relationships that offer little guidance or support. Accordingly, the purpose of this dissertation research was to explore the EFL pre-service teachers' perceptions towards the support they received from their practicum teacher while they conducted their six-week practicum in local educational institutions in Chetumal, Quintana Roo. The goal of this research was to understand what the pre-service teachers' needs are and identify what enhancements need to be done to improve the quality of the practicum experience in this university.

A collective case study design was used. Therefore, participants were six EFL pre-service teachers enrolled in the course of ACPLE-144 Práctica Docente I in the University of Quintana Roo, in Chetumal. Data sources included open-ended interviews and personal narratives. Additionally, the theoretical framework that underpinned this study was Vygotsky's social constructivism theory.

Findings indicated that EFL pre-service teachers believed that the number of supervisions they went through was insufficient while they conducted their six-week practicum. Nonetheless, they reported that this dearth of supervision was compensated by the frequent use of Facebook, as it was used to be in constant interaction with their practicum teacher. Furthermore, these pre-service teachers commented that their practicum teacher guided and supported them in various ways besides supervising and providing them with feedback. Another significant finding was that, although participants perceived their practicum as short, having this first-hand experience was a good professional initiation.

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Since the late 1980s mentoring pre-service teachers has been generally promoted as a significant component in pre-service teacher education (Hobson, Ashby, Malderez & Tomilson, 2009; Hobson, Harris, Buckner-Manley, & Smith, 2012; Hudson & Nguyen, 2008; Serpell, 2000) and especially in EFL pre-service teachers' school-based experiences (Hudson & Nguyen, 2008). Although it is recognized as an important component in teachers' professional preparation, there is no single definition for what mentoring is (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010, Lai, 2005). Lai (2005) emphasizes that such lack of consensus has led researchers to focus on different dimensions of mentoring. In her literature review, she found out that mentoring has been conceptualized in different dimensions, namely relational, developmental and contextual dimensions. Lai describes that the relational dimension focuses on the relationship which is established between mentors and mentees; the developmental dimension aims for professional and/or personal growth of both mentors and mentees; and the contextual dimension which focuses on the influence of the school cultural and organizational features on teacher learning.

Nevertheless, mentoring has been mostly defined in literature as a relationship (Abiddin & Hassan, 2012; Charleston-Comier, 2010; Hobson et al., 2009; Hudson, Nguyen & Hudson, 2009; Inzer & Crawfrod, 2005; Ragins & Kram, 2007) which offers professional support and guidance (Charleston-Comier, 2010). In education, mentoring is mostly described as the relationship between a less experienced practitioner (mentee) and a more experienced one (mentor) (Hobson, et al., 2009; Hudson, et al., 2009; Sedibe, 2014). Such relationship is established in order to assist the less experienced person in his adaptation to the professional context facilitating his learning and helping him in his professional development (Hudson et al., 2009).

Kemmis, Heikkinen, Fransson, Aspfors, and Edwards-Groves (2014) affirmed that mentoring "is understood and conceptualized in different ways (sayings), enacted in different ways (doings), and that people relate to one another differently (relatings) in different forms of

mentoring" (p. 155). These authors emphasized that just as mentoring does not have a single meaning, there is no a unique purpose of mentoring. Hence, many versions of mentoring can be distinguished according to their purposes, actions and ends. Drawing on empirical evidence from several studies carried out in Australia, Finland and Sweden, Kemmis et al. (2014) demonstrated the existence of three archetypes of mentoring, namely supervision, support and collaborative self-development. For these authors, supervision is based on a more instrumental view; this means, assisting the new teacher for passing through probation in order to qualify as a member of the profession. Support, on the other hand, copes with a more traditional view of mentoring in which both support and guidance is offered through a mentor (an experienced teacher who does not establish a supervisory relationship) for the development of the mentee's professional knowledge, skills and values. Lastly, collaborative self-development copes with professional growth through peer-group mentoring. Kemmis et al. suggests a combination of these three archetypes can be adopted by any educational system.

Considering Kemmis et al. (2014) archetypes of mentoring and my experience as part of the alumni of the English Language Major at UQRoo, in Chetumal, the practicum periods in this university may include those forms of mentoring and could be practiced in different extents. However, the present work is limited to mentoring as supervision. That is, the form of mentoring the EFL pre-service teachers from this university receive solely from their instructor of the course of ACPLE-144 Práctica Docente I. This teacher is a more experienced professional in the area of EFL teaching and is responsible for assisting the EFL pre-service teachers in overcoming the challenges of being a beginner teacher, and helping them in that way in their professional development through supervision and feedback.

Even though, Zeegers (2005 as cited in Ambrosetti and Dekkers, 2010) states supervision is said to be an outdated model, it has the key purpose of assessing (Hudson & Millwater, 2008); an element which the traditional view of mentoring does not take into account. Additionally, Encinas and Sanchez (2014) claim that supervision is a widely used practice in Mexico. In Moradi, Sepehrifar, and Khadivc's perspective (2014), supervision is "considered to be a deliberate intervention into the instructional process with the aim of improving instruction assuming a professional working relationship between teachers and supervisors" (p.1222). Moradi et al. (2014) indicate this intervention can serve as both a training approach and a support service in which cycles of planning, observation, and analysis of teaching practices are offered.

Such observations can enrich the excellence of pre-service teachers' practicum, since particular goals can be set from having a holistic image of pre-service teachers' training practices. Therefore, the quality of encounters that occur between the pre-service teachers and their supervisors is a crutial factor in an effective teacher-training programme (Sewall, 2009).

1.2. Problem statement

According to Leshmen (2012), the mentoring process is crucial in the pre-service teachers' practicum. It is in this process where pre-service teachers are close to the real world of teaching (Eröz-Tuğa, 2013). This is an opportunity for pre-service teachers to apply the acquired knowledge in the university context (Tok, 2010). Moreover, Bates, Drits and Ramirez (2011) highlighted that facilitating pre-service teachers with interactions beetween knowledgeable others, such as supervisors, can help them build support systems that can have impact in their teaching practice.

The University of Quintana Roo (UQRoo), in Chetumal, Quintana Roo, offers school-based experiences for their pre-service teachers since 2011 according to the Programa de Enseñanza de Inglés en el Sector Social (PEISS). Hence, the ELT practicum for English Language Major students at UQRoo, in Chetumal, takes place in the last year of the BA, in order for students to apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills developed in previous courses such as ACPLE-140 Philosophy of Education, ACPLE-141 Educational Technology, ACPLE-142 Methods and Techniques for Teaching English, and ACPLE-143 Development of Teaching Materials (Licenciatura en Lengua Inglesa, 1995). Furthermore, mentoring is provided in several forms within this practicum, such as peer mentoring or cooperating teachers' mentoring. Nonetheless, owing to my experience as a graduate student from this BA, I believe that the form of mentoring provided to pre-service teachers in that course on the part of the teacher educator should offer considerable guidance and support. By providing such guidance and support students can be prepared to solve common classroom difficulties, since Práctica Docente I is the first time for these pre-service teachers to face classroom realities, interact with students, and plan and teach their own classes.

Eby, Butts, Lockwood and Simon (2004) state that "although the benefits of being mentored are well-documented, research has called into question the idea that mentoring relationships are always positive experiences for protégés" (p. 412). Ragins, Cotton and Miller

(2000) state that mentoring relationships can be both satisfying and dissatisfying; consequently, leading to positive and negative outcomes (Eby, Butts, Lockwood and Simon 2004). Eby et al. remark in their study that "protégés perceive a variety of problems with their mentors, ranging from relationships that appear to be quite dysfunctional to those that offer protégé little guidance or support, to those that are simply not a good fit" (p. 439).

There are studies that have investigated the problems pre-service teachers encounter during their practicum (Arouri, & Awwad, 2014; Hamaidi, Al-Shara, Mukeredzi & Mandrona, 2013; Merc, 2010; Yunus, Hassim, Ishak, & Mahamond, 2010). Findings from these have demonstrated that pre-service teachers experienced lack of guidance and communication from the part of either their mentors or supervisors during their teaching practice. Some others have explored pre-service teachers' perceptions on their mentoring experiences or mentors' practices while carrying out their practicum (Hobson et al., 2012; Hudson & Hudson, 2007; Hudson & Skamp, 2002, Sedibe, 2014; Tok & Yilmaz, 2011). These have revealed pre-service teachers can perceive both positive and negative support from their mentors. Nonetheless, there is scarce literature on exploring only EFL pre-service teachers' perceptions concerning the mentoring they are given (Hudson et al., 2009; Kourieos, 2012; Rakicioglu-Soylemez & Eroz-Tuga, 2014). Surprisingly, Encinas and Sánchez (2014) confirm there is little research on mentoring in Latin America, particularly in Mexico, in both the in-service and the pre-service context.

1.3. Purpose of the research

Bernhardt (1999) determines that exploring students' perceptions can show us the real picture of what processes work best with students. Likewise, Prosser and Trigwell (1999) indicate that the way in which students perceive their learning and teaching environment influence the quality of their learning. They add that each student focuses on different aspects of their learning and teaching context. Furthermore, such perception can vary according to the students' previous experience evoked by particular situations (Prosser & Trigwell, 1999).

Bernhardt (1998) emphasizes that "students' perceptions can be a major indicator of what needs to change to get different results" (p.2). Thus, this work intends to explore perceptions to identify what is or not working with the mentoring pre-service teachers receive from their Práctica Docente I teacher, providing empirical evidence which could be pivotal and useful to improve the programme of the practicum courses in this institution. It is important to clarify that

the programme of English Language Major in the University of Quintana Roo, in Chetumal, specializes in English teacher training. Subsequently, to prepare pre-service teachers for a laborious profession, it includes practicum (teaching practice) which corresponds to the courses ACPLE-144 Práctica Docente I and ACPLE-145 Práctica Docente II. During these courses, pre-service teachers depend on a supervising teacher who is the instructor of the course. Thus, besides providing students with pedagogical instruction as their teacher, he is expected to be responsible for lesson planning supervision, observing the pre-service teachers' performance when carrying out their practicum and providing them with assessment and feedback.

However, it is my own experience as a pre-service teacher at the UQRoo, in Chetumal, which makes me believe that there is a need to rethink the structure of these courses, and to include supportive and collaborative mentoring practices to actively assist the EFL pre-service teachers in their professional development. Before completing my last year of the English Language Major in this university, my fellow EFL pre-service classmates and I participated in collaborative reflection sessions, which were part of a study. In these sessions, we gathered to reflect on our teaching practice experiences and many comments concerning the support provided from our Práctica Docente teachers emerged. One of the conclusions we reached was that many considerations should be taken into account to improve the supervision that was being offered to us. Hence, the current study is a response to my experience as an EFL pre-service teacher in the University of Quintana Roo, in Chetumal.

Within our national panorama, according to Romero et al. (2013) who compiled research in the field of foreign language teaching and learning in Mexico during 2000 to 2011, mentoring and supervision have been addressed in a small number of studies, such as: *Supervision in initial teachers' education and the role of beliefs: A case study* (Estudillo, 2010); *Classroom observation, feedback, and reflection. How are they helpful in the development of English language teacher?* (Torres, 2006); *Establishing a mentoring programme for in-service Mexican English language teachers* (Rodriguez, 2005); and *Exploring supervision of practice teaching in a language teaching programme in a public university in Mexico* (Sanchez, 2004). So far, no research in Quintana Roo has addressed neither mentoring nor supervision; hence, this study seeks to obtain data which will help to address this research gap.

1.4. Research objectives and research questions

The current study, therefore, explores the perceptions of a small sample of EFL pre-service teachers towards the support they received from their Práctica Docente I teacher while carrying out their practicum. Accordingly, this work intends to understand the perceptions of EFL pre-service teachers regarding the support received of their Práctica Docente I teacher, and how beneficial that support is for them. Additionally, it aims to understand to what extent these pre-service teachers feel that their practicum prepares them to teach English as a foreign language. The term *support* in this study refers to any kind of guidance offered in various ways to assist the pre-service teachers. Respectively, the present study seeks to address the following questions:

RQ1: What are the perceptions of the EFL pre-service teachers at UQRoo towards the support of their Práctica Docente I teacher?

RQ2: How do the EFL pre-service teachers benefit from such support?

RQ3: To what extent do these pre-service teachers consider their practicum prepares them to teach English as a Foreign Language?

Kourieos (2012) conducted a qualitative study which showed the perceptions of EFL pre-service teachers related to the mentoring they received from their teaching practicum supervisors while carrying out their practicum. This study demonstrated that pre-service teachers were not pleased with their supervisors, as they thought they were not receiving sufficient visits to their classroom nor appropriate feedback for improving their teaching. Hence, Question 1 arises from having that empirical evidence. Question 2 is derived from Kiggundu's (2007) study in which he claims that research has demonstrated mentors and/or supervisors have significant influence on the performance of pre-service teachers while carrying out their practicum. Lastly, Question 3 emerges from Koirieus' research as well as she asked EFL pre-service teachers to what extent they felt that their teaching practice prepared them to teach English as a foreign language in primary schools. Participants responded they conceived their teaching practicum as an assessment period in which their mistakes, instead of being learning opportunities, were reflected in low grades. Additionally, they reported they considered their teaching practicum as a worrying and fruitless activity since they were not receiving constructive feedback, which in the view of Kourieus deprived them of developing pedagogical content knowledge.

1.5. Research significance

Students' perceptions, as indicated by Bernhardt (2003), help us to understand what students think about their leaning environment. She adds their perceptions are of great importance so school personnel can determine what improvements should be done in the system; additionally, they show us what is possible. I firmly believe that exploring the pre-service teachers' perceptions on the support they receive from their Práctica Docente teacher can provide an important opportunity to the understanding of the pre-service teachers' needs in their practicum. Therefore, this work can be of relevance for current professors who teach the courses of the practicum at UQROO or work with programmes of EFL teacher training so they can acknowledge what enhancements need to be done to prepare their students efficiently.

Curriculum designers from this institution can benefit from the results as well, as the findings of this research can prompt reconsideration of the syllabus of the practicum courses based on the EFL pre-service teachers' needs. In doing this, students will be provided with effective support in their training. Moreover, this study can trigger more interest in doing research on this matter at UQRoo. By doing this, a great number of both EFL pre-service teachers and teachers who teach the courses of the practicum in this institution may benefit from different results.

1.6. Thesis' structure

This dissertation is then organized into six chapters. This chapter introduced the current study as a whole. It offered an overview of the background and problem statement. Additionally, it specified the purpose of the study, defined the research questions and study significance. Succeeding this introduction, Chapter II contains a review of relevant literature concerning the problems pre-service teachers face up when carrying out their practicum, and the perceptions of pre-service teachers on their mentoring experiences which prompt the research questions addressed in this project. Chapter III then presents the theoretical perspective that will provide support to the current study. The methodology to gather and analyse data will be later presented in Chapter IV. Moreover, results and discussion will be depicted in section V. Finally, Chapter VI discusses the conclusions of the present research, the pedagogical implications of this study's findings, the limitations of the study, and proposes directions for further research.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

In order to understand the EFL pre-service teachers' perceptions on the support they receive from their Práctica Docente I teacher while carrying out their practicum at UQRoo, in Chetumal, it is essential to define perception, teaching practicum and mentoring. This chapter begins by introducing the concept of perception as defined by different authors followed by the concept of practicum. An overview of the different definitions of mentoring in literature and an explanation of the archetypes of mentoring will then be presented. A description of the different models of teacher education and their relationship with language teacher supervision then follows. Finally, this chapter concludes with the review of relevant literature of the phenomenon of study.

2.1 Defining Perception: I perceive, you perceive, she perceives, they perceive and we perceive

In education, exploring students' perceptions gives us a picture of the students' learning environment and consequently, can be an indicator of what enhancements need to be done in the system (Bernhardt, 1998). Furthermore, Prosser and Trigwell (1999) indicate the quality of the students' learning is influenced by the way in which they perceive their learning and teaching environment. Thus, this work intends to explore perceptions to identify what is or is not working with the form of mentoring UQRoo EFL pre-service teachers receive from their Práctica Doncente I teacher. In order to do this, we must outline first what is understood by a perception.

The term perception has been defined by Rookes and Willson (2005) as "a process which involves the recognition and interpretation of stimuli which register on our senses" (p.1). Maund (2003) provides a further definition based on the Aristotelian-Stoic approach. For him, perception refers to a natural process in which a perceiver acquires knowledge by his senses; as a result, this individual gives meaning to the world and environment he perceives. Mound also highlights that perception plays three roles, as means of practical knowledge (identifying and recognizing objects or happenings), means of theoretical knowledge (forming judgments and thoughts of objects of happenings) and means of justifying knowledge-claims (acquiring beliefs).

Additionally, Bernhardt (1998) specifies that the word *perception* leads to others such as *observation* and *opinion* which meanings include a view, judgment, or appraisal formed in the mind about a particular matter; a belief stronger than impression and not as strong as positive knowledge; a general view; an expression of judgment or advice, and a judgment one holds as true. For the purpose of this study, *perception* will be understood as an opinion or observation on the acknowledgement and understanding of something or someone and the judgments we form of that someone or something. In this way, the EFL pre-service teachers can voice their needs while they conduct their practicum in local educational institutions.

2.2. Defining Practicum: A first-hand experience

In literature, *teaching practice*, *practicum*, *field experiences*, *professional experience* or *internship* is referred to the period in which a student teacher or pre-service teacher has the opportunity to work with a group of students (Perry, 2004) assuming the full responsibility to teach them (Tok, 2010). This is the moment when pre-service teachers are exposed to the real world of schooling (Ngidi & Subaya, 2003) and classroom situations (Bolarfinwa, 2010). Additionally, Latorre Ortega (2007) suggests this is the time when pre-service teachers "have contact with students and develop a figure of autonomy to plan, and to teach the classes in a way they think fits best the context" (p.4).

Thus, Bolarfinwa (2010) claims that the practicum is merely "designed to give the student-teachers an opportunity to put into practice the theories relating to the principles and practice of education, which they have learnt" (p.1) preparing them in that way for their future career. This experience then helps pre-service teachers to become insightful and realistic of their teaching practices (Eröz-Tuğa, 2013). Likewise, Prada Castañeda and Zuleta Garzón (2005) affirm that this teaching experience makes the pre-service teachers conscious of their performance providing them with the tools to become "effective managers of their classrooms" (p. 158).

Having this hands-on experience, pre-service teachers are allowed to develop their teaching skills gaining professional wisdom (Ulvik & Smith, 2011). As this practicum provides pre-service teachers with school-based experiences (Tuli & File, 2010), it is given great emphasis all over the word in teacher training institutions (Merç, 2010) to develop the pre-service teachers' pedagogical capacity (Doering, Johnson, & Dexter, 2003). Subsequently,

teaching practice is inevitable for those students who undergo professional courses in education (Bolarfinwa, 2010), since it is considered an integral and major component in teacher training programmes (Çelik, 2008; Grootenboer, 2006; Merç, 2010; Ngidi & Subaya, 2003).

In ELT programmes which prepare pre-service teachers for either EFL or ESL contexts, practicum is both essential and indispensable in their curriculum (Eröz-Tuğa, 2013). Chan (2014) mentions that in order to be an EFL teacher one does not only need to have subject knowledge of the language but also have both theoretical and practical knowledge. Therefore, the practicum can "become a relevant teaching experience in which students apply their received knowledge and learn by themselves how to handle daily situations in the classroom" (Prada Castañeda & Zuleta Garzón, 2005, p. 161).

Teacher education programmes should be designed to prepare professionals who can meet the challenges of this century classrooms and work places (File & Tuli, 2010). As a result, these programmes must aim to develop, in the pre-service teachers, knowledge, skills, attributes, and dispositions to teach effectively in a school system (File & Tuli, 2010). To this end, it is essential that pre-service teachers have a first attempt at teaching in order to experience "situations where they can listen to students, find out about them as human beings, find out their level, and get used to being with them in a classroom and come out unscathed" (Prada Castañeda & Zuleta Garzón, 2005, p. 161).

Nonetheless, beyond bridging the theory and practice, the teaching practicum offers a specific context to the pre-service teachers which allows them "to investigate current workplace conditions; internal and external factors influencing current structural/organisational features; and the impact of school planning processes on classroom practices in relation to curriculum, evaluation and pedagogy" (Groundwater-Smith, Deer, Sharp, & March, 1996) providing them in this way a clear understanding of the socio-cultural, political, and economic factors which underpin education (File & Tuli, 2010). Hence, this is the perfect moment for pre-service teachers to not only apply all the knowledge they have gained in school but also take into consideration the educational context in which their teaching will take place.

Overall, practicum is said to have two primary functions. One is to shape the student teachers up for the profession while acquiring practical experiences in the field, and the other one is to evaluate those student teachers according to the quality of their professional learning in this period (Bolarfinwa, 2010). Thereby, in the view of Leshmen (2012), a mentoring process

throughout teaching practice is necessary in every teacher education programme to contribute with the pre-service teachers' professional development. For Fuller (1969), new teachers tend to experience concerns about their performance. Likewise, Kram (1988) claims that young adults launching in new careers are concerned mostly about their competence and the ability to function affectively. Hence, pre-service teachers who are experiencing the beginning of the profession need teacher educators who are willing to share their knowledge with them (Viafara, 2005). In this way, pre-service teachers can be guided and supported helping them in their learning and making their early teaching experiences less challenging. Accordingly, it is imperative to provide teachers to-be with a valuable experience while in their practicum (Mickelson, 1990).

2.3. Defining Mentoring: Taking care of Telemachuses

Mentoring dates back to the Greek mythology when Oddysseus untrusted his young son Telemachus to his most trusted advisor, Mentor, while he sailed against Troy (Inzer & Crawfrod, 2005; Ragins & Kram, 2007). Additionally, it is believed that Athena, the goodness of wisdom, took the form of Mentor to guide, teach, and to protect Telemachus (Ragins & Kram, 2007). The aforementioned story offers us an insight of the traditional meaning of mentoring highlighting constructs such as a relationship and a more knowledgeable person who offers protection, instruction or guidance to a younger individual. In education, this definition has been widely adopted in literature. Hence, mentoring has been defined as a relationship (Abiddin & Hassan, 2012; Charleston-Comier, 2010; Hobson et al., 2009; Hudson et al., 2009; Inzer & Crawfrod, 2005; Ragins & Kram, 2007) between a more experienced professional (mentor) and a less experienced individual (mentee) (Hobson et al., 2009; Hudson et al., 2009; Sedibe, 2014) to support the less experienced practitioner in his induction into the culture of teaching, and thus, facilitate his learning and foster his professional development (Hudson et al., 2009).

Nevertheless, Ambrosetti and Dekkers (2010), Ambrosetti, Knight, and Dekkers (2014), Kemmis et al., (2014), and Lai (2005) have stated that there is no consensus on one single definition of mentoring. Lai specifies that in literature authors mostly have focused on three different components of mentoring when defining it. These are the relational component which refers to the relationship which is established between mentors and mentees, the developmental component which aims for professional and personal growth of both mentors and mentees, and

the contextual component which focuses on the influence of the school cultural and organizational features on teacher learning.

In the view of Kemmis et al. (2014) mentoring can be contextualized in different ways, performed differently, and people involved can also relate to one another distinctively. This is because mentoring can be understood and justified in particular manners to "assist early career teachers to situate themselves within the school community and the demands of their new position in the induction phase of the teaching career" (p.154). Therefore, they define mentoring as follows.

> As a social practice, mentoring is a specific kind of cooperative human activity in which characteristic actions and activities (doings) are comprehensible in terms of relevant ideas in characteristic discourses (sayings), and in which the people and objects involved are distributed in characteristic relationships (relatings) (p.155).

In other words, for these authors mentoring is a social practice which depends on particular intentions, actions and outcomes to assist new teachers. Consequently, different forms of mentoring can result from different projects. For that reason, it is said that mentoring does not have a fixed meaning. Kemmis et al. (2014) emphasize that a specific practice of mentoring can be shaped by different conditions or arrangements of a school, municipality or country, which they label as practice architectures. These practice architectures exist in three dimensions which are semantic space, the space which cultural-discursive arrangements prefigure the way in which mentoring is understood; the physical space-time, the material-economic arrangements that indicate the way in which mentoring should be performed, and the social space, the space in which social-political arrangements prefigure the manner in which people relate to one another.

Kemmis et al. (2014) suggest that people, namely mentors and mentees, involved in these different versions of mentoring, not only generate different kinds of learning, but also acquire different dispositions. These are "capacities and commitments that they express in practice by saying and doing particular things, and by relating to others and the world in particular ways" (p.157). Hence, the way in which mentoring is practiced generates, reproduces, and changes the dispositions of both mentors and mentees. Moreover, questionably, new teachers who develop these dispositions also develop different ways of performing in their profession. Kemmis et al. state that if this premise is accurate, then it is important to consider what forms of mentoring are the most appropriate for the profession.

It is clear so far that mentoring can be expressed in different forms since it can be based on particular projects and that the individuals involved in it can adopt, produce and reproduce certain dispositions. Kemmis et al. (2014) revealed the existence of three different archetypes of mentoring in their study where they analysed the practices of mentoring for beginner teachers from Australia, Finland and Sweden. It is highlighted that these versions of mentoring were not only found in these countries, but also in literature concerning mentoring which shows that they exist in other countries as well.

These three archetypes then are mentoring as supervision, a more instrumental view of mentoring in which the project consists of assisting the new teacher to pass through probation; mentoring as support, a traditional view of mentoring in which the aim is to develop in the mentee professional knowledge, skills, and values, and mentoring as collaboratively self-development in which peer-group mentoring is required for professional growth.

2.4. Archetypes of mentoring

2.4.1. Mentoring as supervision. This version of mentoring understands the process as preparing the new teachers for a probation phase in which they have to meet requirements as qualified members of the profession. The purpose of this version of mentoring is to comply all the state practical, procedural, and legal requirements. Mentors in this form of mentoring have to possess knowledge, skills, and values that the mentees require to meet all the aforementioned requirements.

In mentoring as supervision, a mentor/supervisor-mentee relationship is established and mentors have to discipline the mentee towards meeting professional standards in his performance, documenting his performance and complying the requirements of the state registration body. Additionally, mentors act as local agents of the state and develop the disposition of being supervisors in charge of observing and reflecting on the mentees' teaching practice and evidence. They also have to assess the mentees' portfolio and report the summative assessments of the mentees to the state registration body. Mentees, on the other hand, have to subject themselves to fulfill professional standards policies, document their performances collecting data in a required portfolio, discuss the evidence with the supervisor and send their portfolios to the state registration body for a summative assessment.

2.4.2. Mentoring as support. In this archetype, mentoring is understood as a process for supporting and guiding the new teachers for their professional development in order to help them fit in the workplace and in the profession. In addition, mentoring as support sees the relationship as an opportunity for mentees to develop their teaching through both experience and experimentation with the assistance of observations, reflections and guidance from a mentor.

It is noteworthy to mention that mentors in this version of mentoring do not establish a supervisory relationship with the mentee even though sometimes they observe the mentee's teaching. Likewise, mentoring as support requires mentors who tend to be wise and more experienced than mentees. Among their responsibilities, mentors have to meet with the mentees on an agreed basis offering reflections and guidance. They also have to observe, support, challenge and occasionally advise the mentees on their performance. Additionally, mentees develop the disposition of being members of the profession. They also reflect on their teaching, collect evidence from their professional practices, and discuss professional concerns with their mentors.

2.4.3. Mentoring as collaborative self-development. This third view of mentoring is understood as a form of collaborative reflection discourse where all members who participate in it, different from mentoring as support where a relationship between mentor and mentee is asymmetrical, are seen as equal. Thus, participants can act as co-mentors or co-mentees for one another. This professional dialogue copes with sharing, discussing, and reflecting on teaching experiences, problems and work environments to give and receive assistance. There might be an experienced teacher as well who helps to manage the flow of the discussions and give advice when necessary.

It is noteworthy to mention that the proceedings from these meetings are confidential, since all participants agree to not exchange information of what occurs in these group meetings with non-members. Furthermore, this form of mentoring aims to collaborative and individual self-development to become part of the professional community fostering the professional autonomy of its members. Activities in peer mentoring groups are flexible, as the group is the one who decides the issues for discussions and their proceedings. Moreover, these activities are said to be informal because no documentation is required in this form of mentoring and the time and space of discussion are confidential.

2.5. UQRoo's supervision

Kemmis et al. (2014) concluded that the different practices of mentoring are fostered by particular projects and dispositions, which are shaped by different conditions. For instance, the new teacher is expected to fulfill professional standards by being under observation (mentoring as supervision), become part of the profession by carrying out professional discussions (mentoring as collaborative self-development) and become a wiser professional by being supported and guided (mentoring as support). These authors claimed that any educational system can adopt different elements from these archetypes for the mentoring practices they offer. Taking into account the definition of Kemmis et al. (2014), *mentoring* in this study is understood as a collaborative activity in which specific actions are enacted and relationships are established to assist the pre-service teachers in their adaptation within an educational institution and helping them in their professional development.

In the University of Quintana Roo in Chetumal, mentoring for the EFL pre-service teachers is carried out to support them in different ways to make their first teaching experience less challenging and to help them in their learning. Hence, based on the aforementioned archetypes of mentoring, the present study only addresses the archetype of supervision. In the perspective of Kayaoglu (2012), supervision is based on the principle that pre-service teachers require technical, educational and moral support. Moreover, Gebhard (1990) states that the goal of language teacher supervision is to observe what happens in teachers' classrooms to help them improve their instruction. Nonetheless, Cuenca (2012) explained that supervisors besides observing and interpreting the practice of a pre-service teacher, they evaluate it. Thus, throughout this dissertation, the term *supervision* is used to refer a process in which pre-service teachers are observed and assessed to promote the pre-service teachers' professional growth. Furthermore, considering that Kemmis et al. (2014) stated that the practice of mentoring can be moulded by different conditions of a school, the form of mentoring offered in this university for pre-service teachers is slightly different from the one above-mentioned in this section. Yet, they share several features.

Owing to my experience at UQRoo and having conducted my practicum, mentoring as supervision is carried out so EFL pre-service teachers can be observed, assessed and given feedback on their teaching practice by the instructor of the course of ACPLE-144 Práctica Docente I. This instructor, who is a more experienced practitioner, adopts the disposition of

being a supervisor to observe, reflect and assess the EFL pre-service teachers' teaching practice and evidence to assist the pre-service teachers when necessary. Gebhard (1984) states that supervisors can play different roles and functions. Similarly, Bailey (2006) expressed that supervisors can represent several affordances. Those are, the relationships between an organism and a particular feature of its environment (Van Lear, 200). Hence, the affordances a supervisor provides depend on the individual's doings, needs, and purposes.

Furthermore, in order for the EFL pre-service teachers to pass the course, they must comply both practical and procedural requirements, since they have to carry out a practicum in an institution and document their teaching practices in a portfolio, which will be latter submitted to their instructor at the end of the practicum for a summative assessment. Specifically, this portfolio must include lesson plans for each session taught, instructor's assessment or observations, self-reflection journals for each week and since these pre-service teachers are paired with another EFL pre-service teacher, peer observations for each week must be included as well. Although, mentoring as supervision is the archetype of mentoring that will be addressed in this study, this does not mean other versions of mentoring such as support or collaborative self-development may not occur within this context.

Ramos-Sanchez et al. (2002) assumed that negative supervisory events could lead to unfavorable consequences in the supervisor-supervisee relationship and in the supervisee's professional and personal development. Kemmis et al. (2014) stated that if the form in which mentoring is practiced generate in the individuals involved different dispositions and therefore, they tend to perform differently in their job, it is essential to consider "what forms of mentoring are most appropriate, when, for whom, and under what circumstances" (p.157).

2.6. Models of teacher education and language teacher supervision: How is professional competence developed and improved?

In the view of Wallace (1991), there are three models in which professional competence can be acquired in language teacher education: the craft model, the applied science model, and the reflective model. In addition, all these models have implications for how supervision should be conducted.

2.6.1. The craft model. In this model, "expertise in the craft is passed on from generation to generation" (Wallace, 1991). That is, a young trainee learns by working closely with a more experienced practitioner following his instructions and advice. Hence, this trainee gains professional competence by instruction, demonstration and practice.

It is when beginners work with a master teacher, imitate his behaviours and receive feedback from him that they learn the trade (Bailey, 2006). This model has a bearing on the practicum system as beginners are placed with more experienced practitioners to learn directly from them. Thus, the trainee is expected to absorb as much as expertise as he can. Even though this model is pivotal in terms of learning technical skills, teaching is now highly influenced by the theories and research findings.

2.6.2. The applied science model. This model understands teaching as a science. Therefore, scientific knowledge is applied to achieve desired objectives. In this model, experts in relevant areas convey this type of knowledge to the trainees. These trainees then put in practice this knowledge. If trainees fail on the application of scientific findings, it is because they did not apply such findings well nor they understood them fully.

In this model, beginners learn to teach because they are transmitted research-based findings and they are able to apply those in their classroom practice. According to Bailey (2006), teacher educators and supervisors are responsible for conveying research findings to the trainees and helping them in building bridges between the theories they have studied and the realities of their own teaching in order for them to apply such scientific knowledge when teaching. This happens most of the time in the post-conversation conference in which the trainees are given feedback. Such feedback from the practicum is essential for pre-service teachers in order for them to develop their pedagogical and teaching skills (Ali and Al-Adawi, 2013). When trainees are able to practice procedures following such reseach findings, professional competence is acquired (Bailey, 2006).

2.6.3. The reflective model. This model acknowledges the importance of reflecting on one's teaching practices in order to improve one's pedagogy by taking decisions and action. Furthermore, this model gives equal importance to both teachers' experiential and received knowledge. Those types of knowledge are the knowledge teachers learnt while in their every-day practice and the research-based knowledge gained in their teacher training. Wallace (1991) claimed that any teacher education course should include these two types of knowledge to acquire professional expertise.

This author said that this model is cyclical process. It is through the teachers' experiential and received knowledge, their teaching practice, and their constant reflection that they can improve and develop their own theories. Accordingly, this model allows teachers to be more decision-makers and be aware of how their own decisions influence their teaching performance.

In Bailey's perspective (2006), supervisors need to understand teachers' experiential knowledge because it serves a source used to filter incoming information, such as feedback. This author claimed that the responsibility of the supervisors in this model is to encourage new teachers to reflect on their practices besides discussing their teaching experiences and providing them with feedback. Black and William (1988) emphasized that quality feedback allows learners to assess their own learning and performance letting them in that way identify their next move. According to Cohen-Sayag and Fischl (2012), reflection tasks promote pre-service teachers' reflective abilities. Therefore, by doing this reflection tasks, they can recall about their performance and different classroom situations to make decisions. It is when practitioners are reflective that they are accountable for their own professional development (Bailey, 2006).

2.7. Previous research on mentoring experiences

Considering the importance of mentoring, it is significant to review research carried out on pre-service teachers' perceptions on different mentoring experiences. Subsequently, this section firstly will analyse literature about common problems pre-service teachers encounter during their teaching practicum. Then, studies concerning pre-service teachers' perceptions on their mentoring and mentors' practices will be discussed. Finally, an analysis of the reviewed literature cloncludes this section.

2.7.1. Studies regarding problems pre-service teachers encounter during their practicum. Hamaidi, Al-Shara, Arouri, and Awwad (2014), investigated the perspectives of Faculty of Educational Science pre-service teachers (n=71) regarding their teaching practice experience and the challenges they faced to disclose the reality of the practicum. Participants were early childhood education and classroom teacher majors. To collect data, a Likert scale questionnaire was administered. Findings revealed that, even though participants benefited from the practicum in developing interaction, communication and management skills, both childhood and classroom pre-service teachers stressed the challenges they faced. Some of these challenges were the lack of guidance provided by practicum supervisors, difficulty in communicating with cooperative teachers and the inadequate support provided by the latter. Hamaidi et al. recommended mini-trainings with cooperating teachers, supervisors and student teachers to set specific roles for each one of them.

Mukeredzi and Mandrona (2013), on the other hand, conducted a qualitative study that reported on the experiences of 14 Bachelor of Education pre-service teachers who were carrying out their four-week practicum. Reflective journals from the student teachers and collaborative reflection sessions were the chosen instruments to collect data. School context, mentoring, classroom practice and collaborative reflections were the major themes that emerged from the collected data. Concerning mentoring, student teachers commented their mentors were mostly absent making them feel insecure of what to do. In addition, only four pre-service teachers reported their mentors were helpful; these mentors were described as supportive, offering feedback and advice, and sharing with student teachers their skills and experiences. Moreover, they were said to be positive about the student teachers' development. As each student teacher was assigned two mentors, some of them confirmed they had experienced both poor and effective mentoring. Additionally, mentors were reported of being too busy to make time for mentoring, being doubtful of their mentees, and lacking of expertise. Mukeredzi and Mandrona concluded the participants in this study had negative experiences regarding mentoring. Therefore, they suggested training workshops for mentors to enhance the mentoring for the student teachers and mentors' own professional development.

Similarly, Yunus, Hassim, Ishak, and Mahamond (2010) designed a qualitative study to investigate TESL pre-service teachers' experiences about mentors, supervisors,

learning processes, and school administrators. Participants were 38 pre-service teachers from Malaysia and China who had undergone their practicum. Moreover, an open-ended questionnaire in the form of post-practicum reflections was the instrument to investigate those experiences. Based on the responses, the pre-service teachers indicated positive comments on the relationship they had with school administrators and the attitudes they had towards them; they were friendly and helpful to them. Additionally, these pre-service teachers described having good experiences with their mentors and supervisors, since they provided them with guidance and support. Participants mentioned that their mentors were experienced teachers who gave them advice and tips for effective teaching. Moreover, they said their supervisors were friendly, patient and helped them improve their teaching. Most participants mentioned that these experiences helped them improve their teaching. Nonetheless, these pre-service teachers experienced challenges during their practicum as well regarding the relationships with their mentors and supervisors. The problems mentioned that dealt with the latter ones involved experiencing lack of communication. Moreover, participants found their mentors and supervisors to be busy and sometimes moody. The authors believed that all good experiences or challenges are part of the learning process of every beginning teacher and that these situations would lead them to become good teachers.

Correspondingly, Marais and Meyer (2004) carried out an exploratory study to understand 165 third-year primary school student teachers' experiences during their teaching practice. A survey was used as an instrument to collect data in order to explore the positive and negative experiences of these student teachers while carrying out their practicum. One of the two major themes that emerged from the results was the influence of supervisor teachers. Although some student teachers reported their supervisors to be supportive, comprehensive, friendly, and gave good advice and appropriate feedback, some others commented that their supervisors did not devote them enough time and attention. These student teachers commented their supervisors did not give them feedback and considered them as incompetent and unprofessional. In addition, other student teachers mentioned some supervisors even told them that they would not be good teachers and recommended them to choose another career. Only one participant stated that their supervisor treated her as nothing and therefore, she felt dull. Lastly, student teachers informed that supervisors and other teachers tended to gossip among them. Marais and Meyer concluded their study giving some recommendations in which they suggested training opportunities for the

supervisors and assessing their professional competence to ensure that student teachers are provided with prepared supervisors. Moreover, these authors emphasised that it is crucial that teacher trainers acknowledge the factors that impede student teachers having a positive practicum experience so they can improve the relationship between student teachers and their supervisors.

Differently from Hamaidi et al. (2014), Marais and Meyer (2004), Mukeredzi and Maradona (2013), and Yunus et al.*,* (2010), Merç (2010) designed a mixed study to determine the self-reported problems of 99 Turkish EFL pre-service teachers throughout their teaching experiences in the Teaching Practicum course. Writing reflections based on Hole and McEntee's (1999) protocol for reflection on their teaching practice was necessary to detect those problems. As a result of data analysis, five categories resulted from the labeling: student teachers, students, cooperating teachers, supervisor and educational context. For the present study, only the category of problems of cooperating teacher and supervisors will be presented, since results from these categories are relevant for the study. The cooperating teachers were supposed to collaborate with the university supervisor, observe the pre-service teachers teaching, fill-in observation formats, provide feedback, and grade the students' performance. Within this category, five subcategories emerged: lack of cooperation, absence of cooperating teacher, cooperating teacher' interference, disruptive behaviour from the cooperating teacher, and the perception of student teachers' role. Among these subcategories, the lack of cooperation support was one of the most important problems the pre-service teachers detected. Therefore, this was evidence that cooperating teachers did not fulfill their responsibilities. On the other hand, the only problem that these pre-service teachers reported regarding their supervisors was the interference they had when they were giving classes.

These studies outlined some major problems pre-service teachers encounter in their practicum. Surprisingly, even though these pre-service teachers belonged to different disciplines such as Science, Education, TESL and TEFL, they reported almost the exact same problematic: mentoring. In these studies, pre-service teachers reported receiving lack of guidance or assistance (Hamaidi et al., 2014), feedback (Marais & Meyer, 2004), communication (Hamaidi et al., 2014; Yunus et al., 2010) and cooperation (Merç, 2010) from their mentors, supervisors or cooperating teachers. Moreover, they

highlighted their mentors or cooperating teachers' absence during the practicum (Mukeredzi & Maradona, 2013; Merç, 2010) and the fact that some mentors and supervisors were too busy to make time for mentoring or supervising (Mukeredzi & Maradona, 2013; Yunus et al., 2010; Marais & Meyer, 2004).

Pre-service teachers also commented some of these experienced professionals had disruptive behaviours (Yunus et al., 2010; Merç, 2010). On the contrary, only some cooperating teachers were informed to have established perceptions of the student teachers' role (Merç, 2010) and that some mentors were doubtful about their mentees or supervisees (Mukeredzi & Maradona, 2013; Marais & Meyer, 2004). Furthermore, some pre-service teachers made comments regarding the supervisors and cooperating teachers' interference during their classes (Merç, 2010). Lastly, lack of expertise from the part of the mentors (Mukeredzi & Maradona, 2013), incompetence and professionalism (Marais & Meyer, 2004) were some other problems commented by the pre-service teachers. Evidence, consequently, demonstrates that cooperating teachers, supervisor and mentors did not perform their roles effectively. For a further insight on pre-service teachers mentoring, the succeeding section will analyse studies regarding perceptions on mentoring and mentors' practices.

2.7.2. Studies exploring pre-service teachers' perceptions on their mentoring.
To begin, Hudson and Skamp (2002) carried out a pilot study, which aimed to explore, identify, and describe the perceptions of 59 fourth-year pre-service teachers regarding the mentoring practices they received. After a four-week practicum, a literature-based survey which reflected attributes and practices for mentors to assist the mentees' teaching in the area of science (personal attributes, system requirements, pedagogical knowledge, modelling and feedback) was used to collect data. Results showed that most of these pre-service teachers perceived having received restricted mentoring in respect to primary teaching science since only 44% of mentors coped with demands, 44% assisted with classroom management, 41% helped them with timetabling, 37 % with teaching strategies and 37% in solving problems. Additionally, only 24% of mentors discussed aims and 44% assisted in reflecting. Even though, the majority of these pre-service teachers (90%) remarked their mentors observed their science lessons, 39 % of these did not received oral feedback and other 19 % did not received written feedback. This means, 10 % of pre-service teachers were not observed during their four-week practicum and not

all pre-service teachers were provided with feedback. Moreover, it was reported that 64 % of mentors did not give clear explanations, which causes concern regarding the quality of feedback provided in both written and oral forms. These authors concluded the study recommending that further research should be conducted to validate the existence of the five mentoring attributes and practices above-mentioned.

Similarly, Hobson (2002) reported the school-based mentoring experiences of secondary students' teachers. In-depth interviews and self-complete questionnaires at the end of their Initial Teacher Training course were used as instruments to gather data. Findings demonstrated that student teachers considered their mentors were effective, particularly because they assisted them in developing the ability to manage pupils, maintain discipline, and use a variety of teaching methods successfully. Additionally, student teachers reported that planning lessons with a school teacher or mentor, having school teachers or mentors observing their classes and providing feedback, and having their classes video-recorded and discussing it with a tutor or mentor was very valuable for them. Student teachers also appreciated that their mentors gave them advice and ideas about teaching. Moreover, mentors were not only reported as supportive but also reassuring. It was highlighted that having scheduled meetings with the mentors and a mentor able to make time to converse matters of mutual concern was advantageous. Furthermore, having their lesson plans checked by their mentor and discussing lesson planning, observing their mentors teach and having targets for improvement set by their mentors or supervising teachers was beneficial. Nonetheless, student teachers also complained about their mentors, as they did not make time for them and having regular meetings, they experienced lack of constructive feedback about their teaching, their mentors were unsatisfactorily supportive and not up-dated, their personalities and their mentors' mismatched, and their mentors were busy only ticking boxes or not keeping record of lesson observations. Since this study demonstrated both positive and negative mentoring experiences, Hobson suggested an effective selection of mentors, encouragement for teacher to become effective mentors, providing mentors with more time to spend with student teachers, providing training opportunities for teachers who wish to become mentors, and matching mentors and student teachers to avoid personality clashes. Hobson also emphasized that school and teacher mentors should recognize the student teachers' needs in order to support them.

Hudson (2003), similarly to Hudson and Skamp (2003), explored and described the perceptions of 29 first-year primary science pre-service teachers on their mentoring experiences through a literature-based survey at the end of their practicum. Results indicated that even though the majority of the pre-service teachers reported that their mentors increased their confidence in teaching science, provided them opportunities to reflect on their teaching, and inspired them to teach, pre-service teachers informed that less than half of the mentors assisted them in reflecting, instilled positive attitudes and addressed their anxieties. Also, only a small group of students reported their mentors helped them with their university assignments. Likewise, these pre-service teachers indicated that more than half of the mentors discussed primary science teaching aims, showed primary science content knowledge and outlined curriculum documents. Nevertheless, a few mentors discussed policies and procedures for teaching primary science. In addition, a considerable number of mentors were reported to guide the pre-service teachers' preparation, assisted them with classroom management and discussed questioning techniques. On the contrary, less than half of mentors assisted with teaching strategies, discussed assessment, gave clear explanations, developed problem solving strategies, assisted in solving problems and with timetabling. Similarly, only a small group of mentors obtained science equipment. Furthermore, mentors were perceived to display enthusiasm, coped with demands and used a syllabus. However, less than half of the mentors modeled science teaching, shared examples of programming, discussed teaching knowledge and modeled the teaching of challenging topics. Finally, concerning feedback, these pre-service teachers perceived that a significant number of mentors provided both oral and written feedback, and observed science lessons. Hobson accentuated that more effective ways of mentoring could be conducted if mentors consider the pre-service teachers' needs. He also recommended further research on primary science teaching is needed. Furthermore, Hobson commented that mentors should be educated on personal attributes, system requirements, pedagogical knowledge, modeling, and effective ways of providing feedback.

Ekiz (2006), on the contrary, studied student teachers and mentors' perceptions of the practice of mentoring using an open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interviews to collect data from 55 primary pre-service teachers. In addition, he interviewed five of their mentors only for supplementary information. From the data analysis, some major issues regarding mentoring emerged, namely, unshared understanding, support from mentors, support

to mentors, challenges and evaluations of the program. Results showed that mentors did not provide enough feedback, as they were mostly absent while mentees were teaching. Thus, there was not a one-to-one relationship with mentors since there was not sufficient supervision. Furthermore, there was a misunderstanding of what assignments the mentees should have carried out. Although some mentors were perceived as supportive, some others were not, as they did not help mentees preparing their classes. Despite the mentors' absence, mentees stated their mentors did learn from them; for example, they learnt how to create worksheets and make a class dynamic. Lastly, mentees mentioned that only one day of the week was available for them to teach. Consequently, time restrictions was one of the problems mentors perceived which the researcher later inferred that it had impact on the mentors' willingness to supervise. Ekiz concluded affirming that mentoring was not well implemented by mentors, since there was lack of communication and support in the mentor-mentee relationship. Moreover, what was surprising was that even when mentors were aware of their roles and functions, these, according to mentees, were not observed in their practices. The author highly recommended training mentors on how to supervise mentees to correct the aforementioned problems.

In addition, Hudson and Hudson (2007) explored and described the perceptions of 147 Australian final-year pre-service teachers on their mentor's practices with regard to primary mathematics teaching. To collect data, they used an adaptation of the aforementioned survey employed by Hudson and Skamp (2002), which they named the Mentoring for Effective Mathematics Teaching (MEMT). This survey also was focused on the five-factor model of attributes and practices (personal attitudes, systems requirements, pedagogical knowledge, modeling and feedback). Among those five factors, it was the factor of pedagogical knowledge that provided the researchers with specific data about the practices displayed by mentors. Even though, they found that the majority of mentees indicated to agree or strongly agree their mentors displayed pedagogical knowledge for teaching mathematics, the study demonstrated there were mentors (20%) who might not have mentored pedagogical knowledge. For instance, 64 % of the mentors assisted pre-service teachers in planning and 67% discussed the teaching timetable of the pre-service teachers prior their practicum. Others perceived 73 % of mentor assisted with classroom management and 68% with teaching strategies. Nevertheless, approximately half of the mentors (52%) were perceived to discuss neither assessment nor questioning techniques for teaching mathematics. Additionally, some mentors (57%) did not consider content knowledge

and problem solving strategies, as well as providing viewpoints on teaching mathematics (61%). Consequently, Hudson and Hudson concluded their study outlining the inadequate mentoring that those pre-service teachers received regarding pedagogical knowledge. Nevertheless, the authors suggested providing an intervention of attributes and practices to mentors so they can provide equitable mentoring in primary mathematics teaching.

Also, Maphosa, Shumba, and Shumba (2007) sought to investigate 222 student teachers' views on the effectiveness their mentors' role. In order to do this, student teachers were asked to answer a questionnaire and then, they were interviewed. Data were collected on determined areas namely the nature of help the students were offered by mentors, the mentors' level of preparedness in offering mentorship and the student teachers' perception of the effectiveness of their mentorship. Results revealed that most student teachers worked directly with mentors when they were carrying out their teaching practice and that a minority of student teachers did not work under mentors. Furthermore, most of student teachers informed that mentors did not teach their share and that they were not content with the load-sharing scenario with their mentors, as student teachers tended to take full loads. The majority of student teachers agreed that their mentors did not help them with lesson planning and demonstrated ineffective teaching. A large number of respondents indicated that the lessons taught were never discussed with their mentors, and no skills were offered to mark the pupils' work or use the chalkboard. Additionally, almost all respondents specified that their mentors did not talk of professionalism to them. However, a considerable number of respondents indicated they were helped in co-curricular issues. Importantly, student teachers reported that their mentors showed unprofessional conduct such as absenting themselves, being late for duty, mistreating pupils, selling food to students in class and sending pupils on personal errands. Consequently, the students rated their mentorship as ineffective and very ineffective in helping them to develop professionally. Maphosa, Shumba, and Shumba concluded their study highlighting that there is need to workshop mentors to prepare them to be effective.

Concerning the perceptions of EFL pre-service teachers on their mentoring or mentor's practices, Hudson, Nguyen, and Hudson (2009) carried out a quantitative research focused on the perceptions of 106 Vietnamese fourth-year EFL pre-service teachers about their mentors' practices for developing their teaching of writing in English. This study employed the same five-factor model (personal attributes, system requirements, pedagogical knowledge, modelling and

feedback) that Hudson and Skamp (2002) used for their study. However, it was adapted as well to reflect the mentoring for EFL teaching writing. The Mentoring for English as a Foreign Language Teaching (MEFLT) survey resulted from this adaptation, and at the end of the pre-service teachers' professional experience at several secondary schools in the Hanoi area was administered to them. Results from that survey revealed that most students (more than 50%) were not provided with efficient mentoring practices; for example, only 46% of mentors were perceived as supportive, 34% demonstrated hands-on, 50 % did observe teaching for feedback, 47% reviewed lesson plans, 45 % provided evaluation on teaching, 46 % discussed aims and 37% assisted with planning and teaching strategies. Thus, these authors suggested that mentors should be guided to enhance their practices with some sort of intervention. In addition, they remarked that assessing the perception of mentees on their mentoring can result in fruitful information to design quality mentoring programmes.

Hudson, Uşac, and Savran-Gencer (2010) conducted another quantitative study using the five-factor model of attitudes and practices to identify mentee's perceptions. Data from 304 final-year primary science pre-service teachers proved that more than 85% of mentees reported their mentors having shown personal attributes for mentoring (instilled confidence and listened attentively). However, more than 25 % did not agree on their mentors were supportive, assisted in reflecting or instilled positive attitudes. Moreover, the majority of mentees demonstrated their mentors discussed aims and policies for teaching sciences and carried out pedagogical knowledge practices (provided viewpoints, guided preparation or discussed assessment and problem solutions). Nevertheless, more than 30% were not assisted with planning or timetabling. Additionally, more than 85% of mentors did evaluate teaching, 78% reviewed lesson plans and only 77% observed teaching for feedback. Generally, 20 % of mentees reported they had not received 24 of the 34 practices of the five-factor model. This study provided a benchmark of how mentees perceived their mentoring in their school-based experiences. Hudson et al. noted that if institutions are able to detect benchmarks, they would acknowledge what mentors' practices can be enhanced.

Furthermore, Graves (2010) conducted a collective case study to explore the mentoring relationships between four student teachers and seven cooperating teachers while carrying out their early childhood practicum. Open-ended interviews, observations, reflective journals and dialogue journals were used to gather data. After analyzing the collected data, three major

themes emerged: expectations, communication, and time. The student teachers admitted entering their practicum with some expectations of an ideal relationship. Hence, when the student teachers' expectations were met, their mentoring relationships were considered as supportive. On the contrary, when their expectations were not met, their mentoring relationships were described as unsupportive and distant. Additionally, the mentoring relationships seemed to be affected by the communication or dearth of it. Three student teachers had problems communicating with their mentors during their practicum. These were caused mostly by the lack of initiative on the part of both mentees and mentors, since student teachers believed that their mentor should be the ones to take initiative and vice versa. Moreover, dialogue journals were used to improve communication; nevertheless, in some cases they replaced verbal communication. In addition, the period of the practicum was found to be affecting the student teachers' mentoring relationships, as the practicum was carried out in only eight weeks. Overall, results demonstrated that only two student teachers received positive mentoring and this was attributed to the mentors' motivation for working with student teachers. On the other hand, one mentee did not receive positive mentoring, as his and his mentor's personality mismatched. Similarly, another student teacher commented her mentor offered her little or no assistance and therefore, she felt neglected. Graves stated that cooperating teachers must be willing to develop mentoring functions in order to support the student teachers' development. He added that teacher education programmes need to offer longer and quality teaching practice experiences. Finally, this author emphasised that dialogue journals appeared to be helpful for student teachers, as they ensure some sort of communication with the mentor. Graves concluded that mentor teachers are the ones with more experience and consequently, they can help the student teachers with the pitfalls they may face as beginner teachers.

Tok and Yilmaz (2011) conducted another study that reported inadequate mentoring. They explored the perceptions of 100 undergraduate students in a Turkish teacher education programme on their teacher mentors' behaviours during their teaching practice. To collect data, unlike Hudson and Skamp (2002), Hudson and Hudson (2007) and Hudson et al. (2009), a researcher-designed open-ended questionnaire was used at the end of the participants teaching experience. They found out that pre-service teachers perceived high disagreement on their mentors' support, since when asked if their mentors were supportive enough, 69 % responded they were not supportive. Some of their answers were that mentors were not tolerant and

understanding, were bias, and did not provide instructive feedback nor treat pre-student teachers as colleagues. They also, mentioned that their mentors used violence in the classroom, did not allow pre-service teachers to choose what to teach, were indifferent to pre-service teachers, were not good models, made the pre-service teacher do their personal work and the school environment was not convenient. The results indicated that those problems are mostly interpersonal and about supervision. Participants also emphasized that they would like mentors to be unbiased, tolerant, indulgent, understanding, with appropriate manners and sympathetic. Data from this study explicitly showed that mentors teachers did not have suitable conducts. This study presented evidence that could arise doubts about the effectiveness of mentoring practices. Moreover, given the findings of the study, Tok and Yilmaz suggested training mentor teachers on how to supervise student teachers.

Contrarily from Tok and Yilmaz (2011) who studied only mentors' behaviours, Hobson, Harris, Buckner-Manley, and Smith (2012) focused on 44 pre-service teachers' mentoring experiences to examine their perceptions during their initial field practices at a historically black university in Texas. Hobson et al. aimed to explore the pre-service teachers' views on mentoring and preparation in the pre-service training program. Moreover, their study took the form of a mixed study; therefore, the Survey on Mentoring Pre-service and Novice Educators was designed to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. While analyzing the qualitative data, one major theme emerged, which was obstacles for the success of pre-service teachers. Poor mentors, cooperating teachers, and role models; lack of mentoring, classroom experiences, and practice in the real world; and ineffective time management and organization skills were the preeminent responses under this category. Some of these coincide with some of the results provided in the previous studies. Hudson and Hudson (2007), Hudson and Skamp (2002), and Tok and Yilmaz (2011) all agree on the inadequate mentoring provided to the pre-service teachers. Hobson et al. suggested paying attention to the preparation and detailed selection of mentors as well.

In a similar way, Kourieos (2012) conducted a qualitative study to unveil the mentoring experiences of 14 EFL student teachers during their practicum identifying the impact that mentoring had on their learning to teach. Focus group interviews were the chosen instrument to collect data from the purposeful sampling, which was later divided in two groups based on friendship groupings to allow participants to express themselves more. Results demonstrated that

student teachers perceived their teaching practice as useful, since it gave them the opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge they learnt in university and it helped them to develop their reflection and evaluation for the understanding of some issues. Likewise, three main themes emerged from data: the role and suitability of the teaching practice supervisor, the role of the classroom teacher and the prescriptive nature of the practicum. Student teachers informed that their practicum was not merely understood as a learning opportunity, but an assessment period where their success was represented in their grades. Student teachers also reported being unsatisfied with the occasional visits of their teaching practice supervisors, their limited knowledge of the subject matter and the lack of constructive feedback given, since this was given in the form of ambiguous verbal comments. This demonstrated that for student teachers it was difficult to understand what they needed to improve. Thus, it was a nerve-wracking and an unproductive experience. Since their supervisors failed to provide learning opportunities, the student teachers had to resort to the classroom teachers who were believed to be more knowledgeable. These pre-service teachers appreciated their support and guidance, as their feedback was based on their own experience and reality. Kourieos concluded that supportive and qualified mentors are required for student teachers to create effective learning and teaching environments in which they can prepare themselves for the difficulties of the profession.

In the same way, Ngoepe (2014) examined the perceptions of 200 mathematic student teachers on the mentoring they received while conducting their practicum. A literature-based structured questionnaire, which contained a Likert-type scale, was employed as means to elicit the perceptions of student teachers concerning their mentors' support and assistance. Results showed that the majority of student teachers agreed their mentors helped them planning their lessons, writing the outcomes of such classes, deciding on which media to use to develop concepts, and identifying teaching skills and appropriate materials to teach. In addition, most student teachers pointed out that their mentors let them observe their classes, demonstrated them some teaching skills, observed their classes when they taught, suggested them to use group work and gave them freedom to use any method they considered appropriate. Likewise, a considerable number of student teachers responded receiving useful feedback. Consequently, these student teachers considered their mentoring to be positive. Ngoepe concluded affirming that the mentoring system used was appropriate and useful for the pre-service teachers and thus, it must continue.

Furthermore, Rakicioglu-Soylemez and Eroz-Tuga (2014) explored through reflective journals and semi-structured interviews the perceptions of 22 prospective EFL teachers regarding their mentors' (cooperating teachers) practices while conducting their practicum. Results proved that some prospective teachers perceived the unwillingness of their mentors to take time to provide feedback after observing their teaching practices. Others commented their mentors dedicated time to provide feedback. Nonetheless, they did not possess an understanding of constructive feedback; their feedback was mostly described as an impartially and standardized process. Prospective teachers also underlined that they needed to receive more instructional support during their practicum, as they had challenging experiences with their mentors' attitudes towards providing instructional support. Besides being perceived as providers of feedback and professional support, mentors were seen as socio-professional mediators in charge of introducing them to the students and school administration. Nevertheless, prospective teachers had not had consistent experiences in adjusting to the school context, since they felt alone and alienated from such context. Evaluating the cooperating teachers at the end of the practicum concerning to what extent their practices were effective was a major suggestion provided by these prospective teachers. Likewise, they mentioned that feedback should be a systematic and objective procedure in which mentors must have a checklist or fill in a form to keep track in the mentoring practices. They also suggested that mentors should spend more time with prospective teachers. Rakicioglu-Soylemez and Eroz-Tuga concluded their study stating that foreign language teacher education programmes have to ensure that effective practicum experiences are being provided to prospective teachers.

Sedibe (2014), contrarily, obtained different results. He conducted a study to explore Postgraduate Diploma Certificate in Education (PGCE) student teachers' perception on their mentoring during their seven-week practicum at high schools in Gauteng Province, South Africa. As the researcher did not have access to all PGCE student teachers, he focused on a fourth year pre-service teacher who was knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon. In-depth semi-structured individual interviews were carried out for this study when the participant had free time. Findings showed that the participant's teaching practice improved by the mentoring process that was provided to him or her at the school where she/he was doing his/her practicum. The reason of this, according to the participant, was that his or her mentor, in contrast to the mentors in Tok and Yilmaz's (2011) study, was always available. Sedibe, therefore, concluded

that his study evidenced that mentors are role models for the student teachers and that such role is significant, since they provide these students vast knowledge and skills.

Additionally, Ramnarain (2015) conducted a case study to report three Physical Sciences student teachers' mentoring experiences at their teaching school. Data were collected through interviews, lesson plans, mentor's reports, and mentor-mentees discussions. Findings showed that the three student teachers commented that at the beginning, they felt judged by the mentor teacher and thus, they felt anxious. Nevertheless, over time they began to trust their mentor. As a result, they could approach her in looking for guidance. Owing to this trust, the critical feedback on lessons imparted was well accepted. Student teachers mentioned this feedback created in them consciousness of their teaching decisions and actions. Furthermore, they reported that observing their mentor's teaching led them gain insight on how they could use pedagogical representations. Generally, the student teachers valued the mentoring that was offered to them. Those students considered that the interaction with their mentor made them more aware of their decisions while planning and that their teaching reflections become more purposefully focused. Among other recommendations, Ramnarain completed their study suggesting that mentors, mentees and university lecturers should work together and he recommended regular meetings with these individuals to clarify discrepancies on the philosophy of teaching and learning.

Collectively, these studies highlighted how pre-service teachers perceived their mentoring experiences and their mentors' practices during or after their teaching practicum. Precisely, the majority of the reviewed studies on this matter reported that pre-service teachers perceived either experiencing positive and negative mentoring (Graves, 2010; Hobson, 2002; Hudson, 2003; Hudson & Hudson, 2007; Hudson, Nguyen, & Hudson, 2009, Hudson & Skamp, 2002; Hudson, Uşac, & Savran-Gencer, 2010; Rakicioglu-Soylemez & Eroz-Tuga, 2014), just negative mentoring (Ekiz, 2006; Hobson, Harris, Buckner-Manley, & Smith, 2012; Kourieos, 2012; Maphosa, Shumba, and Shumba, 2007; Tok and Yilmaz, 2011) or positive mentoring experiences (Ngoepe, 2014; Ramnarain, 2015; Sedibe, 2014). Evidently, a significant number of studies demonstrated deficient mentoring. Consequently, some authors (Ekiz, 2006; Hobson, 2002; Hobson et al., 2012; Hudson, 2003; Hudson, et al., 2009; Hudson & Skamp, 2002; Maphosa et al., 2007; Tok & Yilmaz, 2011) concluded their studies proposing interventions for mentors or supervisors training to amend that deficiency.

Considering Kemmis et al. (2014) archetypes of mentoring, the reviewed literature demonstrated two prominent archetypes in most of the studies when addressing perceptions regarding mentoring: supervision and support. These two models were conducted by experienced professionals who take most of the time in literature the name of mentors, since they have the responsibility of not only supporting, advising and guiding the pre-service or novice teachers but also observing and assessing them. In other cases, pre-service teachers can be assigned both a mentor, who is charge of assisting and advising and a supervisor, who observes and evaluates them. On the contrary, occasionally they just count with a supervisor or mentor, or even their cooperating teacher functions as both mentor and supervisor. As stated by Kemmis et al. (2014), any education system can adopt any or a combination of these three archetypes (supervision, support and collective self-development). Based on this statement, the revised literature not only is focused on supervision or just mentoring as in the traditional view, instead supervision is viewed as a process within mentoring which completes its panorama to assist the pre-service or novice teachers' professional development.

The designs of the revised research addressing perceptions on mentoring experiences have been mostly quantitative (Hudson, 2003; Hudson & Hudson, 2007; Hudson, et al., 2009; Hudson & Skamp, 2002; Hudson et al., 2010; Maphosa et al., 2007; Ngoepe, 2014;) followed qualitative designs (Ekiz, 2006; Graves, 2010; Kourieos, 2012; Rakicioglu-Soylemez & Eroz-Tuga, 2014; Ramnarain, 2015; Sedibe, 2014;) and mixed studies (Hobson, 2002; Hobson et al., 2012; Tok & Yilmaz, 2011). To analyse data, quantitative studies mostly used surveys employing Likert scales. On the other hand, qualitative research employed questionnaires or interviews, and mixed studies applied either questionnaires, surveys or interviews.

Most employed surveys had acceptable Cronbach's alphas ranging from 0.7 to 0.9 for internal validity (Hudson & Hudson, 2007; Hudson et al., 2009; Hudson & Skamp, 2002; Hudson et al., 2010). In other cases, the survey to be applied was analysed by experts for coherency and consistency (Hudson, 2003). Likewise, to ensure the validity of the interviews conducted in the aforementioned studies, these were triangulated with other interviews (Ekiz, 2006; Maphosa, Shumba, and Shumba, 2007), questionnaires (Ekiz, 2006), and other instruments such as journals (Graves, 2010). Also, the coding consistency was checked to test inter- and intra-coder reliability (Rakicioglu-Soylemez

and Eroz-Tuga, 2014). Questionnaires, on the contrary, were tested with a group of students to ensure the clarity of the questions (Ngoepe, 2014; Tok & Yilmaz, 2011). To sum up, of the revised studies regarding the perceptions of pre-service, most of them demonstrated appropriate validity and reliability. Nonetheless, a few of them did not mention validity and reliability procedures (Hobson, 2002; Hobson et al*.,* 2012; Kourieos, 2012; Ramnarain, 2015; Sedibe, 2014).

Additionally, these studies have been carried out in different countries such as South Africa (Maphosa et al., 2007; Ngoepe, 2014; Ramnarain, 2015; Sedibe, 2014), Australia (Hudson, 2003; Hudson & Hudson, 2007; Hudson & Skamp, 2002), Cyprus (Kourieos, 2012), Turkey (Ekiz, 2006; Hudson et al*.,* 2010; Rakicioglu-Soylemez & Eroz-Tuga, 2014; Tok & Yilmaz, 2011), England (Hobson, 2002), Vietnam (Hudson et al*.,* 2009), and the United States (Hobson et al*.,* 2012). To the best of my knowledge there is scarce research on EFL pre-service teacher's perceptions concerning mentoring experiences and mentoring practices (Hudson et al*.,* 2009; Kourieos, 2012; Rakicioglu-Soylemez & Eroz-Tuga, 2014). Evidently, no research on these subjects have been carried out at the University of Quintana Roo, in Chetumal, despite it offers school-based experiences for their EFL pre-service teachers. Hence, this study aims to fill this research gap to provide evidence which can illuminate how EFL pre-service teachers perceive the support they are provided while conducting their practicum.

Hudson et al. (2010) suggested that "more research is required to understand mentees' perceptions through rich qualitative studies" (p. 251). Accordingly, the present study will be conducted from a qualitative design carrying out interviews to let individuals express themselves about their experiences in a detailed manner; therefore, allowing others to gain insight about distinctive issues (Saidman, 2012). Having data concerning EFL pre-service teachers' perceptions on the support they are provided may lead to the understanding of their needs while taking part in their practicum. Consequently, improvements in the form of mentoring offered can be implemented for future EFL pre-service teachers at the University of Quintana Roo.

To accomplish the above-mentioned, three significant questions have been established as specified in Chapter I:

RQ1: What are the perceptions of the EFL pre-service teachers at UQRoo towards the support of their Práctica Docente I teacher?

RQ2: How do the EFL pre-service teachers benefit from such support?

RQ3: To what extent do these pre-service teachers consider their practicum prepares them to teach English as a Foreign Language?

CHAPTER III
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter presents the theory that will provide support to the current study: Vygotsky's social constructivism theory. This section first defines what social constructivism is followed by its main tenets: learning is situated, knowledge is constructed by learners, and learning involves both the use of tools and social interaction with more knowledgeable others. This chapter then concludes with a detailed explanation of how this theory relates to the present study.

3.1. Social Constructivism

Lev Vygotsky was the forefather of social constructivism. He posited that individuals are the result of a historical and social process, in which language plays a fundamental role. Knowledge for him then is constructed through interaction between the individuals and the social, cultural and physical context in which the individuals are immersed. Consequently, social constructivism holds the view that learning is generally active (Payer, 2005). This is one of the main tenets of the social constructivism theory, as learners construct their knowledge based on their prior experiences.

When individuals learn something new, such knowledge is integrated into their prior experiences and their existing mental structures. That is, when new information is assimilated and accommodated into existing knowledge and experiences, the individuals' learning is not passive nor objective, but subjective since the individuals' knowledge is modified as they interact within their social, cultural and physical context (Abbottt, 1999 as cited in Payer, 2005). According to Payer (2005), knowledge is hence acquired because of the individuals' interactions with reality and the comparison between the individuals' existing mental structures and the structures of others who surround them.

For Ngoepe (2014), "pre-service teachers bring their own set of beliefs, values and attitudes into the classroom where they practice their teaching" (p. 43). Hence, the EFL pre-service teachers' beliefs concerning their conceptions of appropriate teaching or/and appropriate teacher's behavior can be integrated into their pedagogy when first conducting their practicum. In addition, such beliefs, values and attitudes may be either strengthen or weaken through their

teaching experience, as they may experience different situations in their classrooms and interact with their cooperating teachers, their Práctica Docente I teacher, and their peers. In the view of Hernandez (2008), learning is more effective when commitment, group participation, frequent interaction, feedback and connections with a particular context in reality are present. Taking this into account, mentors/supervisor should be committed to support their pre-service teachers with frequent supervisions, feedback and tutoring meetings to assist them in their learning and therefore, in their professional development while conducting their practicum.

Based on the aforementioned, social constructivism is based on the premise that higher mental processes occur first when interacting with other people, since they are co-constructed during shared activities and then, they are integrated into the individual's cognitive development to allow the individual to function independently when solving problems (Woolfolk, 2005). Therefore, Vygotsky's theory is not just a theory of learning but also a theory of higher cognitive development (Johnson & Golombek, 2003). Having mentioned this, the interactions between the Práctica Docente I teacher and the EFL pre-service teachers are not only the ones that assist these students in their learning and development. Interactions with their cooperating teachers, peers and even their own students can be crucial for these pre-service teachers' development as well.

Moreover, Vygotsky believed that cultural tools (symbol systems), including real tools, play a significant role in cognitive development. He claimed that higher mental processes are mediated by tools such as language, signs and symbols. As individuals engage in activities with more knowledgeable others, "they exchange ideas and ways of thinking about or representing concepts" (Woolfolk, 2005, p. 45). Individuals then internalize such co-created ideas and ways of thinking. In the perspective of Woolfolk (2005), individuals transform such ways of thinking and acting, as they construct their own representations, symbols, patterns, and understandings. John-Steiner and Manh (1996) claim that unexperienced individuals depend on the transmitted experience of others. Thus, more knowledgeable others serve as guides providing the individuals with the necessary information and support they need to grow intellectually. This adult assistance is called scaffolding, a support for individuals to grown independently as learners (Woolfolk, 2005).

According to Vygotsky, there are particular problems that are beyond the individuals' cognitive skills and are difficult for them to solve by themselves (Woolfolk, 2005). Therefore, the individuals require clues, reminders, steps or encouragement to try to solve such problems.

They use this help for support to construct a firm understanding that will later be useful to address those problems by their own. That area where the individuals cannot solve problems by themselves is called zone of proximal development (ZPD). That is, "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978). Hence, this is a zone of discovery and experimentation where the individual can be successful with the assistance of more capable peers.

The theory of social constructivism then relates specifically to this study because EFL pre-service teachers are mostly unexperienced practitioners when entering to real world of teaching. Subsequently, they may face problems while conducting their practicum that may be difficult for them to solve because of their lack of experience. Thus, they need the support of more knowledgeable others such as their practicum teacher, cooperating teachers and experienced peers to provide them with guidance and support to overcome such challenges. Jansenn and Lazonder (2016) claim that when such support is directed to the pre-service teachers' zone of proximal development, they are more successful in integrating pedagogical knowledge.

Such support can be provided in various ways. The importance lies in the constant interaction and communication with those knowledgeable others to learn and therefore, grow professionally. Consequently, the EFL pre-service teachers' learning is the result of their beliefs regarding appropriate teaching or/and appropriate teacher's behavior, experiences in their classrooms and interactions with more experienced practitioners while carrying out their practicum. As the main purpose of this study is to identify the EFL pre-service teachers' perceptions towards the support they receive merely from their Práctica Docente I teachers, who act as the more knowledgeable others in the students' zone of proximal development while conducting their practicum, the social constructivism theory perfectly fits in this study to explain such phenomenon.

CHAPTER IV
METHOD

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of a sample of EFL pre-service teachers towards the support they received from their Práctica Docente I teacher while carrying out their practicum. In pursuing to understand the challenges that pre-service teachers experience when learning to teach, this chapter describes the study's research methodology.

It is essential to describe the research design that worked best to accomplish this work's objectives. A qualitative design was proposed in order to examine the research questions addressed in this study. An overview of the research approach chosen then follows. Afterwards, a detailed description of the context where the research was conducted and the characteristics of the participants are provided. Additionally, given the importance of confirmability in research, a description of the instruments followed by an illustration of data collection and the analysis procedures selected are presented. Furthermore, an outline of the issues of trustworthiness are specified. The researcher positionality is also described. Finally, a summary of the preceding sections concludes this chapter.

4.1. Qualitative design

Qualitative research is conducted when a researcher aims to achieve an in-depth understanding of a problem, situation, context or scenario (Reyes, Hernández & Yeladaqui, 2011; Creswell, 2007). Providing a further definition, Denzin and Lincoln (2000) claim qualitative research is the "study of things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense, or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (p.3). Subsequently, this design is adopted when the researcher wants to empower the participants to express themselves through sharing their experiences or stories to have a detailed understanding of a problem or issue (Creswell, 2007). As indicated by Yin, "the events and ideas emerging from qualitative research can represent the meanings given to real-life events by the people who live them, not the values, preconceptions, or meanings held by researchers" (2011, p.8). Qualitative research can be then the opportunity to develop new concepts, which might attempt to provide an illuminative and valuable explanation to social processes (Yin, 2011).

Qualitative research is conducted when quantitative measures and statistical analysis are not appropriate to understand the complexity of the problem (Cresswell, 2007). Precisely, a qualitative research is characterized by, as pointed out by Creswell (2007), tending to collect data in the field where participants experience a problem. Moreover, the information is gathered by the very researcher using multiple instruments and interacting face-to-face with participants within their natural context. Thus, data are mostly related to the participants' perspectives or subjective views, which are later analyzed using themes or categories according to the theoretical lens which the researcher has previously established. The researcher has to interpret what is being listened, heard, or observed; as a result, he will develop a holistic view of a particular phenomenon. It has to be emphasized that another feature of qualitative research is that it is emergent, as all stages of the process are likely to modification once the researcher starts gathering data. As the purpose of this work was to explore and understand the perceptions of EFL pre-service teachers about the support they received from their Práctica Docente I teacher, a qualitative design was the most appropriate to adopt in order to understand and interpret this phenomenon.

4.2. Qualitative approach

The qualitative design is integrated by different approaches which are characterized by their objectives. Creswell (2007) reviewed five qualitative approaches which in the view of Reyes, Hernández & Yeladaqui (2011) are the ones habitually used in qualitative design. These are narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case studies. Owing to the intentions of this research, the current study took the form of a case study which, as indicated by Yin (2003), is an empirical inquiry that studies a phenomenon in a real-life context when "the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p.13).

A case study is then conducted when contextual conditions are pivotal to be addressed, as they may be relevant to the carefully chosen phenomenon of study. Consequently, Dörnyei (2007) highlights that this approach is appropriate for rich descriptions of complex issues within a particular social context, since it enables the researcher to observe how diverse circumstances shape the social world which surrounds us. This approach is highly recommended by Dörnyei in order to explore unknown ground and understand a particular phenomenon.

Furthermore, this approach specializes in exploring and understanding a single case (one individual) or cases (several individuals) through multiple sources of information, such as observations, interviews, audiovisuals material, documents and reports. Through those instruments, data analysis is collected to be later transcribed and analyzed carefully in themes (Creswell, 2007). As indicated by Creswell (2007), three variations of case studies exist: instrumental case study, which concentrates in a single concern and chooses one individual to exemplify such problem; intrinsic case study, which focuses on a case rather than the problematic; and collective case study which selects several cases. For the purposes of this work, a collective case study was selected since in the view of Creswell it allows to illustrate better the issue to study. Similarly, in the perspective of Duff (2008), by concentrating one's research in a single person or small number of individuals, it is feasible to collect detailed information and conduct an in-depth analysis of such cases. She also claims that since case studies tend to be exploratory, they open up new areas of study and allow to disclose different viewpoints from the participants themselves.

4.3. Research context

Qualitative research encompasses contextual conditions such as environmental, social and institutional conditions which can strongly influence human behaviour (Yin, 2011). Hence, it is important to outline some details of the culture and environment of the setting where the research will be conducted. In the view of Bloomberg and Volpe (2008), these details provide information of an organization's history, vision, objectives or principles, which may be useful to understand the behaviours of a particular portion of a population immersed in a specific setting.

The educational institution where the present work took place was the University of Quintana Roo (UQRoo) in Chetumal. The University of Quintana Roo was founded in May 1991 (Identidad Universitaria, 2014) and since then, it is well-known for its excellence. This institution is a public university, which counts with four campuses around the state which are located in Chetumal, Cozumel, Playa del Carmen, and Cancún; being the main campus the one situated in Chetumal. This campus offers sixteen bachelor's degrees, eight master's degrees and one doctorate.

The aim of the University of Quintana Roo is to educate individuals to become well-prepared professionals committed to the human being progress and able to contribute to the

strengthening of Mexico and Quintana Roo's culture, social and economic development. (Identidad Universitaria, 2014). One of the majors this university offers is the English Language programme. This BA is a five-year programme which aims at training students become EFL teachers, apply and innovate teaching methods and techniques, design materials and carry out research in the area of English teaching (Licenciatura en Lengua Inglesa, 1995). Alumni of this BA are expected to have a vast knowledge of the English language, teaching English methodology, linguistics, French and/or translation. Consequently, they are qualified to teach English, design materials, and/or translate (Licenciatura en Lengua Inglesa, 1995). Nevertheless, before graduating students have to take the mandatory courses of ACPLE-144 Práctica Docente I and ACPLE-145 Práctica Docente II in which they have to carry out in each a practicum in local educational institutions to put in practice what they have learnt in previous courses. EFL pre-service teachers mostly conduct their practicum in kindergartens, elementary schools and in their same university. In Práctica Docente II, they usually teach a different educational level from the one selected in Práctica Docente I. Relevantly, the criteria selection for conducting the present study in this university was the familiarity and the easy access of the context and participants.

4.4. Participants

For this collective case study, participants were chosen under the criterion of purposeful sampling. This occurs when the researcher chooses individuals who voluntarily accept to participate in the project and accurately represent the characteristics that will be studied (Reyes et al., 2011). Additionally, these individuals are selected since they can "purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study" (Creswell, 2007, p.125). In other words, these individuals are chosen as they can provide plenty and significant data concerning the research topic (Yin, 2011).

Having mentioned that, to accomplish the objectives of the present project, participants were a sample of seven EFL pre-service teachers at the University of Quintana Roo, in Chetumal, who accepted to participate voluntarily. Specifically, all students were attending to their ninth semester of the major and enrolled in the course of ACPLE-144 Práctica Docente I. Moreover, they had already passed the following courses: ACPLE-113 English VII, ACPLE-140 Philosophy of Education, ACPLE-141 Educational Technology, ACPLE-142 Methods and Techniques for Teaching English, and ACPLE-143 Development of Teaching Materials. These

students were selected as this was the first time they faced classroom realities, interacted with students, and plannned and taught classes adopting an autonomous figure (Latorre Ortega, 2007).

When data were collected, two groups of ACPLE-144 Práctica Docente I were offered in this university; hence, this study sought to have participants from both groups. Included in the research sample, there were students between the ages of 22 and 23 years old. Among them, two pre-service teachers were females and five were males. In addition, four of them belonged to the morning group and three of them were from the afternoon group. Except from two participants, the majority of them had no previous experience in teaching.

Particularly, EFL pre-service teachers were contacted by arranging a meeting to visit both classes of ACPLE-144 Práctica Docente I to explain them the intention of the study and the data collection procedures encouraging them to participate in it. EFL pre-service teachers who volunteered were asked to provide some personal information such as telephone number, e-mail and Facebook account to be contacted later for the interviews.

4.5. Ethical considerations

For the current study, both privacy and confidentiality were respected throughout the research process, as in the perspective of Dörnyei (2007) "the primary principle of research ethics is that no mental or physical harm should come to the respondents as a result of their participation in the investigation" (p.67). Hence, the participants were explained the purpose and significance of this study as well as the data collection procedures assuring that their participation or non-participation would not affect their grades in any manner. Moreover, they were given a pseudonym to protect their identity (Creswell, 2007) and explained that they had the right to reject answering any question or withdraw from the study at any time without giving any explanation (Dörnyei, 2007). Importantly, cautionary measures were taken to protect the storage of participant-related data, since it was ensured that no other than the researcher and the research supervisor would have access to such material. Additionally, the participants were clarified that they had the right to ask any inquiries concerning the study at any time and that they would receive a copy of the results if wanted (Cohen, Manion, & Morrisson, 2007; Creswell, 2007). To formalize the aforementioned, each participant was given a consent form to be signed prior the commencement of the study (see Appendix 1).

4.6. Instruments

Exploring EFL pre-service teachers' perceptions on the support they received from their Práctica Docente I teacher while carrying out their practicum was indispensable for this study. Thus, interviews seemed the most appropriate instrument to use as they enable participants to "discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view" (Cohen et al., 2007, p.349). Even though interviews are said to be laborious to design and conduct and requires effective communication skills on the part of the interviewer (Dörnyei, 2007), they provide in-depth data regarding the participants' understandings of particular situations of the world they inhabit. Therefore, their importance for this study.

Interviews, according to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007), have commonly three purposes. Primarily, they are used in research as an instrument to gather data based on specific research objectives, either test hypotheses or create new ones, and complement other research methods. In the present study, interviews were conducted as means to gather data to give answer to the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the perceptions of the EFL pre-service teachers at UQRoo towards the support of their Práctica Docente I teacher?

RQ2: How do the EFL pre-service teachers' benefit from such support?

RQ3: To what extent do these pre-service teachers consider the course of Práctica Docente I prepares them to teach English as a Foreign Language?

Given the nature of this study, the interviews took the form of one-to-one, semi-structured, open-ended interviews which means, they were composed of a number of predetermined questions which were systematically asked to the participants, yet the interviewer was permitted to "probe far beyond the answers to their prepared and standardized questions" (Berg, 2001, p.70). Hence, the interviewer was allowed to ask unscheduled questions that emerged from the interviewing process to understand the participants' points of view. Furthermore, open-ended questions constructed these interviews. These are flexible questions, which enable the interviewer to have a depth perspective, clear misinterpretations of the answers, establish rapport, foster communication and assess what the interviewee knows or believes (Cohen et al., 2007). In addition, these questions are typically carried out from general to

particular to obtain the required data (Hernández, Fernández-Collado & Baptista, 2006). As a consequence, the interview schedule included the general topic to be discussed, specific questions for each topic to be addressed, issues within topics and additional questions for each one of them and a set of prompts, which are questions that allow the interviewee to give extended responses and probes, which are follow-up questions (Cohen et al., 2007). The interview protocol (schedule) was used in order to have a guide and take notes of the participants' responses respectively (Creswell, 2007). Specifically, it usually assists the interviewer in organizing himself considering the interview items. Moreover, to document such interviews as Creswell (2007) and Dörnyei (2007) suggest, an audio recording device was employed to record every interview to be latter transcribed and thus, facilitate data analysis.

Originally, interviews would be the only data source. However, to increase the confirmability of the study, it was latter decided to use narratives as well as a secondary source, since they would allow participants to tell their stories about their personal experiences and provide more explanatory information concerning the phenomenon of study (Creswell, 2012). In Pavlenko's view (2007), accessing into the learners' personal world is one on the major advantages that personal narratives provide. Consequently, since this study was focused on exploring the support participants received while conducting their practicum, the researcher felt that this instrument would allow pre-service teachers express their own perceptions concerning their experience in a more elaborate manner or express something else they did not mention in the interviews.

4.7. Interview protocols design

The three research questions to be addressed in this study and the ACPLE-144 Práctica Docente I syllabus were used as framework to develop the questions for the pre-service teachers' interview protocol. First, an analysis of the syllabus of ACPLE-144 Práctica Docente I was necessary to identify the aspects concerning the support professors who teach that course can offer to the pre-service teachers while conducting their six-week practicum completing twelve hours of teaching. From those aspects five themes emerged, namely supervision, feedback, lesson planning, material design and reflections.

Then, together with the research questions which were used as matrices, the pre-service teachers' interview protocol was designed following the suggestion of Bloomberg and Volpe (2008). These authors recommended to type in bold the research questions and brainstorm underneath each other questions which could answer them. As a result, many questions were developed. Nevertheless, they were reframed until they were a considerable number of questions and more importantly, considered as appropriate to give answer to the research questions.

This protocol contains twelve ice-breaking questions and seventeen questions to give answer to the four research questions this study addresses. From those seventeen questions, 1 and 2 were general questions which concerned teachers' performance and given support. Questions 3 to 13 referred to either pre-service teachers' views or support given on supervision (question 3), feedback (questions 5 and 6), lesson planning (questions 7, 8 and 9), material design (questions 10 and 11) and reflections (questions 12 and 13). Question 14 sought for the pre-service teachers' perceptions on how the supervision and general given support was beneficial for their performance as teachers. Finally, questions 15 and 16 were closure questions as question 15 dealt with the pre-service teachers' views on the extent their practicum prepares them to teach English as a foreign language and question 16 sought for the pre-service teachers' recommendations and suggestions for the supervision and support given while carrying out their practicum.

As interviews were planned to be carried out in three instances to explore the EFL pre-service teachers' perceptions concerning the support given at the beginning, midpoint and end of their practicum, most of the ice-breaking questions were planned to be asked in the first interview in order to get to know participants. Questions 1 to 14 were meant to asked in all three interviews and questions 15 and 16 were arranged to be asked in the closure interview. Although specific questions were planned for each interview, the researcher had the opportunity to probe for details when necessary.

When data were collected two goups of Práctica Docente I were offered and the same instructor taught them. Therefore, this instructor was asked to participate in the study once the pre-service teacher finished their practicum. The purpose of this was to corroborate the participants' responses. Hence, it was necessary to develop an interview protocol just for the Práctica Docente I instructor.

Such protocol was based on the questions developed for the pre-service teachers' interview protocol. This protocol contains nine ice-breaking questions and other eleven questions

to corroborate the participants' responses concerning the support perceived on their supervisions, feedback, lesson planning, material design and reflections. Once having both instruments ready, my dissertation supervisor reviewed and provided feedback for both. Her comments and suggestions were integrated into the protocols and later with her approval, piloting testing was conducted.

4.8. Interview protocols piloting

In the view of Dörnyei (2007), "always pilot your research instruments and procedures before launching your project" (p. 75). Creswell (2012) supports that a pilot test is a procedure in which the researcher modifies the research instruments based on a small group of individuals' feedback who have previously evaluated the instruments. Hence, to ensure the reliability of the instruments (semi-structured open-ended interviews) piloting testing was necessary to enhance the interviews questions and procedures (Cresswell, 2007) in terms of level of language used, understandability of the questions, or question order (Berg, 2001) and detecting those elements from the employed techniques which could be an obstacle for reaching the objectives of the study (Seidman, 2012). Subsequently, the pre-service teachers' interview protocol was piloted with three individuals who fulfilled almost the same characteristics as the participants in the present study. Specifically, these individuals had already passed the courses of ACPLE-113 English VII, ACPLE-144 English VIII, ACPLE-140 Philosophy of Education, ACPLE-141 Educational Technology, ACPLE-142 Methods and Techniques for Teaching English, and ACPLE-143 Development of Teaching Materials. Furthermore, they were taking the course of ACPLE-145 Práctica Docente II and carrying their practicum in local educational institutions.

The comments and suggestions that emerged from those interviews dealt with the vocabulary and the strategies employed as an interviewer. Additionally, those interviews' transcriptions allowed the researcher to ensure the understandability of the questions and if they were structured appropriately. Hence, the pre-service teachers' protocol was refined taking into consideration both the pre-service teachers' recommendations and the analysis of the interviews' transcriptions.

On the contrary, the teachers' protocol was piloted only with my dissertation supervisor as she had given the course of ACPLE-144 Práctica Docente I, she was not teaching it when the instrument was piloted and she would not be teaching it when carrying out the present study. It is

noteworthy to mention that the interview protocol was piloted only with her to avoid interviewing teachers who were likely to teach that course when conducting the study. In this case, the transcription of her interview allowed the researcher to reframe some questions, add some others and eliminate a few ones. When both protocols were modified they were revised one more time by my dissertation supervisor and a researcher external to the study. The final version of both of the interview protocols are included in Appendix 2 and 3.

4.9. Guide for personal narrative design

As personal narratives would be used to elicit from the EFL pre-service teachers more elaborate answers on their perceptions, at the end of all the interviews, a guide for them to write a one or two-page long narrative was designed. This guide contained six questions, three of them were the three research questions posited before, and the others were taken from the different interviews carried out during the pre-service teachers' practicum (see Appendix 4). Participants were asked to write their narratives taking into account those questions and send it via Facebook two or maximum three days after they were interviewed for the last time. Participants were asked to write their narratives in their mother tongue to avoid restricting them expressing their perceptions and experiences.

4.10. Data collection procedures

After having the final version of the primary research instruments, it was resorted to the corresponding authorities to ask for their support and collaboration to have access to the participants, and to conduct the present study. Once having their approval, both classes of Práctica Docente I were visited to explain the EFL pre-service teachers the research objectives and importance of the study to encourage them to participate. EFL pre-service teachers who voluntarily accepted to participate were sent a text or Facebook message to schedule the interviews. As previously mentioned, there was only one instructor teaching both classes of Práctica Docente I when the data were collected. Hence, this instructor was asked to participate in this study in order to have the view of all the participants involved in the phenomenon. Nevertheless, this was only carried out for corroboration purposes.

Particularly, EFL pre-service teachers' interviews were conducted in three instances to explore the support students received at the beginning, midpoint, and end of their six-week

teaching practicum. Hence, these interviews were conducted at the beginning of the EFL pre-service teachers' practicum and ended when their teaching experiences finished. Additionally, the participants were informed about the dates of the interviews every two weeks. Once the interviews were finished, participants were asked to write a personal narrative following the guide that was provided to them after the last interview and send it via Facebook two or three days later. On the other hand, their Práctica Docente I teacher's interview was conducted once at the end of the participants' practicum to have a deeper understanding on the support she provided to the students and triangulate her information with the data students provided.

Furthermore, the majority of these interviews were carried out at UQRoo, in Chetumal, in a quiet place to facilitate the audio recording and the pre-service teachers and their teachers' participation. Except from one time in which one interview was carried out in the workplace of one of the participants, most of the interviews were carried out in the Linguistics laboratory and the Self-Access Center (SAC) of the university. In addition, all the interviews were conducted in Spanish so participants could express anything without restrictions. Relevantly, participants were given a consent form at the beginning of the interviews as means to have access to the data they provided in all the interviews and protect their identities with an alias so they could feel comfortable talking about their perceptions on the support they received from their teacher. Their Práctica Docente I teacher was given a consent form as well for the same purposes.

4.11. Data analysis procedures

Transcriptions of each one of the interviews carried out were indispensable for data analysis. In total, twenty-two interviews (twenty-one belonged to the participants and one to the Práctica Docente I teacher) were transcribed employing the DIY (Do It Yourself) method. Consequently, the data were transcribed using Microsoft Word 2010 and Nero ShowTime v.9 for Windows.

Furthermore, a thematic analysis was employed to analyse these data. This is, as indicated by Braun and Clarke (2006), "a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (p.6) to "find repeated patterns of meaning" (p. 15). Additionally, it was used as it is characterized by either reflecting the reality or unraveling its surface, being flexible since it offers different analytic positions, being convenient for an extensive amount of data, and

underlining the similarities and differences across the data set (Brown & Clarke, 2006). In order to this, QDA Miner Lite v1.4.3 for Windows was used.

Accordingly, the data analysis in this study followed the Braun and Clarke's guide of thematic analysis which encompasses six phases. First, all the transcriptions were read twice to become familiarized with the data set and take notes on initial ideas. Then, taking into account such notes, interesting features of data were coded. Once all data were coded, all these codes were reviewed several times to ensure they were not repeated and identify how different codes could generate a theme. After looking for the relationships between codes, emergent themes were defined and named to produce the report, which following Creswell's suggestion, it took the form of a cross-case analysis; in other words, a theme comparison among all cases. Moreover, to ensure the quality of the analysis for this research, Brown and Clarke's 15-checklist of criteria for good thematic analysis was taken into account.

4.12. Issues of trustworthiness

Yin (2011) claimed that there is a need for qualitative studies to determine their trustworthiness. Bloomberg and Volpe (2008) clarified that trustworthiness features consist of the attempts of the researcher to seek for credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability. First of all, credibility has been used in qualitative research is a synonym of validity. Validation is considered by Creswell (2007) as a process of "understanding one's own understandings of the topic" and "understandings derived from other sources" (p.206). This is "whether the findings are accurate and credible from the standpoint of the researcher, the participants, and the reader" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008, p. 86). Thus, it is essential to select and conduct diverse strategies when carrying out a study to confirm its credibility.

According to the validation strategies listed by Reyes et al. (2011), members' checking is to request participants to verify their interviews' transcriptions to assure that the transcribed data is what they intended to express. This was one of the strategies this study employed to reinforce its validity. As the last interview was considered the most fruitful, this interview was sent to all the participants via Facebook and all of them agreed on the validity of their interviews. Another practical strategy was requesting my dissertation supervisor to look over the data analysis and results in order to have a distinct perspective from mine and receive trustworthy opinions and suggestions, which were advantageous for the enhancement of the present study.

Triangulation was another procedure that this study conducted to strengthen the validity of the present work. This is one of the most recurring validation strategies in research as it consists in resorting to different sources to corroborate information (Reyes et al., 2011; Creswell, 2007). Hence, data from the EFL pre-service teachers' interviews were contrasted with their personal narratives and their Práctica Docente I teacher's interview to confirm the provided data. Moreover, the researcher clarified her positionality, background and motives for conducting the study in order to improve the research interpretative validity.

Qualitative studies not only seek to establish credibility but also dependability, which in the view of Bloomberg and Volpe (2008) is the extent that the research findings may be replicable. To ensure this, a detailed description of what was planned and executed throughout this research was provided at all stages of the methodology. Even though qualitative studies do not attempt to generalize the results, it is possible that the phenomenon of study in a specific context and the lessons learnt from such phenomenon may be pertinent to other contexts. This is termed transferability, which is the degree to which the research phenomenon and results may be transferred to other settings (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). Consequently, the researcher addressed the issue of transferability by offering a rich description of both the participants and the context. This description "serves to place the reader figuratively in the setting, to transport the reader to the actual scene, to make it real" (Cresswell, 2012, p. 472). In this way, readers can evaluate to what extend this study's conclusions can be transferable to other people, settings, and situations.

4.13. Up close and personal: My positionality as a researcher

In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the primary research instrument (Yin, 2011). Consequently, in the perception of Yin (2011), it is imperative to identify the possible biases generated by the instrument's personal background or motives for carrying out the research which may affect the research design, data collection and interpretation procedures. In the perspective of Creswell (2007) "the researchers' interpretations cannot be separated from their own background, history, context, and prior understandings" (p. 39). Additionally, Yin supports that view mentioning the best studies in qualitative research cannot get rid of those influences; nevertheless, they need to be acknowledged as explicitly as possible to enable the audience reinterpret the researcher's interpretations if necessary. Therefore, guarding against unethical influences, the

following information attempts to account for the biases which could evidently influence this research.

I earned a bachelor's degree in English Language in the University of Quintana Roo (UQROO) located in Chetumal in 2014. While pursuing such degree I participated in the *Foro de Estudios en Lenguas Internacional* (FEL) in 2012 giving a workshop and a talk in 2013. Being part of those forums awoke an interest in doing research, as I came to realise how significant it is in the field of education and foreign languages. Such interest led me to be a participant in studies carried out by UQRoo professors twice, which personally were fulfilling experiences.

One of the studies, which addressed the importance of reflecting on teaching, was conducted in my last year of the major when carrying out my practicum. During this time, I was concerned about the support given to us as EFL the pre-service teachers, when carrying out our teaching practicum. Therefore, as part of the alumni of the English Language Major in this university, I recognise I have a strong bias toward the perception that EFL pre-service teachers do need more support and guidance on the part of the teachers in charge of the courses of ACPLE-144 Práctica Docente I and ACPLE-145 Práctica Docente II. I believe that having such support would help pre-service teachers overcome some of the difficulties they cope with when teaching and therefore, they may feel that those courses do prepare them to face the reality they will be experiencing in different educational institutions. Nonetheless, I am aware that the assumptions and generalizations I have constructed as an EFL pre-service teacher may not be universal within the context in which this study will be carried out.

Additionally to my bias, I have knowledge of the participants in the present study. Precisely, I have enrolled in classes with the students as they were my generation peers and I have been a student of their practicum teacher as well. Thus, it is of paramount importance for myself as a researcher to control and minimize those biases so they do not affect the data collection and analysis procedures in such way that alters and invalidates them. Noticeably, the current study is a response to my experience as an EFL pre-service teacher in the University of Quintana Roo, and hopefully it will contribute to the understanding of those pre-service teachers' needs while carrying out their practicum.

4.14. Summary

In summary, this chapter has outlined an account of the qualitative approach selected to illustrate the UQRoo EFL pre-serive teachers' perceptions on the support they receive from their Práctica Docente I teacher. Moreover, a description of the University of Quinta Roo and the participant sample were presented. Importantly, the principal tools for data collection were described. An explanation on how data were analised followed. Additionally, the approaches to assure the trustworthiness of this research were explained. Finally, the positionality of the researcher was outlined. Accordingly, the section that proceeds is the result of the data analysis.

CHAPTER V
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An analysis of the research data gathered by means of open-ended interviews along with narratives is presented in this chapter to give answer to the three research questions posed in Chapter 1. Consequently, verbatim quotes from the participants and relevant literature will be provided in order to support the findings. The following participants, Albus, Fred, Harry, Hermione, Luna, Remus, and Ron (see Table 1), decided to share their perceptions concerning the support they received while in their practicum, how they benefited from it and how their teaching experience prepared them to teach English as a Foreign Language.

Thus, this qualitative case study is then built around seven EFL- preservice teachers who were students in the course of ACPLE-144 Práctica Docente I in the UQRoo, in Chetumal. Upon conducting a cross-case analysis of the seven case studies, four main themes were established: size does matter, actions speak louder than words, what was reaped, it was sown, and a sneak peak of reality (see Table 2). Real names of participants, their Práctica Docente I teacher, and the educational institutions in which the pre-service teachers carried out their twelve-hour practicum have been changed to protect their identities.

Table 1. *Participants' background.*

Participant	Group	Sex	Age	Previous teaching experience	Number of supervisons	Classes given	Educational level taught
Albus	Morning	Male	23	Six months	1	12	Kindergarten
Fred	Afternoon	Male	22	None	3	6	University
Harry	Afternoon	Male	22	None	2	12	Elementary school
Hermione	Afternoon	Female	22	Five years	1	5	University
Luna	Morning	Female	22	None	2	9	University
Remus	Morning	Male	22	None	1	24	Kindergarten
Ron	Morning	Male	22	None	1	11	Kindergarten

Table 2. *Themes derived from data analysis.*

Categories	Research questions
Size does matter	

▪ Supervisions and groups size:
    ▪ Suggestions about supervision: more supervisions, more Práctica Docente I teachers, and smaller Práctica Docente I groups.
    ▪ Characteristics of the ideal Práctica Docente I teacher
▪ Consequences of lack supervision and feedback
▪ Facebook
▪ Tutoring meetings:
    ▪ Suggestions about tutoring meetings: more tutoring meetings
▪ Cooperating teachers and peers' support
	What are the perceptions of the EFL pre-service teachers at UQRoo towards the support of their Práctica Docente I teacher?

Actions speak louder than words	

▪ Teacher's support:
    ▪ Lesson plan revision
    ▪ Supervisions
    ▪ Feedback	

What was reaped, it was sown	
▪ Benefits of lesson plans revision ▪ Benefits of supervision and feedback ▪ Benefits of reflective journals ▪ Benefits of overall teacher's support	How do the EFL pre-service teachers benefit from such support?
A sneak peak of reality	
▪ Length of the practicum ▪ Suggestions to the course: longer length of the course and more workshops ▪ Lessons learnt from the practicum	To what extent do EFL pre-service teachers feel their practicum prepares them to teach English as a foreign language?

5.1. What are the perceptions of the EFL pre-service teachers at UQRoo towards the support of their Práctica Docente I teacher?

5.1.1. Size does matter. *Size does not matter* is a common expression used to outline that the magnitude of anything is insignificant. Nonetheless, when referring to a group of pre-service teachers who lack teaching experience and therefore, require the support of a more experienced practitioner to help them learn to teach, size definitely matters.

5.1.1.1. *Supervisions and groups size*. When data were gathered, two classes of ACPLE-144 Práctica Docente I were offered and were imparted by the same teacher, professor McGonagall. Hence, this teacher was in charge of fifty-two EFL pre-service teachers. Moreover, she was accountable for observing all these pre-service teachers' performance while conducting their practicum in order to provide them with constructive feedback and evaluate their progress as English teachers. Accordingly, the majority of the participants (6) reported this was a factor which massively affected the regularity of their supervisions. Hence, for them, the number of supervisions they went through was insufficient. Nevertheless, they were highly aware that this was the result of having a single teacher in charge of both the morning group and the afternoon group and having the responsibility of observing them all in a short period of time (six weeks). Albus, Remus and Luna expressed the following:

> Es que si fueran grupos más reducidos pues como que siento que más atención hacia a ti y así, pero pues no… no está esa posibilidad. Los grupos son extensos. Entonces, no puede estar atrás de todos al mismo tiempo [If the groups were smaller, I feel that more attention would be given to us, but no… there's not that chance. The groups are large and she cannot check on everyone at the same time] (Albus, Interview 1).

> No es lo mismo checar a veinte que a cuarenta y la clase de la mañana es más grande. No tiene suficiente tiempo para checarnos y no nos puede checar más. No podemos mejorar o no podemos recibir feedback porque la maestra está ocupada con los demás alumnos. Es mucha carga para un solo professor [It is not the same to supervise twenty than forty students and the morning class is bigger. We can´t improve or receive feedback because our teacher is busy with the rest of the students. It's a lot of work for one single teacher] (Harry, Interview 2).

> La maestra es demasiado responsable pero a veces no puede porque los horarios de algunos alumnos chocan y tiene de a tres o cuatro parejas en el mismo horario. Entonces tiene que decidir a cuál ir y "¿Qué día puedo ir a

observarlos?". Pero hasta ahora, me ha observado dos veces y está intentando una tercera porque sí somos varios y hay quienes están en Sky High y otros que están en Sunny Side pero sí nos observa, y toma nota para darnos retroalimentación [Our teacher is too responsible, but sometimes she can't observe us because some students' teaching schedules collide and there are three or four pairs teaching at the same time. Thus, she has to decide what classes she wants to attend to and "What day can I observe you?" Until now, she has supervised me twice and she's trying a third time because yes, we are a lot and some students are teaching in Sky High and others in Sunny Side. However, she does supervise us and takes notes to give us feedback] (Luna, Interview 2).

Freiburg and Waxman (1990, as cited in Bailey, 2006) emphasize that most of the supervisors' time is comsumed by travelling to and from different places. Thus, it is difficult for them to devote time to the trainees (Bailey, 2006). Professor McGonagall expressed that being in control of both groups was exhausting because of the fifty-two students she had. Consequently, she voiced that it was impossible for her to be with all the pre-service teachers all time. She reported that due to the fact that students taught classes in different schools around the city and shared the same teaching schedule, it was hard for her to supervise them constantly. Moreover, professor McGonagall explained that once she tried to observe half of her students in a single week, and to observe the rest the following week. Nevertheless, she could not do it because it was wearing. That semester professor McGonagall was also teaching another course in the university besides Práctica Docente I. She stated that at some point she was worried about not having time for her other responsibilities.

Even though she mentioned she got to supervise all of her students, the number of supervisions the pre-service teachers went through vary. Professor McGonagall clarified that the reason some pre-service teachers were supervised more than others was because she thought they needed more support to improve their teaching skills. On the other hand, she acknowledged that some pre-service teachers had previous experience in teaching English and some others had the potential of doing a good job, as in the beginning of the course they took some time for conducting microteaching in which she could observe their performance. Therefore, she was not worried about these students, but the former.

Evidently, the pre-service teachers were deprived of having regular supervisions because of the large number of students that needed to be observed. The insatisfaction of infrequent visits of the teaching practicum supervisors or mentors was also apparent in Ekiz (2006), Kourieus

(2012), Marais and Meyer (2004), and Yunus et al. (2010). Kourieus (2012) highlighted that teaching practicum supervisors should put more effort into observing pre-service teachers during their school-based experiences. Although professor McGonagall's persistent effort and responsibility was noticeable in the participants' comments, it was impossible for her to keep up with all her 52 students equally.

On the other hand, Fred was the only participant who was supervised three times while teaching. He completed his twelve hours of teaching in merely two weeks. He taught two-hour classes three days a week and thus, he was supervised half of his practicum. As a result, this situation may have influenced his perception concerning the sufficiency of the supervisions received. He said: "Yo digo que fue suficiente a pesar de lo que no hubo. Ella sí quería pero aun así yo le echo la culpa al tiempo de que no fuera [Although, she didn't visit all the classes I taught, I think she observed me enough times. She wanted to observe me more, but she couldn't. I put the blame on time]" (Fred, Interview 2). He later added: "Me pongo en el lugar de maestra. Tiene que ver… no soy su único alumno y tiene que estar con todos y dividirse [I try to be in her shoes. I'm not her only student and she has to divide herself to be with everyone else]" (Fred, Interview 3). Fred was conscious that Professor McGonagall had to supervise a significant number of students. Therefore, the constant support and interaction with her made him satisfied with the number of supervisions he received. According to Sewall (2009), the quality of encounters that occur between the pre-service teachers and their supervisors during their practicum is an essential factor in an effective teacher-training programme. Hence, it is pivotal for the supervisor when working with pre-service teachers to select the most relevant, effective and efficient approach for both parties to conduct the practicum supervision. Sewall claims that anything less than relevance, effectiveness and efficiency can endanger the aim of developing quality teachers.

Due to the insufficient visits of professor McGonagall, five participants posited that more practicum supervisions are required in order for their teacher to check on them regularly and for them to acknowledge their teaching strengths and weaknesses. Hermione, Harry and Ron were the ones who agreed on having at least three supervisions during their whole practicum. Hermione pointed out that by doing this the Práctica Docente I teacher can provide them with the feedback the need:

Las supervisiones siento que deberían ser tres: una al principio, otra a la mitad de las prácticas y la última al final del curso. Teniendo ese tipo de logística podríamos determinar cuan preparado se encuentra el alumno o cuales son su debilidades y fortalezas que este tiene para así poderlas atacar en el siguiente modulo o bien hacerles los llamados *feedbacks* correspondientes [I feel that three supervisions are needed: one at beginning, another in the middle and the last one, at the end of the practicum. Having this logistics, we can determine how prepared a student is and what their strengths and weaknesses are in order to address them and provide the student with the corresponding feedback] (Hermione, Narrative).

In the view of Freiburg and Waxman (1990, as cited in Bailey, 2006), supervisors should observe each pre-service teacher three or four times during their practicum semester. Kayaoglu (2012) explains that supervision is based on the principle that pre-service teachers need technical, educational and moral support. In the view of Gebhard (1990) "language teacher supervision is an ongoing process of the teacher's education in which the supervisor observes what goes on in the teacher's classroom with an eye toward the goal of improved instruction" (p. 107). Thus, all pre-service teachers "need to be observed and communicated in terms of their performance, weaknesses and strengths in the classroom" (Kayaoglu, 2012, p. 103). In this way, they can address the problems that require their immediate attention. For those three pre-service teachers being observed at least three times would help them to that.

Furthermore, to compensate the insufficient supervisions, the majority of participants (6) agreed on having more Práctica Docente I teachers. Harry, Fred, Albus, Luna and Hermione voiced that each course of ACPLE- 144 (the morning and afternoon group) should have their own Práctica Docente I teacher in order for them to have the opportunity to visit all the pre-service teachers constantly, and provide them with enough support:

Agregándole un maestro más o dos que vayan y observen las clases porque si solo es uno y tiene que checar a veinte y este está dando clases diario, solo va a poder checar a uno cada mes o cada vez en cuando. Si son más maestros sería más rápido. Va a haber un mejor control y te van a atender más rápido. Te pueden dar feedback más rápido y puedes mejorar [The supervision can be improved by having one more teacher or two more teachers to visit our classes. If there's only teacher and she has to supervise twenty students and also has to teach daily, she could only be able to supervise one pre-service teacher once every month or once in a while. If there are more teachers, supervisions would be more controlled and carried out faster] (Harry, Interview 2).

Ron, on the other hand, seemed to believe that it would be ideal to have more teacher supervisors to be provided with several points of view concerning teaching English and teaching strategies. He believed that: "A lo mejor nuestro profesor no ve algo, que otro podría ver [Another teacher could notice something that our professor ignored]" (Ron, Interview 2). Hence, these EFL pre-service teachers require more teacher supervisors to serve as a source of ideas and possible support, which according to Bailey (2006) this is one of the many affordances that a supervisor can represent. Van Lear (2000) defined affordance as a "reciprocal relationship between an organism and a particular feature of its environment" (p. 252). This author claims that what becomes an affordance "depends on what the organism does, what it wants, and what is useful for it" (Van Lier, 2000, p. 252).

Albus also expressed that reducing the Práctica Docente I groups could be a solution for the insufficient supervisions. In this way, the Práctica Docente I teacher will have sufficient time to supervise them all. He explained the following: "Yo reduciría los grupos para que el maestro de Práctica tenga más tiempo para observar a todos sus estudiantes varias veces [I would reduce the number of students in each group so the Práctica Docente teacher can have more time to observe all of her students several times]" (Albus, Narrative). Freiburg and Waxman (1990, as cited in Bailey, 2006) emphasize that each practicum supervisor may observe 10 to 12 pre-service teachers to devote sufficient time to them.

Relevantly, four participants reported that anyone interested in being a practicum teacher/supervisor needs to be in constant communication and interaction with their students when carrying out their practicum. Hernandez (2008) claimed that learning is more effective when commitment, group participation, frequent interaction, feedback and connections with a particular context in reality are present. Accordingly, it is imperative that pre-service teachers and their supervisors have a good interaction in order for the pre-service teachers to enhance their teaching skills (Yunus et al., 2010). Fred stated that is quite hard to go into the "real world" when one is still learning to teach. Therefore, the Práctica Docente I teacher is needed for constant guidance and support. Albus echoed Fred's point of view when reporting that as this is their first time facing real classrooms, they are still not sure of what to do. Thus, guidance on the part of the Práctica Docente I teacher is pivotal. Remus and Ron elaborated more in this issue:

> Es importante que alguien… no digamos que toda la vida porque en algún punto
> tienes que soltarte y empezar tú mismo… crear tus propias estrategias, pero es

importante en el proceso de desarrollo. Entonces "Mi maestro me decía esto". Es una base, una guía para que uno genere o desarrolle sus propias virtudes y crear su propio criterio de cómo crear una clase [It is important that someone… let's say no our whole lives because at one point one should fly away from the nest… develop our own strategies, but that person is important in our development process. Hence, "My teacher used to tell me this." She is the basis, a guide so we can develop our virtues and create our criteria on how we can teach a class] (Remus, Interview 1).

Es importante que este profesor esté pendiente de lo que nosotros hacemos porque igual y podemos perjudicar a niños, desmotivar a alguien o ser la causa de que una persona deje de hacer algo. Es importante el apoyo que nos dé el profesor de la materia porque repito nosotros no tenemos experiencia y nosotros creemos que lo estamos haciendo bien pero igual y no. Tener la opinión de alguien con más experiencia es fundamental [It is important that this teacher checks on what we are doing because perhaps we can harm children, demotivate someone or be the reason that someone stopped doing something. The support provided by the Práctica Docente I teacher is imperative because we lack of teaching experience and we might believe we are doing it right when we aren't. Having the opinion of someone with more experience is necessary] (Ron, Interview 1).

One of the main tenets of social constructivism claims that development depends on the interaction with others and our surroundings. Consequently, the interactions that EFL pre-service teachers have with their Práctica Docente I teacher can help them shape not only their thinking but also their behavior, as Vygotsky's theory is not just a theory of learning but also a theory of higher cognitive development (Johnson & Golombek, 2003). Furthermore, as John-stainer and Mahn (1996) put it, "human development stars with dependence on caregivers. The developing individual relies on a vast pool of transmitted experience of others" (p. 192). Hence, the constant interaction, communication and guidance with a more knowledgeable practitioner, the Práctica Docente I teacher, during the practicum will provide EFL pre-service teachers with support for developing complex skills, and for their understanding of different knowledge domains regarding teaching English as a foreign language. This is because the Práctica Docente I teacher plays a significant role in the zone of proximal development (ZPD) of the pre-service teachers, since this a zone of exploration and discovery in which they are cognitively prepared but need the support, guidance and nurturing of someone with more experience to facilitate their professional growth and development.

In order for frequent interaction, communication and guidance to take place, all participants reported that any Práctica Docente I teacher needs to observe the pre-service

teacher' classes to provide them with feedback and check on their progress. Albus, Harry, Luna, and Ron commented that by doing this they can acknowledge what exactly they need to improve. Albus and Luna said the following:

> Considero que debe estar detrás de los alumnos de práctica porque tendemos a cometer muchos errores y muchas veces no recibimos… no nos regañan o luego los alumnos no nos dicen nada. Entonces, teniendo al maestro observándonos, diciéndonos que está correcto o qué está mal, de esa forma nos apoya corrigiendo todo lo que hagamos erróneo [I think that this teacher should be behind the pre-service teachers because we tend to make mistakes and a lot of the time we don't receive… we are not told off or our students don't say anything to us. Thus, having this teacher observing and telling us what is right or wrong helps us improve everything we are doing incorrectly] (Albus, Interview 2).

> Es necesario porque nosotros podemos ir por un lado erróneo sin saberlo. Si te va a revisar obviamente te va a dar retroalimentación, qué está bien o qué podrías mejorar. Así podríamos cambiarlo la próxima vez que nos fuera a ver [Supervising us is necessary because we can follow an incorrect path without even knowing it. If we are supervised, feedback will be given to us: what we are doing right or wrong. In that way, we can change all that next time we are supervised] (Luna, Interview 2).

For Vygotsky, learning is embedded within social activities and occurring as the individual interacts with the objects, events and people of the social environment (Woolfolk, 2005). For example, Ramnarain's results (2015) demonstrated that the constant interaction between the pre-service teachers and their mentor allow them to be more aware of their decisions while planning and be more purposefully focused when reflecting. For UQRoo EFL pre-service teachers having interaction with their Práctica Docente I teacher through supervisions and feedback can help them learn the ropes of the profession.

On the contrary, Remus and Luna expressed a different point of view. They were the only participants who voiced that supervising is an essential responsibility of the Práctica Docente I teacher to make sure that her students are actually conducting their practicum. Luna had this observation to share: "Puede ser que le digamos que estamos yendo a clase y en realidad no es así [Perhaps we can tell her we are giving our classes when we are not really teaching them]" (Luna, Interview 2). Remus had the following to say: "Hay algunos que dicen "Como la maestra no viene, no voy a ir a Sunny Side y cuando sé que me van a evaluar, voy corriendo a Sunny Side para pedir que me den una clase para que la maestra vea" [There are some pre-service

teachers that say "As our Práctica Docente I teacher does not come to observe us, I'm not going to go Sunny Side and when I know she's going to evaluate me, I run to Sunny Side to ask for a class to teach so she can observe me"]" (Remus, Interview 2).

This is evidence that some EFL pre-service teachers failed to see that more than a passing grade, the practicum was an opportunity for their own professional development. Although the Práctica Docente I syllabus strongly emphasizes that the EFL pre-service teachers have the responsibility to attend to their classes or otherwise they will receive a failing grade in the corresponding observation, professor McGonagall reported that this happened to her twice. She said:

> Hubo a quienes iba a observar y como no les avisaba, no llegaban. Me pasó dos veces. Fue tiempo que les destiné a esos y ya no los vi y me decían "Es que no me aviso". O sea "¿Como no te aviso, no vas?" [It happened to me that when I went to observe them and as I didn't tell them, they didn't even arrive. This happened twice. It was time I designated for them and I couldn't observe them. They told me "You didn't inform us about your visit." Thus, "You don't teach your classes just because I didn't inform you about my visit?"] (Professor McGonagall, Interview)

Owing to the need of constant interaction between the EFL pre-service teachers and their Práctica Docente I teacher, all the participants agreed that a Práctica Docente I teacher must be committed to her students' progress and development. Harry said: "Si no nos dedican tiempo, no podemos avanzar [If we are not dedicated time, we can't progress]" (Harry, Interview 3). Moreover, Remus had this to say: "Si alguien no nos guía, sería muy difícil que nosotros no desarrollemos mejor en el futuro [If no one is guiding us, it would be very difficult for us to improve in the future]" (Remus, Interview 1). Luna emphasized the following: "Tiene que estar atento y que le importa lo que estás haciendo porque si es desinteresado, podríamos pasar la clase de práctica docente con los ojos cerrados [This teacher needs to be attentive and show that she cares about what one is doing because if she is uninterested, we could spend the whole practicum blindfolded]" (Luna, Interview 2). Hence, for the pre-service teachers the absence of this teacher as a source of knowledge can be an obstacle for them to improve and therefore, progress.

Surprisingly, Hermione was the only participant who claimed that she did not receive any feedback about her supervision. She thus suggested courses for Práctica Docente I teachers in order to be good supervisors. She said: "Porque siento que debe de haber un feedback y desde el

principio, por ejemplo, entra la maestra y ve tu planeación "A ver si estás siguiendo lo que dice o si sabes lo que estás haciendo" [Because I feel that feedback should be provided and from the beginning, for example, the Práctica Docente I teacher should enter to your classroom and check your lesson plan "Lest's see if you are following what it is said here or if you know what you are doing"]" (Hermione, Interview 3). Freburg and Maxwell (1990, as cited in Bailey, 2006) found that most supervisors of pre-service teachers receive little training on how to supervise their trainees effectively. Additionally, professor McGonagall voiced that it is essential for them as Práctica Docente I teachers to be trained to prepare future English teachers. However, this training is not offered to the teachers that teach the courses of Práctica Docente at UQRoo. This indicates that any Práctica Docente teacher may have a different perspective on how to train EFL pre-service teachers and their lack of training may result in different ideas in how to assist these pre-service teachers.

5.1.1.2. *Consequences of lack of supervision and feedback.* According to Newton's third law of motion, for every action there is a reaction. Ramos-Sanchez et al. (2002) hypothesized that negative supervisory events could lead to unfavorable consequences in the supervisor- supervisee relationship and in the supervisee's professional and personal development. Owing to the lack of supervision and feedback experienced in the majority of participants, some of them commented that at some point while carrying out their practicum they felt unmotivated (3), sad (1), abandoned (1) and even frustrated (1), as their teacher could not supervise their classes and provide them with feedback of their performance:

> Yo me esmero y mi compañero se espera y que no vaya como que te desmotiva ese hecho [My peer and I put a lot of effort on our classes and not visiting us, demotivate us] (Hermione, Interview 1).

> La vez que nos dijo que nos iba a observar y no fue, me sentí un poco desmotivado. "¿Qué ocurre? ¿Qué va a pasar?" [When she said she would observe us, she didn't. I felt a little unmotivated. "What's going on? What will happen?"] (Albus, Interview 2).

> Un poco triste porque uno quisiera que lo estén supervisando y diciendo "Esto está bien o esto está mal. [I felt a little bit sad because one would like to be supervised and told "This is right or this is wrong"] (Ron, Interview 2).

Me sentí abandonado y decía "¿Cómo voy a hacer esto si no lo sé?" [I felt abandoned and thought, "How am I going to teach this if I don't know how to do it?"] (Fred, Interview 2).

Con frustración porque no sabes qué hacer. Entonces, como eres nuevo de plano no sabes qué hacer y "¿Qué hago? ¿Qué digo?". Entonces, tienes como mil preguntas pero si un respuestas [I felt frustrated because one doesn't know what to do. Thus, as you are new, you don't know what to do and "What do I do? What do I say?" Consequently, you have like thousand questions without an answer] (Harry, Interview 3).

Furthermore, five of the participants stated that doubting their teaching abilities was also a meaningful consequence of the insufficient supervision they experienced. In his study of teacher concerns, Fuller (1969) found that new teachers tend to experience survival concerns such as 'How I am doing?' or 'Will others approve of my performance?'. In addition, Kram (1988) claims that young adults launching in new careers are concerned about their competence and their ability to function affectively. As a result of not having such support, these participants commented that they were not certain if their practical classroom know-how was appropriate or not. Luna said: "Si no me va a ir a ver sí ya te preocupas. "¿Qué estás haciendo bien o qué estás haciendo mal" [If she doesn't observe me, I worry about "What am I doing right or wrong?"] (Luna, Interview 2). Albus echoed Luna's point of view: "Tenía esa intriga de "¿Estoy trabajando bien o estoy trabajando mal?" [I was curious about "Am I doing it right or wrong?"] (Albus, Interview 2). Hermione elaborated on this issue:

Es como si me hubiesen aventado al ruedo así como así. Ahorita si es cuando uno dice "Chin, la maestra si hace falta, no nos ha dicho esto, no nos lo ha enseñado, no ha venido". Entonces te quedas como a la deriva a ver si estás haciendo las cosas bien [It was as if I had been thrown into an arena just because. Now is when one says "Yikes! The Práctica Docente I teacher is needed. She hasn't said this to us, we haven't been taught this, she hasn't visited us yet." Thus, one has a sense of drift]" (Hermione, Interview 2).

Similar results were found in Kourieus' study (2012). This author demonstrated that the lack of constructive feedback the pre-service teachers received deprived them to acknowledge what they needed to improve. In addition, Mukeredzi and Mandrona's study (2013) showed that owing to the absent of the pre-service teachers' mentors, those pre-service teachers felt insecure of what to do. Moreover, Albus reported that although he was supervised and provided with feedback, the latter was given almost at the end of his teaching practicum making him wish for

more supervisions. He said: "Yo creo que fue un poco tarde, ya que recibimos la retroalimentación a finales, casi en la última semana. Entonces, hizo falta un poco más de supervisión [I think the feedback was given a little bit late, as we received it at the end, almost in the last week of our practicum. Hence, more supervisions were needed]" (Albus, Interview 3). Likewise, Hermione said that her only supervision, which was almost at the end of her teaching practicum, was not advantageous because she did not receive any feedback of her performance when supervised. She explained: "Ya es el final, "¿Ya para qué? ¿Para qué va ir a lo último?". Desde un principio debió haber ido para moldearme, formarme y darme conocimientos para que yo en las siguientes pueda mejorar [It's almost the end of our practicum. "What for? Why at the end?" From the beginning she should have observed me to shape me, train me and provide me with knowledge in order for me to improve the following classes]" (Hermione, Interview 2).

Additionally, three participants claimed that they made their own assumptions regarding the suitability of their teaching when they did not receive the corresponding feedback of their teaching performance. Remus and Albus voiced that if no one was there for them, to tell them what they did right or wrong, they tended to believe that what they were doing was all right. Similarly, Hermione supported their point of view reporting the following:

> Conmigo no ha habido esa retroalimentación y esas observaciones "Hazlo así o así". A mí… soy bien masoquista. Me gusta que me regañen y me digan "Esto está mal. Haz esto bien". A mí no me enoja que vengas y me corrijas. Si no lo haces me voy a enojar, ¿Por qué no me lo dijiste?" o al maestro "Maestro, ¿por qué no me dijo desde el principio que no estaba haciendo las cosas bien? Para mí, todo el tiempo lo hice bien" [I haven't received feedback and I haven't been supervised. "Do it like this or this." I'm masochistic. I like to be told "This is wrong. Do it right!" I don't get mad if you come and correct me. If you don't, then I'll get mad. "Why didn't you tell me?" or "Teacher, why didn't you tell me from the beginning I was doing it wrong?" For me, I did it correctly all the time]" (Hermione, Interview 1).

Social constructivism posits that learners construct their knowledge based on their prior experiences. In the view of Ngoepe (2014), "pre-service teachers bring their own set of beliefs, values and attitudes into the classroom where they practice their teaching" (p.43). Thus, these preservice teachers might have integrated into their pedagogy their beliefs concerning their conceptions of appropriate teaching or/and appropriate teacher's behavior owing to the absence of a more knowledgeable practitioner, their Páctica Docente I teacher, by their side.

Although it was evident from some of the participants' comments that this dearth of supervision was a crucial factor that affected them both affectively and prevented them from acknowledging the appropriateness of their pedagogy, two participants seemed to believe that the infrequent visits to their classrooms did not affect them much. Remus commented that he himself was accountable for carrying out an acceptable lesson once his teacher reviewed his lesson plan. Moreover, Hermione thought that she did not feel that affected, as she has a considerable amount of experience and hence, she has the basic knowledge of teaching:

> No afectó demasiado porque el contacto había al revisar nuestros lesson plans. Era como un apoyo antes de ir a dar clases… yo tengo la responsabilidad de dar bien la clase si mi lesson plan ya me lo revisaron y está bien. Yo tengo que desarrollarlo de la mejor manera [The lack of supervision didn't affect me that much because we were in touch when she checked our lesson plans. This was a support before teaching our classes…. I have the responsibility of teaching a good class if my lesson plan is reviewed and it's correct. I have to develop my lesson as best as possible] (Remus, Interview 3).

> La verdad, no me afectó. Tengo el conocimiento. Tengo las bases. No soy una maestra perfecta, pero si me avientan al campo así como así tengo las armas para poder defenderme [Honestly, the lack of supervision didn't affect me. I have the knowledge. I'm not a perfect teacher, but if I'm asked to teach, I have the necessary tools to do it] (Hermione, Interview 3).

Baring the obvious insatisfaction of the infrequent practicum supervisions and feedback since most of the participants were supervised once (4) or twice (2) during their six-week practicum, six participants seemed to believed that professor McGonagall simply observed either a decent or deficient class. For them, this was unacceptable in order to have a picture of their overall teaching performance, as like any other teacher, some days are good days, others are bad days. Remus and Fred said that professor McGonagall only saw them at their best, but they would have liked being observed at their worst in order to received useful feedback. On the contrary, the rest stated that professor McGonagall saw deficient classes. Luna and Ron voiced that, as they were supervised at their worst and they were supervised a few times, her Práctica Docente I teacher could have had the impression that all their classes were like that one. Luna expressed the following:

A veces nos iba mal, bueno, no mal sino no nos iba tanto como esperábamos desde un principio. No cubrían con nuestras expectativas y justo esos días era en los que la profesora iba. Entonces, tú pensabas que a lo mejor se quedaba con la idea de que así eres en tu clase y que los alumnos son así, que los aburres y en cambio había otros días en los que ella no iba y nos iba excelente, que los alumnos participaban bastante, y eso no lo logró ver a causa de las faltas, bueno, del escaso… de la escasa revisión de nuestras clases [Sometimes, our classes went wrong, well, not wrong but they didn't go as expected from the beginning. They didn´t cover our expectations and those exact days our PD I teacher went and supervised us. Thus, one thinks that there's the possibility that the PD I teacher can have the impression that one is like that and your students are like that, and that you bore them. On the contrary, there were other days in which she didn't observe us and everything went perfect, the students participated a lot, and she didn't see that because of the lack of supervisions] (Luna, Interview 3).

Cuenca (2012) explained that besides observing and interpreting the practice of a pre-service teacher, a supervisor evaluates it. Nonetheless, this author mentioned that "the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of practice is predicated for these student teachers-like all teachers-on the array of factors that mediate teacher action and student response" (p. viii). He stated that there is a great number of factors that could affect the effectiveness of a pre-service teacher's practice. Additionally, he claims that when supervisors walk into a supervision visit, they have little or no understanding of such factors. Consequently, in this case, Práctica Docente I teachers should observe their students constantly to identify what factors are impeding the effectiveness of the EFL-preservice teachers' practice in order to address them as soon as possible.

Moreover, a significant number of participants (5) commented feeling nervous when being supervised because of the fact that they were being supervised and having the thought that their grade largely depended on their performance. Luna was the only participant who expressed that she did not mind at all being supervised; nonetheless, she voiced that when being observed, one's personality and the classroom atmosphere dramatically changes. Cuenca (2012) claims that "the mere presence of an observer already disturbs some of the ordinary routine of a classroom as it dawns on all members—students and adults alike—that an observer is evaluating the performance of a student teacher" (p.vii). To overcome this problem, Bailey (2006) suggests that familiarity and trust are required. Bailey claims that if supervisors are a regular and positive fixture in the programme, the degree of trust among the supervisor and the teacher increases and

the observer's paradox is lessened. That is when the influence the observer has on the behaviour he wants to observe decreases (Bailey, 2006).

5.1.1.3. *Facebook**. Participants pointed out that although their Práctica Docente I teacher did not supervise them constantly, she was in touch with them via Facebook. She created two groups, one for the morning group and one for the afternoon group. Professor McGonagall emphasized that the reason she created these groups was because she had 52 EFL-preservice teachers and thought Facebook was an ideal tool to communicate constantly with them. In these groups, professor McGonagall explained that she posted announcements, uploaded different formats for their students to download, and posted comments providing them with feedback and praising the supervised pre-service teachers when doing a good job. Additionally, she employed this platform so students could send her their lesson plans to be revised in order for her to provide them with immediate feedback or answer any questions they could have had.

Three participants' comments revealed that they believed Facebook as a useful tool, since the posts by the teacher concerning the activities carried out by other pre-service teachers provided them with ideas to design and adapt their classroom activities. Harry said that when running out of ideas he resorted to the Facebook group. He later added:

> Por ejemplo veía en que fallaba yo y ahí decía yo "Tengo que hacer algo para mejorar" porque hay algunos compañeros que lo hacen muy bien y tienen como que ventaja o nacieron para hacerlo, se les facilita. Entonces, a veces veía algo que hacían ellos y decía "Ah, bueno. Puedo modificar esto o hacer esto y ahí trataba de sacarle ventaja [For example, I noticed what I was doing wrong and I thought to myself "I have to do something to improve" because there are some classmates who teach well and kind of have an advantage or they were born to do it, it's easier for them. Hence, I sometimes checked on the group something they did and thought "Oh! Ok. I can modify this or do this" and I tried to take advantage from that] (Harry, Interview 3).

Three participants, on the other hand, agreed on mentioning that being praised by their teacher was encouraging for them to carry on teaching and improving. Fred stated: "Ella nos felicitaba después de las clases que habíamos dado, en la página de Facebook que contamos en nuestro grupo, esto nos motivaba a seguir con las demás clases [She congratulated us after the classes we taught in the Facebook group. This motivated us to carry on with the rest of the classes]" (Fred, Narrative). Similarly, Harry voiced: "La profesora también nos alentaba y

felicitaba en ese grupo. Esto era muy útil ya que así me podía enterar cómo mejorar mi clase [Professor McGonagall also encouraged us in this group. This was very useful, as I could identify how I could improve my class]" (Harry, Narrative). Evidently, Facebook was source of support for some of the participants.

Similar results were found in English and Duncan-Howell's study (2008). They demonstrated that a Facebook group can be used a support tool for pre-service teachers while conducting their practicum. Moreover, Caner's study (2010) demonstrated that pre-service teachers require feedback from their lesson plans and their practicum. Hence, providing them with a platform in which supervisors can reflect and provide feedback on the preservice teachers' lesson plans and practice can contribute to their professional development.

Furthermore, Harry, Remus and Ron indicated that Facebook allowed them to be in constant communication with and have a rapid answer of their questions from their Páctica Docente I teacher. Harry reported that as they did not have enough time to meet personally with his teacher because of schedule constrains, Facebook was a useful tool for communication and encouragement. Remus said: "No nos vemos físicamente pero nos hablamos via Facebook. Entonces, en cualquier momento le escribes [We don't see each other personally but we talk in Facebook so you can write her anytime]" (Remus, Interview 2). Although Ron thought that using Facebook had its advantages, he claimed that it was not better than a face-to-face interaction. Ron had this to say:

> Es complicado porque a veces no es lo mismo. No es lo mismo verla físicamente y aclarar las cosas que verla por una red social. Por ese medio nos contactábamos con ella para ponernos de acuerdo si el lesson plan podría funcionar [It's complicated becuase sometimes it's not the same. It's not the same meeting her personally and clarifying some things than interacting with her through a social network site. Through that platform, we could contact her and agree if our lesson plan could work] (Ron, Interview 3).

Even though it seems that Facebook served as a learning tool for some, Hermione was the only participant who indicated that they would have given a better use to the Facebook group if they would have employed it as a platform to share experiences, as it mostly was used by professor McGonagall:

> No lo usaban mucho más que para dar información general como "¿Saben qué? No hay clase en tal fecha o esto o el portafolio se entrega en esta fecha". No para "A

ver, chicos. Vamos a hacer un foro de discusión sobre la experiencia que tuvieron esta semana dando sus clases. A ver compártanme experiencias. De tal a tal hora vamos a hacer un foro de discusión o "¿No tenemos clase? Vamos a tener un foro de discusión". Nunca hubo eso. Si tenemos redes sociales, estaría súper bien hacer un buen uso. "Bueno, ¿ya tenemos Facebook? Vamos a hacer esto" [They didn't use it for other things rather than for giving general information like "You know what? We have no classes on this date or this or the portfolio will be handed in this date." It wasn't used for "Let's see, guys. We are doing a discussion forum about the experiences you had this week when giving classes. Share your experiences. From this hour to this hour we will be doing it" or "We don't have classes? We're doing a discussion forum." There was none of that. If we have this social network site, we'd better make the best of it. "Ok. Do we have a Facebook group? Let's do this"] (Hermoine, Interview 3).

For Kirschner and Karpinski (2010), Facebook provides its users opportunities to share knowledge, write comments, and engage in peer-to-peer interaction. These authors claimed that due to those features, Facebook could enhance learning experiences in an informal setting. Perhaps Hermione expected a better use for the Facebook group her teacher created as sharing experiences could have been beneficial for all members of the group.

5.1.1.4. *Tutoring meetings***.** EFL pre-service teachers commented that once they started giving classes they would rarely meet personally with professor McGonagall, as there was generally a schedule mismatch. Therefore, it was problematic for them to arrange a meeting. When the EFL pre-service teachers were not teaching, they were taking other classes in the university and when professor McGonagall was not supervising them, she was teaching another class or supervising other EFL pre-service teachers. Consequently, it was easier for them to communicate with her via Facebook in which they would mostly ask for any doubts and send their lesson plans to be reviewed. Nevertheless, all participants expressed that they should have met regularly with professor McGonagall while conducting their practicum to constantly review their lesson plans, receive feedback, and discuss teaching uncertainties. Participants' comments revealed that they should have met once (2) or twice (2) every week, every two weeks (1) or right after each class (2). Hermione and Ron expressed the following:

> Más que nada para las inquietudes que se me presenten en mi desempeño como profesor y para que te den unos tips o un feedback o un review de lo que estás haciendo para ver si lo que realmente estás haciendo es lo correcto [Mainly, for the uncertainties that can emerge as a teacher while conducting my practicum and

receive tips or feedback or have a review of what one is doing to acknowledge if it is correct] (Hermione, Interview 3).

Yo creo que mínimo dos veces a la semana antes de ir a dar la clase porque a lo mejor nosotros planeamos pero visto desde otro punto de vista el *lesson plan* puede haber un error que nosotros no hayamos visto o alguna actividad que podríamos incluir o que podría funcionar mejor de lo que tenemos planeado. Mínimo un día antes para hacer esos cambios que se podrían dar [I think that at least, we should meet twice a week before teaching our class because perhaps another point of view can notice a mistake we ignored or tell us about an activity that we can add or could work better that the one we had previously planned] (Ron, Interview 3).

Moreover, Hermione commented that the whole group of Práctica Docente I should get together at least once a week to share their experiences. She said: "Yo siento que a lo mucho debería ser una por semana para discutir entre ella y el grupo nuestras experiencias y saber las opiniones de qué es lo que podemos hacer [I think that we should get together at least once a week to discuss with her our teaching experiences and share opinions on what we can do"]" (Hermone, Interview 3). Participants demonstrated that they are not only seeking for more interaction through supervisions but through weekly tutoring meetings in which they can share, discuss, and reflect on their teaching expriences.

Hence, according to Kemmis et al.'s archetypes of mentoring, participants suggest being provided with mentoring as collaborative self-development. Hobson (2002) highlighted in his study that having scheduled meetings with the mentors and a mentor able to make time to converse matters of mutual concern was highly advantageous for the pre-service teachers. As questions arise regarding their teaching skills and abilities, it is essential for the pre-service teachers to have opportunities in which they can be listened and provided with feedback in order to have an alternative perspective and help them resolve problems.

5.1.1.5. *Cooperating teachers and peers' support.* Although participants agreed on experiencing dearth of supervision and tutoring meetings, some of them (3) mentioned being supported by their cooperating teachers (homeroom teachers of the groups in which the EFL pre-service teachers taught) during their practicum. These participants expressed that they received feedback from them, were helped with group management and with the design of their materials. Albus commented that due to the insufficient supervisions, he opted for asking his cooperating teacher what he could or could not do with his students.

Something similar happened in Kourieus' study (2012); as participants voiced that their supervisors failed to provide them with learning opportunites, they had to resort to their cooperating teachers for support. Albus said that his cooperating teacher was helpful when trying to control her students. Likewise, Ron stated that his cooperating teacher not only assisted him with group management but also suggested him what to teach. Moreover, she was willing to create material for him when necessary and even provided him with background information of his students. In addition, Fred said that his cooperating teacher was by his side providing constant feedback. Together with professor McGonagall's point of view, he had a full panorama of his teaching performance. He commented the following:

> Otro maestro también me daba correcciones y él lo hacía de una manera más *rude*. Nos lo hacía ver de una manera muy… te quedabas así como que "¡Hay!" y aprendí de eso que nos dijeron y ya con lo que nos dijo la maestra de la materia fue así como el complemento y yo, en mi caso, junte los dos conocimientos para poder hacer mi prototipo de buen maestro, por así decirlo [The other teacher gave me feedback and he did it in a tacless manner. He did it in a way that… Ouch! and I learnt about what he said to us and together with what our Práctica Docente I teacher said, it was a complement and in my case, I joined the comments of both of them to create my own prototype of a good teacher] (Fred, Interview 3).

On the contrary, Hermione, Luna, Harry, and Remus had a different experience, since they did not receive feedback from their cooperating teachers. Remus voiced that although his cooperating teachers helped him with group management, he said: "Ellas no se involucran en nuestro proceso de enseñanza [They are not involved in our teaching process]" (Remus, Interview 2). Furthermore, he stated that as their cooperating teachers had been working with his students for a while, they should have helped him telling him what to do or avoid doing. Similarly, Harry emphasized that her cooperating teacher was absent when teaching his classes. He said: "La maestra se va a la sala de maestros. La vez pasada vi que fue a tomarse un café [My cooperating teacher goes to the teachers' room. The other day I saw her going for a coffee]" (Harry, Interview 2). In the same way, Hermione said that her cooperating teacher only gave her feedback once. She claimed: "Nada, simple mente se sienta atrás y terminas la clase y él da indicaciones y ya. Y no sabemos nada. No nos dice nada [Nothing, he only sits in the back and one finishes the lesson and he gives instructions and that's all. We know nothing. He says nothing to us]" (Hermione, Interview 2). Furthermore, Luna voiced that she and her peer gave

their cooperating teacher a format in which he had to evaluate different aspects from their teaching. Nonetheless, he only was present in her classes twice. She mentioned:

> Como que no le gusta, como que es muy flojo y luego nos dice "¿Son doce horas? ¿No puedo evaluar sólo tres?". Está padre porque nos deja en las clases sola pero necesitamos de sus observaciones para dárselas a la maestra y no a la hora de la hora nos ponga así como "Es que lo hacen muy bien la verdad, son capaces" [It's like he doesn't even like it, he's lazy and he asked us "Twelve hours? Can I observe only three?" It's cool because he leaves us alone but we need his observations to give them to our Práctica Docente I teacher and he shouldn't give them to us like "They teach really well, they're capable"] (Luna, Interview 2).

Furthermore, these last two participants claimed that their cooperating teachers' teaching perspectives differ from theirs. Hermione said that the only time she was given feedback from her cooperating teacher, she did not fully agree with what he said. She voiced:

> La primera vez, le dieron la rúbrica al maestro titular del grupo y puso ciertas cuestiones que a mí no me… cosas incoherentes porque si estás enseñando inglés, le tienes que hablar en inglés independientemente de que estén en introductorio. No tiene que ser en español. Si no les explicas cierta gramática… porque me puso una observación que me decía que no les debo de decir que es gramática. Bueno, entonces, "¿Qué va a aprender? ¿Esto es así porque así lo dijo el maestro?" [The first time, he was given the rubrics to evaluate us, he wrote some things that I didn't... incoherent stuff because if you are teaching English, you have to speak in English independently of the introductory level the students have. The class shouldn't be in Spanish. If you don't explain grammar… because he commented that I shouldn't tell the students that what I'm teaching is grammar. Well, then, "What are they going to learn? This is like this because the teacher says so?"] (Hermione, Interview 1).

Likewise, Luna said that her cooperating teacher had a different personality from hers. She commented that once this teacher told her that she was too strict with the students. Luna claimed she was only asking for respect, as a group of students were joking in the classroom. She stated:

> Nos dijo que no seamos muy estrictas para no estresarnos nosotros y los alumnos y la verdad no era ser extricta sino era darnos a respetar. Una cosa es el relajo cuando hay una actividad dinámica y a otra cuando quieres echar relajo y te distraigas. Yo digo la verdad, que el maestro no tenga autoridad y el control de su clase, no significa que nosotros vamos a ser igual que él porque todos los maestros tienen personalidades diferentes la verdad [He told us to not be too strict with the students in order to avoid stressing ourselves and the students. One thing is joking when there's a dynamic activity and other thing is when you just want to mess around and

get distracted. I say that if this teacher doesn't have authority in the class, it doesn't mean that we have to be like him because all teachers have different personalities] (Luna, Interview 2).

Moreover, since EFL pre-service teachers carry out their practicum in pairs, four of them expressed they had the support of either their peers or their other classmates during their practicum. Harry, for example, said that he used to ask their classmates what activities they used in their classes in order for him to have a stock of ideas. He mentioned: "Entre nosotros nos pasamos actividades para que las podamos hacer [We exchanged activities among us so we can do them later]" (Harry, Interview 2). Remus said that working with a peer made everything easier because they worked as a team. Ron voiced Remus' point of view saying: "En mis debilidades me apoya y en sus debilidades yo la apoyo [In my weaknesses, my peer supports me and vice versa]" (Ron, Interview 1).

On the contrary, Fred outlined that besides resorting to their classmates for suggestions. He tended to ask colleagues for ideas in order for him to adapt them for their students. Fred commented:

> Le preguntaba a los demás compañeros que son egresados o a compañeros que ya están trabajando. A mis compañeros les decía "¿Cómo enseñarías esto?" y ya ellos me decían y yo aplicaba sus consejos [I used to ask some colleagues of mine for ideas. I also asked my classmates "How would you teach this?" They provided suggestions and I put them in practice] (Fred, Interview 2).

Since, Hermione was the most experienced of all the participants and her classmates acknowledged it, she served as a source of support for them. She commented that some of her classmates resorted to her to ask for advice:

> Se acercan y me preguntan, "Oye, Hermione, ¿Tú que piensas? ¿Qué *advice* me puedes dar" y ahí les digo "Mira, hay actividad de este, este y este. Te doy estas cuatro y tú escoges como tú te sientas y te guste" [They approach me and ask me "Hey! Hermione. What do you think? What piece of advice can you give to me?" and I tell them "Look, here's an activity to teach this, this and this. I give you this four and then you choose according to your likes"] (Hermione, Interview 1).

Consequently, some the participants' cooperating teachers, classmates and colleagues served as a support system for some of the EFL per-service teachers. That is, they acted as more knowledgeable others. In the view of Vygotsky, the individuals' cognitive development is fostered by the interaction with people more capable or more advanced in their thinking. Hence,

sharing ideas with these more knowledgeable others could have been beneficial for the participants. Moreover, this is evidence that some EFL- preservice teachers are self-regulated students. These learners, according to Pintrich (2000), "set goals for their learning and then attempt to monitor, regulate, and control their cognition, motivation and behavior, guided and constrained by their goals and the contextual features in the environment" (p. 453). Therefore, this type of students characterizes by using learning strategies to enhace their learning. In this case, one of the strategies used by the pre-service teachers was to resort to more approachable and experienced practitioners to gain knowledge from them.

5.1.2. Actions speak louder than words.

5.1.2.1. *Práctica Docente teachers' support.* Although evidence demonstrated how insufficient the supervisions were during the EFL pre-service teachers' practicum due to the groups' size, the majority of participants (6) expressed that professor McGonagall was willing to check on them when necessary during the time they carried out their practicum. These participants highlighted that she reviewed their lesson plans, motivated them, supervised them when she could and provided them with feedback. Moreover, she was available to answer any doubt, provided them with valuable opinions and suggestions, answered their uncertainties via Facebook or WhatsApp, and was in touch with their cooperating teachers. Ron highlighted: "Ella estuvo pendiente de nosotros ya sea por medio de una red social o en el horario de clases que estaba disponible [Professor McGonagall checked on us via Facebook or in the class schedule she was available]" (Ron, Interview 3). Similarly, Luna said: "Nos apoyó siempre que lo necesitábamos [She supported us whenever we needed her]" (Luna, Narrative). Remus and Harry said the following concerning this issue:

> Este año se quedó prácticamente sola la maestra. Entonces, tiene que atender tanto al grupo de la mañana y la tarde. Sí he visto que va a observar y está pendiente de todos. Inclusive ella nos recalcó "Chicos, sí tienen algún problema háblenlo conmigo". Nos dio mucho apoyo y nos dijo que no estamos solos en las prácticas docentes y que ella está para ayudarnos [This year, professor McGonagall was the only Práctica Docente I teacher. Thus, she has to check on both the morning group and the afternoon group. I have noticed that she goes and observes my other classmates and that she is looking after all of us. She even emphasized: "Guys, if you have any problem, tell me." She provided us with a lot of support and said that

we're not alone in our practicum and that she was there to help us] (Remus, Interview 1).

De cierta forma sí se preocupaba por nosotros. Y todos los días visitaba a alguien y todos los días mandaba al grupo: "Me gustó que hicieran eso o fíjense de esto y lo otro" o a veces nos mandaba correo diciéndonos "Chicos, esto o lo otro". Sí estaba pendiente de nosotros y sí sentí como que "Sí le importa a la maestra" [In some way, she cared about us. She used to observe someone every day and she posted daily in our Facebook group: "I liked that you did this or check this out" o sometimes she sent us e-mails saying "Guys, this and the other." She did check on us and I felt like "She does care"] (Harry, Interview 3).

In the view of Gebhard (1984), supervisors can play different roles and functions. He said that generally supervisors direct or guide the teachers' teaching, offer suggestions in the best way to teach, model teaching, advise teachers and evaluate the teacher's teaching. According to the participants' comments professor McGonagall, except from modeling teaching, served the rest of the functions mentioned by Gebhard. Consequently, six participants thought that overall she did a respectable a job as a Práctica Docente I teacher even when she had many students under her responsibility. Harry, for instance, reported that although he experienced the lack of supervision, professor McGonagall was caring. He said: "Nos presta mucha atención. O sea cuida mucho los detalles con nosotros y siempre nos dice: "No, pues acuérdense que tienen que enseñar bien, tienen que ser calmados, pacientes y ustedes fueron alumnos entonces saben lo que conlleva esto" [She's very attentive with us. I mean, she cares about the smallest details and says "Remember that you have to do your best, you have to be calm and patient. You were students, you know what this job implies"]" (Harry, Interview 1). Additionally, Fred and Luna voiced the following:

Su desempeño ha sido muy bueno y la verdad estoy muy agradecido que me haya tocado la maestra Mcgonagall porque ella tiene como cariñito hacia sus alumnos y te sientes muy protegido con ella. Bueno, yo me sentí protegido. De hecho me decía "Oye Fred, no sé qué" y me imagino que es con todos así y somos más de cuarenta y cinco. Imagínate [Her performance has been really good and honestly, I'm grateful that she's my Práctica Docente I teacher because she cares about her students and you feel protected. Well, I felt like that. Actually, she said to me "Hey, Fred. This and the other" and I think she's like that with everyone else. We're more than forty-five students. Imagine that!] (Fred, Interview 1).

En general la maestra sido muy responsable a pesar de que no tiene tiempo para verlos a todos al mismo tiempo. Ha cumplido con las observaciones y nos ha

dado retroalimentación. Es paciente de hecho y también trata de que estemos al día entregando todo [Generally, professor McGonagall has been very responsible although she doesn't have time to observe all of us at the same time. She has supervised us and provided us with feedback. She's really patient and she makes us keep up with all the things we have to hand in] (Luna, Interview 2).

Professor McGonagall clearly did not only adopt the disposition of being a supervisor visiting, evaluating and providing feedback on the pre-service teacher's practices but also, taking into account Kemmis et al.'s forms of mentoring, she provided the students with mentoring as support. She provided advice, offered encouragement, was interested in the pre-service teachers' questions and cared about her students' development. Even though, participants' comments revealed that professor McGonagall could not supervise them constantly, her commitment as a Práctica Docente I teacher was reflected in various ways to guide and support these pre-service teachers during their practicum.

5.2. How do the EFL pre-service teachers benefit from such support?

5.2.1. What was reaped, it was sown. My mother always says that one reaps what one sows. That is, everything one does has an effect. In this situation, all the support professor McGonagall provided to the EFL pre-service teachers could have had an effect on them. It is important to remember that the term *support* in this study refers to any kind of guidance which is offered in various ways to assist the pre-service teachers. Having mentioned that, the majority of participants reported that by having their lesson plans reviewed, being supervised and provided with feedback, ideas or suggestions was beneficial for them while conducting their practicum.

5.2.1.1. *Benefits of lesson planning revision.* Some participants (3) revealed that having their lesson plans reviewed allowed them to design better lesson plans. They reported that they learnt how to appropriately distribute time in each of their classroom activities (1) and write detailed lesson plans for every lesson they delivered (2). Harry and Albus stated:

Creo que lo único que me dijo era que me faltaba escribir más la lección para describir un poco más la información de lo que en verdad íbamos a hacer y en esa parte sí me ayudo porque en los demás trate de poner más [I think that the only thing she told me was that our activities needed to be explained more to describe what exactly we would do and that suggestion helped me, as I tried to describe more in the following lessons] (Albus, Interview 3).

Una vez le mandé y los tiempos... le di mucho a algo que no necesitaba tanto tiempo y le estaba poniendo menos tiempo a algo que necesitaba más tiempo y me decía "Puedes acomodar tus tiempos por aquí o por acá" [I once sent her my lesson plan and the time… I gave a lot of time to an activity that didn't require a lot and I was giving less time to an activity that required more. She told me "You can modify the duration of the activity here and here"] (Harry, Interview 3).

Furthermore, Remus, Ron and Fred reported feeling confident once their lesson plans were reviewed. These participants expressed they felt this way because professor McGonagall was an experienced practitioner whose views were valuable for them to deliver a good class. Ron voiced the following:

Te da la seguridad de que alguien con más experiencia ya lo revisó, puede funcionar, a lo mejor piensa que está bien o si hay que modificarle o agregarle… ella te lo dice. "¿Sabes qué? Mejor agrégale esto o quítale eso o aquello, busca una mejor canción que no esté muy larga porque son niños de tres años, esa mejor funciona con niños de cinco". Por ejemplo, ella nos dijo que los flashcards… no tenía caso escribir en los flashcards porque los niños no leen [You are confident because someone with more experience has reviewed your lesson plan and therefore, it can work. This person perhaps thinks that it's right or something has to be modified. "You know what? It would be better if you add this or eliminate this or that. It would be better if you use a song that is not too long because your students are three year-old children. Maybe that song can work with five year-old students." For example, she told us that the flashcards… that we shouldn't write words in the flashcards because our students don't read yet] (Ron, Interview 1).

In addition, four participants' comments demonstrated that the feedback they received from professor McGonagall provided them with ideas and suggestions to add, design, eliminate, and modify activities in their lessons plans. Harry best exemplified this by saying:

Me dice "Puedes cambiar esto, puedes hacer esto, puedes mejorar aquello, considera que esto puede ser mejor" Me dice cómo mejorar mi clase o si tengo algo así que no entiendo o no sé muy bien cómo meterlo, me dice "Mira Harry, te puedo dar esta idea, puedes hacer esto, puedes hacer el otro, otra actividad con los niños se llama tal". O sea me enseña actividades y cosas. Siento que sí me ayuda [She tells me "You can change this, do this, and improve that. Take into account that this can be improved." She tells me how I can improve my class or if I don't understand something or if I don't know how to add something, she says to me "Look, Harry. I can give you this idea, you can do this or you can do that, another activity for children is called this" I mean, she shares activities and stuff] (Harry, Interview 1).

As participants were provided with suggestions and ideas on how to improve their lesson plans, some of them reported they were able to design better lesson plans. Moreover, some others felt confident when giving a class because of the comments' received by a more experienced practitioner. Hobson's study (2002) also demonstrated that when pre-service teachers had their lesson plans checked by their mentor and had the opportunity to discuss with them lesson planning was highly beneficial for them. Together these results provide significant insights on how lesson-planning revision is effective for the pre-service teacher while conducting their practicum.

5.2.1.2. *Benefits of supervisions and feedback.* A significant number of participants (6) claimed having benefitted from the scarce supervision. It was reported that the feedback from the supervisions the participants went through allowed them to acknowledge their teaching strengths, common mistakes and more importantly how to improve. Furthermore, realising their own selves as English teacher was also a consequence of having professor McGonagall's points of view. In Ali and Al-Adawi's perspective (2013), feedback from the practicum is pivotal for pre-service teachers in order for them to develop their pedagogical and teaching skills. Black and William (1988) emphasized that research on feedback has demonstrated that quality feedback allows learners to assess their own learning and performance letting them in that way identify their next move. Moreover, Woolfolk (2005) claims that the support individuals receive from more knowledgeable others allow individuals to construct a deep understanding that will come in handy to solve problems by themselves. Consequently, by engaging in dialogues with professor McGonagall once their lessons finished, these pre-service teachers acknowledged their strengths and weaknesses as English teachers to improve their performance.

Harry, for instance, voiced that the feedback received from professor McGonagall was useful because before having her point of view, he did not know that what he was doing incorrectly. He said: "Yo no sabía que estaba fallando y hasta que alguien más lo ve, que sabe, te puede decir en qué estas fallando y ella me dijo [I didn't know what my mistakes were until someone with more experience told me] (Harry, Interview 3). In addition, he was the only participant who commented that the feedback he received allowed him to acknowledge his teaching progress. Remus, on the other hand, said that although he could notice his strengths and

weaknesses as a result of his feedback, this made him reflect on who he was as a teacher. Similarly, Albus narrated the following:

Los beneficios fueron principalmente conocerte más como maestro, a veces no nos damos cuenta de que estamos cometiendo un error hasta que alguien más nos lo dice, yo creo que es muy importante para los estudiantes de práctica que reciban toda la retroalimentación posible para que, así como yo, puedan saber cuáles fueron sus aciertos y sus errores a la hora de dar clases [The benefits were mostly knowing yourself as a teacher. Sometimes, we don't realise we are making mistakes until some else tells us. I believe it is essential for EFL pre-service teachers when conducting their practicum to receive as much feedback as they can. Hence, just like me, they can acknowledge their strengths and weaknesses when giving classes] (Albus, Narrative).

Even though Luna claimed that the feedback from her supervisions was beneficial because she knew what to improve, she commented that occasionally her teaching perspective differed from professor McGonagall's feedback. She had this to say:

Yo lo veo como que es bueno. Es bueno que nos dé retroalimentación porque así sabes cómo puedes mejorar, pero hay veces que no estoy de acuerdo con cosas que… como te menciono, que ella no las vio así, pero tú las consideras necesarias y ahí hay un roce de diferentes ideas [I think the feedback is good. It's good because you know how to improve, but there are occasions in which I don't agree with some things that… she didn't understand them as I'd have wanted to, but those things are the ones that I thought were essential, so there's a mismatch of perspectives] (Luna, Interview 2).

While the majority of participants agreed on the feedback to be beneficial, Hermione had a different position. The absence of feedback from a more knowledgeable figure was an obstacle for her to asses her performance. Since she was supervised once at the end of her practicum and she did not receive any feedback, she claimed she did not know if her teaching performance was appropriate. Therefore, she was disappointed of the course of Práctica Docente I. She expressed the following:

De nada porque ahora no supe que hice. O sea no supe si lo que hice estuvo bien o estuvo mal. Relativamente nada. Estoy muy decepcionada de Práctica Docente. Pensé que era así como… no sé. "Ve al campo pero llévate estas herramientas para defenderte" pero no fue así [The feedback didn't help me because I didn't know what I did. I mean, I didn't know if what I did was right or wrong. Nothing. I'm very disappointed of the course of Práctica Docente. I thought that it was like… I

don't know. "Go and teach, but take this tools with you" and it wasn't like that] (Hermione, Interview 3).

5.2.1.3. *Benefits of reflective journals.* When conducting their practicum EFL pre-service teachers are required to write weekly reflective journals taking into account their performance in class, what worked or did not work in their lessons, what problems they encountered and what they learned about themselves and their students. Professor McGonagall claimed that in order for her students to write these journals, she provided them with a format containing guide questions about their teaching, their students and themselves as teachers. She emphasized that being aware of what worked or did not work for them to improve their performance was the main purpose of these weekly journals. Nevertheless, when asked about these journals they had to write, a significant number of participants (5) expressed that writing those was not important for them. Fred, for example, commented that he did not like writing them because it was extra work he had to do. Although Ron had a similar perspective, he acknowledged that they had the purpose of making him reflect on his own self as a teacher. Luna said that those journals were not important for her because she was the one experiencing the teaching; thus, she could remember what happened in her classroom. Nonetheless, she thought that they were useful for professor McGonagall to check on her progress, as she could not observe her constantly. She had this observation to share:

> Para mí es algo innecesario porque es algo que yo ya sé, pero creo que es algo necesario para la maestra porque es la que necesita saber cómo nos sentimos o qué fue lo que pasó porque puede que haya cosas que no aparecen en el lesson plan y como los maestros con los que estamos dando clase también nos evalúan, si ellos llegan a poner un comentario malo a alguna cosa que no nos pareció, ahí nos podemos… estaríamos respaldándonos con nuestro reflexión "¿Qué pasó?" o "Esto es así" [For me, it's not necessary because it's something I already know, but for professor McGonagall it is because she needs to know how we felt or what happened in our classes because there are some things that aren't in the lesson plan. Moreover, as the teachers whom we work with are evaluating us as well… if they say or write a negative comment we don't agree with, we can use our reflection as a backup] (Luna, Interview 1).

Moreover, Hermione claimed that writing the journals were simply a waste of time. She did not believe these journals to be an opportunity for her to ponder about her performance. She

thought instead that if professor McGonagall wanted to have knowledge of what was happening in her classroom, she should have supervised her:

> Yo creo que son una pérdida de tiempo. "¿Qué vas a poner ahí? Me sentí bien porque di mi clase y los alumnos aprendieron bien". Siento que es un extra. No tiene por qué ir ahí porque tu feedback te lo tiene que dar la maestra y ahí debe decir "Hiciste bien esto, hiciste bien el otro" y te lo debe dar con una calificación [I think they are a waste of time "What are you going to write there? I felt good because I gave my class." I feel it's extra work. We shouldn´t do them because the feedback should come from professor McGonagall and she should say "You did this right, you did that right" and she should give that to us with a grade] (Hermione, Interview 2).

Interestingly, Ron voiced that writing those journals were unnecessary because, as a teacher, one does reflect unconsciously. He said: "No las considero del todo necesarias porque ahí mismo nuestra mente como profesores dice "Esto funcionó y esto no" [They aren't entirely necessary because our minds as teachers say "This did or didn't work"]" (Ron, Interview 1). The most attention-grabbing finding was that even though the majority of participants' comments demonstrated that the act of writing such journals was pointless for them, all the participants voiced that they did reflect on their classes and having benefitted from it.

All participants reported that acknowledging what they did right or wrong in their teaching and how they could improve was the benefit of reflecting on their classes. Fred said he used to ask himself regularly the following questions: Could I have done that better? Would this have worked? Why didn't I have enough time? Why did I have so much time left? Moreover, Luna reported that she reflected because she wanted to improve her performance, as she did not want her classes to be boring:

> Sí, sí reflexiono. Una de las cosas que tomo mucho en cuenta es qué resultó con los alumnos y qué no resultó y porqué, y qué podría hacer para mejorar porque a mí no me gusta que las clases sean aburridas. Soy un poco severa, sí soy estricta, pero sí me gusta tener una buena relación con los alumnos para tener que evitar ser estricta y así los logró conocer y saber qué es lo que les gusta para poder hacer más adelante otro material, algo que les llame más la atención de manera que aprendan [Yes, I do reflect on my classes. One of the things I take into consideration a lot is what did or didn't work with the students and what I could do to improve because I don't want my classes to be boring. I´m a little strict. Yes, I'm strict but I like to have a good relationship with the students to avoid being strict with them. In that way, I get to know them and know what the thing they like are to make other material, something that grabs their attention so they can learn] (Luna, Interview 1).

Albus, on the other hand, stated that besides knowing what we could or could not do in his classes, he learnt about himself:

> Yo creo que sí hubo un beneficio porque aprendes un poco más de qué es lo que puedes hacer y no puedes hacer y sobre mí, el tipo de maestro que soy porque mi compañera era un poco diferente. Yo tenía voz fuerte y no me gustaba gritarle a los niños y era así de acercarme y decir personalmente "Oye, no puedes hacer esto o ve a tu lugar" [I believe that it was beneficial because you learn a little bit more about what you can or can't do and about yourself as well, the type of teacher you are. My peer was different from me. I had a louder voice and I didn't like to shout to the children. I approached them and told them personally "Hey, you cannot do this or go to your seat"] (Albus, Interview 3).

According to Wallace (1991), reflection leads to teacher development, as "it is through reflection on professional action that professional expertise is developed" (p.82). Accordingly, professor McGonagall provided her students with the opportunity to ponder and report on their teaching performance in order for them to improve. In the view of Cohen-Sayag and Fischl (2012), reflection tasks promote pre-service teachers' reflective abilities. Although the majority of participants perceived writing their reflective journals to be meaningless, the fact that writing them was mandatory encouraged them to reflect consciously on their teaching performance. By doing that, they were able to acknowledge their strengths and weaknesses as EFL teachers.

5.2.1.4. *Benefits of teacher's overall support*. Having mentioned that *support* in this study refers to any kind of guidance offered in various ways to assist the pre-service teachers, participants' comments revealed that supervision, feedback, lesson planning revision, and motivation was the support they received from professor McGonagall while conducting their practicum. Owing to all the assistance the participants received from professor McGonagall, four of them highlighted that they felt supported, as a more experienced practitioner was there for them to help and guide them in their first experience with "real" students. Fred, for instance, said that having professor McGonagall's support in any way made him feel that he was not alone in that big step he was making. Moreover, Harry commented that if professor McGonagall would not have been there, it would have been challenging for him to learn how to teach. He stated: "Si no estuviera la maestra, creo que sería muy complicado. Me llevaría las doce horas que voy a enseñar aprendiendo o tan siquiera hacer la primera clase bien [If profesor McGonagall wasn't

there, I think it would be really hard. It would take me twelve hours to learn to teach or at al least teach the first lesson correctly]" (Harry, Interview 1).

In addition, Albus, Fred and Remus said they felt motivated because of this support. Fred commented the following: "Te dan más ganas de hacer las cosas y de seguir en esta profesión por todo el apoyo que recibes [You're more willing to do stuff and stay in the profession because of all the support one receives]" (Fred, Interview 2). Similarly, two participants reported that having professor McGonagall's support made them feel confident, as they appreciated that the comments she provided came from her experience. Remus had this to say:

> Me ayuda en la confianza. Voy más tranquilo a una clase sabiendo que una especialista me evaluó y ella pudo ver qué está bien o mal y a veces nos da ideas de "Está bien esto pero intenta con otro". Ella nos da una idea y dice "Vean que tal funciona" [It helps me with my confidence. I'm more relaxed knowing that a more experienced practitioner has evaluated me and noticed what was correct or incorrect. She sometimes provided us with ideas and said "It's alright but you can try this other thing." She gives us ideas and says "See how this works"] (Remus, Interview 2).

Moreover, Fred and Luna commented that thanks to professor McGonagall's assistance they acknowledged what they could or could not do in their classrooms. Both participants voiced that acknowledging that helped them to improve their teaching. Luna, for example, claimed that being aware of her mistakes allowed her to be open to try new things. She emphasized that she realised that if something did not work out, one should be aware that things can work in a different way.

Developing and improving their pedagogical knowledge was reported by four participants as a result of being supported while conducting their practicum. Ron expressed the following in his narrative:

> Me ayudó como futuro profesor ya que no pensé poder hacerlo bien; sin embargo, pienso que sí puedo y las ayuda de la profesora en este caso fue fundamental ya que por medio de sus consejos, revisiones de los lesson plans y feedback siento que puedo hacer un buen trabajo como profesor [The support helped me as a teacher, as I thought I wouldn't do it appropriately. However, I think I can and the help of professor McGonagall was fundamental, since thanks to her suggestions, lesson plan revisions and feedback I know I can do a good job as a teacher] (Ron, Narrative).

The participants' comments revealed that all the support they received allowed them to feel more motivated and confident, to acknowledge what they could and could not do in their classrooms and more importantly, to develop and improve their pedagogical knowledge. In the perspective of Jansenn and Lazonder (2016), when support is directed to the pre-service teachers' zone of proximal development, they are more successful in integrating pedagogical knowledge. Thus, having the support of professor McGonagall in various ways was indeed significant for the participants while conducting their twelve-hour practicum.

5.3. To what extent do these EFL pre-service teachers feel their practicum prepared them to teach English as a foreign language?

5.3.1. A sneak peak of reality.

5.3.1.1. *Length of the Práctica Docente I course.* The course of ACPLE-144

Práctica Docente I was designed for EFL pre-service teacher to complete a practicum in either local kindergartens, primary schools or the Self Access Center (SAC) of their university in merely six weeks completing 12 hours of teaching. Subsequently, the short duration of the practicum affected some of the participants' perceptions (3) regarding the appropriateness of its length. These participants expressed that the hours they had to teach were not enough. Hence, their practicum was only a *sneak peak* of the reality that they will be facing in the future as English teachers. Luna had the following observation to share:

> Nosotros nos quitamos cuando apenas pudimos conocer a nuestros alumnos y entablar una relación con ellos, conocerlos para saber cómo ayudarlos a mejorar en la clase y solamente tuvimos una probadita de lo que podría ser dar una clase pero no tanto como una preparación para ser docente [We stopped giving classes when we started to get to know our students and establish a relationship with them to help them improve in our classes. We just got a sneak peak of how a class could be but not enough to prepare us to be teachers] (Luna, Interview 3).

Moreover, since these EFL pre-service teachers' practicum is conducted in the last two semesters of the B.A, Albus and Remus seemed to believe that the course of Práctica Docente I is not given sufficient importance. Interestingly, Albus compared the practicum they conduct with the one the students from Hogwarts (a school for elementary school teachers' training) carry out. He assumed that those students conclude their B.A more prepared, since their practicum last four years and these students are in constant interaction with students. He said:

Siento que ahorita ya es un poquito tarde porque es el último curso. Como que ya nos estamos metiendo a esto y pues sí nos va a costar acostumbrarnos y lleva más tiempo. Yo lo veo por las cuestiones de los alumnos de Hogwarts. Ellos tienen prácticas los cuatro años de la carrera y están constantemente trabajando con niños. Y pues en cuestiones de pedagogía, salen un poco más preparados. Entonces nosotros tenemos el tiempo muy corto para pues aprender lo necesario [Right now, I feel that the course is offered a little bit late. We're starting and it's going to be difficult to get used to it. It's going to take us some time. I say this because of Hogwarts' students. Their practicum lasts four years and they are constantly working with children. In pedagogy, they are more prepared. Thus, we have a short time to learn the essential] (Albus, Interview 1).

Pre-service teachers in Grave's study (2010) emphasized that more time in their practicum could have led to more learning opportunities. Therefore, Graves suggests that longer and quality teaching practice experiences are needed in teacher education programmes. Similarly, when asked about what they would improve of the course of Práctica Docente I, four of the participants suggested that their practicum should be longer, as for them twelve hour of teaching are insufficient to get to know their students and be ready enough to become English teachers.

Luna, for example, expressed that UQRoo should make an agreement with different schools to conduct professional practices and start teaching from the beginning of the semester. Consequently, these participants assumed that extended practicum is required in order to be better prepared. On the contrary, Mickelson (1990) claimed that even though longer practicum periods are believed to result in better teacher education, "more is not necessary better" (p.259). He highlights that is quality rather than quantity of the experience that matters. Subsequently, it is necessary to ensure that EFL pre-service teachers are equipped the necessary tools to face classroom realities and are receiving the sufficient guidance and support from not only their Práctica Docente I teacher but their cooperating teachers and peers as well when conducting their practicum.

Interestingly, Hermione proposed that in order to improve their practicum experience, at the beginning of the course, they should be assigned a group to work collectively with a cooperating teacher. In this way, they can observe first how this teacher works with his group to latter adopt the role of a teacher. Hermione also expressed that planning all the classes they will teach in order to receive feedback would be essential before conducting their teaching.

Currently, a new curriculum of the B.A has been approved in the University of Quintana Roo and it is planned to be implemented in the Fall of 2016. In this curriculum, the courses in which the EFL pre-service teacher have to conduct their practicum receives now the name of Práctica de la Enseñanza I and II. Unlike Práctica Docente I, in Práctica de la Enseñanza I, EFL pre-service teachers have to design in pairs a syllabus and evaluation instruments before conducting their practicum. In addition, prior conducting their teaching experice, EFL pre-service teachers will be carrying out teaching observations and micro-teaching in several courses. The new curriculum thus seems to fulfill some of the participants' demands.

Furthermore, as in the beginning of the semester these pre-service teachers were provided with a three-day workshop on how to teach children, four of them voiced that more workshops like that one are essential in Práctica Docente I to be informed on how to appropriately teach the educational levels of their preference. Remus voiced the following:

> Nosotros previos a nuestra enseñanza, tuvimos un curso, que por el clima fue de tres días. Fue un curso muy bueno y yo creo que en ese aspecto deberían de dar estos cursos o talleres. Creo que nos hace falta más informarnos más. No solo es decir "Te toca ir a dar clases y ya. Ahí ves cómo le haces. Conseguiste hacer tus lesson plans, tus materiales, ya estás listo". En esta carrera necesitamos muchas ideas. Entonces, que se fijen en impartir talleres de material y de evaluación [Before our practicum, we had a three-day workshop. It was a good one. I think these workshops should be given to us. I think we should be informed more. It's not about saying "It's your turn to teach and that's it. You figure it out. You did your lesson plans, your materials, you are ready." In this profession, we need a lot of ideas. Hence, providing us with workshops about materials and evaluation should be necessary as well] (Remus, Interview 3).

Before their practicum, the EFL pre-service teachers are not offered courses which address how to teach students from different ages. Hence, having workshops like the one they received before conducting their practicum was significant for them. Surprisingly, the new curriculum of the English Language major provides these preservice teachers a course called Diferencias Individuales en el Aprendizaje de Lenguas Extrangeras. Acknowledging how different factors (motivation, attitudes, age, etc.) may influence both the learning and teaching processes of foreign languages is the purpose of such course. Courses in which the EFL pre-service teachers are trained to design their own syllabi, instructional materials and evaluation instruments will be provided as well. Subsequently, future EFL pre-service teachers would

benefit from such courses when conducting their practicum, as the knowledge gained in those courses may come in handy when teaching.

Moreover, Hermione felt that the B.A should offer training in teaching children with different abilities, since in throughout the B.A. they did not receive this type of training. In her perspective, this is indispensable, as it could be possible to have these children in their future classrooms. Although, no course in the new curriculum focuses on that issue, Hermione's comment can serve as evidence to provide the future EFL preservice teachers with a workshop on this issue.

5.3.1.2. *Lessons learnt from the practicum.* Even though the length of the practicum was short (12 hours/6 weeks), participants' comments revealed that they benefitted from having such experience, since they stated that they learnt how to appropriately plan lessons, create instructional materials, design suitable activities, solve classroom problems, and develop rapport with their students. Harry, for example, expressed that he noticed how different he was at the beginning of his practicum and how he improved at the end of it. He reported the following:

> Era la primera vez que iba a enseñar. No tenía ni siquiera la noción de cómo controlar el grupo. En cambio, al final ya controlé al grupo. Ya sé qué hacer. Ya sé crear actividades, ya sé hacer mejor material didáctico. Como que das un gran paso. Y desde que empiezas hasta que terminas se ve mucho la diferencia porque sale uno mejor preparado que cuando iniciamos. Ahorita, ya sé más o menos bastante [It was the first time I was going to teach. I had no idea on how to control my class. Contrarily, at the end, I could control it. I know what to do. I know how to create activities and materials. One makes a big step. From the beginning to the end, you can see the difference because one finishes the practicum more prepared when we started] (Harry, Interview 3).

Furthermore, Hermione and Remus expressed that they felt more teacher-like as a result of conducting their practicum. Hermione voiced that she felt more like a teacher because she tried to look for solutions to the problems she encountered in order for her students to learn efficiently. In the same way, Ron confessed that before conducting his practicum, he was careless, but then he adopted the role of a teacher and thought he needed to be always prepared for his classes. For Ulvik and Smith (2011), the main purpose of the practicum is to offer pre-service teachers with an authentic hands-on experience to develop their teaching skills and gain

experience to enrich their professional wisdom. Thus, everything the participants learnt occurred because they were immersed in the context of a real classroom. This was imperative for the pre-service teachers leaning as they could see at first-hand what being a teacher really involves and feels like.

Hence, some participants (2) voiced that they realised how difficult being a teacher could be. Fred said he could not image how all the teachers around the word teach every day, as a teacher one invests three or four hours in creating material to be used for a few minutes in the classroom. Remus also commented that he realised that in order to be a teacher one requires time, commitment, discipline and respect. He commented:

> Aprendí que ser maestro no es fácil. Que se requiere tiempo, dedicación y disciplina. También, respeto porque los estudiantes van con la idea de que tú les vas a enseñar y tú tienes que prepararte bien para que nos les falles. No ir bien preparado a la clase es faltarles el respeto porque ellos van a invertir tiempo de escucharte y tú tienes que hacer un buen papel [I learnt that being a teacher is not easy. It requires time, commitment, and discipline. Also, respect is required because your students have the idea that you are there to teach them. You have to be well prepared so you don't let them down. Going to your class not prepared is disrespecting them because they're investing their time in listening to you so you have to play a good role] (Remus, Interview 3).

Interestingly, Albus was the only participant who voiced that besides learning that any teacher has to be well prepared for a class, he learnt that one needs to reflect on one's practices. He reported that in order to this, one always has the opportunity to ask other colleagues to comment on one's classes. It is possible, therefore, that reflecting was significant for Albus because of the advantages it had on his teaching, as he claimed reflecting constantly on his performance.

Moreover, as a result of conducting their practicum, six participants claimed they became more confident when teaching a class and more prepared to teach the educational levels they taught. Ron supported this statement by expressing that conducting their practicum was a valuable experience that allowed him to grow professionally and build their confidence, since some days as a teacher one can go through good or bad days having always the chance to improve. He said:

> Yo creo que ha cambiado bastantito porque tengo más seguridad al momento de ponerme en frente del salón, de moverme en el salón, de jugar con los niños, si

hacemos una canción yo lo hago con ellos, pido que la repitan conmigo y los niños copian mis movimientos. Cosa que al principio tenía yo miedo porque decía "¿Me muevo no me muevo? ¿Me van a copiar o no me van a copiar? O ¿Lo estoy haciendo mal?". Poco a poco vas agarrando la confianza en ti y ves que sí está funcionando lo que estás haciendo [I think a have changed a lot because I'm more confident when being in front of a classroom, moving around, and playing with the children. If we sing, I sing with them. I ask them to do it with me and then they copy my movements. I was afraid at the beginning because I though "Do I move? Are they going to copy me or not? or Am I doing it wrong?" Little by little one builds one's confidence and you realise that what you're doing is alright] (Ron, Interview 1).

Although the majority of participants said they became more confident because of their practicum, Luna was the only participant that admitted becoming more patient, since she interacted with different type of students. She also voiced that because she is still a student, she avoided teaching in a traditional way:

Desde que inició el semestre aquí me he sentido muy paciente con los estudiantes y te aprendes a llevar con otro tipo de estudiantes y los entiendes porque tú todavía eres estudiante. Los entiendes y trato de dejar de lado esa forma tradicional cómo enseñan otros maestros de agarrar, leer y dejar tarea. "Léelo y hazlo bien y ya" y tratar de cambiar eso [Since the semester began, I'm more patient with the students because you learn to interact with different type of students and you understand them because you're still a student. You understand them and I avoid teaching in a traditional way as others teachers do. They read and you give them homework. "Read it, do it correctly and that's it." I try to change that] (Luna, Interview 2).

Owing to the fact that all the participants claimed they benefited in some way from their practicum, four of them thought they felt more prepared as English teachers. These participants reported that being provided with a practicum allowed them to gain experience and grow professionally. Harry put it like this:

Ya tengo conocimiento y estoy un poco más preparado. Yo creo que nunca se está preparado al cien por ciento. Antes no tenía nada pero ahora tengo cierto conocimiento, ya puedo… si me sobran diez o quince minutos. "Ok, vamos a crear una actividad y vamos a acabar el tiempo". Siento que aprendes estrategias y técnicas [I have knowledge and I'm a little bit prepared. I believe one is never one hundred percent ready. Before this, I knew nothing, but now I have a little bit of knowledge, I can…if I have ten or fifteen minutes left, I say "Ok, let's create an activity and use this time"] (Harry, Interview 3).

Although having this experience, Luna and Remus voiced they were not fully defined as teachers yet. Remus said he did not feel he was well prepared to teach any student as he only taught children. He reported: "Hasta ahora, no siento completamente que puedo enseñar a cualquiera y que soy muy bueno porque los niños no pueden pensar todavía como un adulto [Until now, I don't feel I can teach anyone and that I'm pretty good because children can't think as adults]" (Remus, Interview 3). Similarly, Luna commented that as their practicum was just a *sneak peak* of reality, this experience just helped her to deal with particular situations. Therefore, she believes she is not clearly defined as a teacher yet. It can be therefore assumed that even though the practicum the participants carried out was short in length, it allowed the students to have a first-hand experience in teaching English, which made them learn the ropes of the profession.

Throughout this chapter, the three research question this study addressed were answered. It was demonstrated that in the EFL pre-service teachers' practicum size did matter, actions spoke louder than words, what was reaped, it was sown, and that the practicum was seen as sneak peak of reality. According to what was described and discussed in this section, the following chapter will present the conclusions of the present study.

CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSIONS

This chapter firstly presents a detailed summary of the major findings of the current research, followed by the considerable pedagogical implications this study may have for the upcoming practicum teachers and current UQRoo curriculum designers. Moreover, a full description of the delimitations and limitations of this study will be provided. Finally, this chapter concludes with implications for further research.

The primary objective of this study was to explore the EFL pre-service teacher perceptions towards the support they received from their Práctica Docente I teacher while conducting their practicum. Furthermore, it sought to understand how such support benefited the EFL pre-service teachers and to what extent these students felt their practicum prepared them to teach English as a foreign language. The present study thus was carried out in the University of Quintana Roo, in Chetumal. Participants were six EFL pre-service teachers who were enrolled in the course of ACPLE-144 Práctica Docente I and volunteered to participate in the study to report their perceptions. Moreover, a triangulated approach was adopted to gather data by different instruments: participants' interviews and narratives as well as their Práctica Docente I teacher's interview. Accordingly, a thematic analysis was conducted to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the perceptions of the EFL pre-service teachers at UQRoo towards the support of their Práctica Docente I teacher

RQ2: How do the EFL pre-service teachers benefit from such support?

RQ3: To what extent do these pre-service teachers consider their practicum (teaching practice) prepares them to teach English as a Foreign Language?

6.1. Summary of major findings

6.1.1. What are the perceptions of the EFL pre-service teachers at UQRoo towards the support of their Práctica Docente I teacher? Amongst the most relevant findings, this study demonstrated that the number of supervisions the EFL pre-service teachers went through while conducting their practicum was insufficient. The large number of EFL pre-service teachers professor McGonagall was responsible for was a factor which enormously affected the regularity of her supervisions, as she was accountable for observing all her students (52 students) in a short period of time (six weeks). Consequently, this dearth of supervision affected these pre-service teachers affectively, as some of them felt unmotivated, sad, abandoned and even frustrated, and prevented them from acknowledging the appropriateness of their practical classroom know-how. Additionally, when participants were not supervised and provided with feedback, they tended to make their own assumptions about the suitability of their pedagogy.

Interestingly, the mere presence of professor McGonagall in their classroom made the majority of participants nervous when supervised, as they believed their grade crucially depended on the observable performance. It was also revealed that as a result of the infrequent practicum supervisions and feedback, the EFL pre-service teachers believed that professor McGonagall merely observed either a decent or deficient class, which was unacceptable to have a picture of their overall teaching performance. Nonetheless, the insufficient supervisions were compensated by the use of Facebook. This study showed that the Facebook groups that were created were valuable tools that allowed the pre-service teachers to be in constant interaction with professor McGonagall. Posts concerning the activities carried out by other pre-service teachers, being praised when supervised, having a rapid answer of their doubts, and having their lesson plans reviewed were the benefits of using such platform.

In addition, as there was a scheduled mismatch between the EFL pre-service teachers and professor McGonagall, these pre-service teachers hardly ever met with her when conducting their practicum. Subsequently, it was reported that tutoring meetings are crucial to review lesson plans, receive feedback, and discuss teaching uncertainties. Hence, this study confirmed that participants are not only looking for more interaction with their Práctica Docente I teacher through constant supervisions but through tutoring meetings as well.

Remarkably, although participants agreed on experiencing dearth of supervision and tutoring meetings, some EFL preservice teachers were supported by their cooperating teachers, peers and more experienced colleagues during their practicum. Hence, such support could have been useful for them to overcome common teaching uncertainties, as all these knowledgeable others were guiding and supporting these EFL pre-service teachers when necessary.

6.1.2. How do the EFL pre-service teachers benefit from such support?

Although evidence demonstrated how insufficient the supervisions were due to the groups' size, this study confirmed that professor McGonagall assisted her students in various ways besides supervising and providing them with feedback. It was reported that she reviewed her students' lesson plans, and motivated them. Additionally, she was available to answer any doubt, provided them with valuable opinions and suggestions, answered their uncertainties via Facebook, and was even in touch with their cooperating teachers. Professor McGonagall's role in the practicum went cleary beyong being just a supervisor. Owing to all the assistance received, the participants felt supported, motivated and confident. They also acknowledged what they could and could not do in their classrooms and more significantly, developed and improved their pedagogical knowledge.

Specifically, this study identified that designing better lesson plans, being provided with ideas and suggestions to add, design, eliminate and modify activities, and feeling confident were the results of these EFL pre-service teachers having their lesson plans reviewed. Even though these pre-service teachers experienced scarce supervision, participants' comments revealed they could acknowledge their teaching strengths, common mistakes and more importantly how to improve as a consequence of having professor McGonagall's points of view. The most surprising finding to emerge in this study was that even though writing reflective journals was reported to be meaningless, the majority of participants voiced having reflected on their practices and benefited from it. It was found that, owing to the fact that such journals were mandatory, they encouraged the pre-service teachers to consciously reflect on their teaching performance.

6.1.3. To what extent do these pre-service teachers consider their practicum prepares them to teach English as a Foreign Language? Another

significant finding that emerged from this study was that duration of the practicum was perceived as too short. Therefore, the practicum was believed to be a *sneak peak* of reality that these pre-service teachers will be facing in the future as English teachers. Nonetheless, having such first-hand experience allowed the majority of these pre-service teacher learn the ropes of the profession.

6.2 Pedagogical implications

The empirical findings in this study provide a clear understanding of the EFL pre-service teachers' needs while conducting their practicum. This could be advantageous for UQRoo curriculum designers and future practicum teachers/supervisor, as a new curriculum of the English Language Major has been accepted by the University Council and soon to be implemented in the Fall of 2016. Acknowledging the perceptions of these EFL pre-service teachers could provide a deep insight about the EFL pre-service teachers learning environment. Hence, such perceptions could assist school personnel in deciding what improvements need to be done in order to offer the future EFL pre-service teachers with a valuable experience while conducting their practicum.

The evidence from this study thus suggests that it would be essential to offer more groups of teaching practicum in order to have additional practicum teachers/supervisors and reduce the number of EFL pre-service teachers a single teacher is accountable for while these students conduct their practicum. Ideally, following the suggestion of Freiburg and Waxman (1990, as cited in Bailey, 2006) regarding how many pre-service teachers a supervisor can observe, each practicum group should have from ten to a maximum of fifteen students. Consequently, each practicum teacher/supervisor would have considerable time to be in constant communication and interaction with their students through regularly supervisions, which could be pivotal for the students' professional development. Another alternative to observe the students' performance could be asking the pre-service teachers to video record their classes. According to Bailey (2006) "technological advances can facilitate the collection and analysis of classroom data" (p.134). Hence, video recordings could be extremely useful for the supervisor and the supervisee, as they provide information about the suppervisee's performance, lesson organization and activities

conducted. Having different practicum teachers can be highly favorable for the pre-service teachers as well, since these experienced teachers could observe not only the students enrolled in their course but also the ones from the other practicum groups. Hence, EFL pre-service teachers can be provided with several and distinctive points of view regarding teaching English.

The current data also highlight the importance of having either one-to-one or group weekly tutoring meetings to discuss teaching uncertainties. Sharing experiences about teaching and receiving feedback can be advantageous for all, as everyone can learn from one another's teaching experience. Furthermore, it seems that the use of Facebook, when frequent face-to-face communication is not possible, could be a useful tool to share experiences, write comments, and engage in peer-to-peer interaction (Kirschner and Karpinski, 2010). Thus, practicum teachers should be encouraged to use such platform as a means to interact with their students.

Since the current data highlighted the importance of supporting the EFL pre-service teachers in this valuable experience, it is suggested to involve cooperating teachers in the pre-service teachers' process of development by reaching to an agreement to make sure students are provided with weekly feedback from them. Having a perspective of someone who has been working with the same students for a while could be highly beneficial. In the perspective of Bailey (2006), "cooperating teachers serve as models, pedagogical tutors, sounding boards, and allies to the student teachers. Their very presence can make the university-based supervisor's role much easier" (p.234).

Moreover, EFL pre-service teachers who have previous teaching experience or who are more confident while teaching should be encouraged as well to assist their less confident peers by sharing ideas and provide them with suggestions. Subsequently, having the practicum teachers, the cooperating teachers and experienced peers' help, a strong support network could be built to offer guidance and assistance when necessary. Lastly, as the participants voiced that they needed more time in their practicum, providing longer and quality practicum experiences could be highly advantageous for the future EFL pre-service teachers. This could be a chance for them to have more learning opportunities and therefore, gain additional experience.

Although this study focuses on the EFL pre-service teachers' perceptions, the findings may as well have a bearing on training practicum teachers/supervisors to assist actively their students in their professional development. By providing teachers with this training, they can be informed about how to ably support their students. Having listed the considerable pedagogical

implications, the present study thus makes noteworthy contributions to the future courses of the EFL pre-service teachers' practicum. By taking into consideration the aforementioned suggestions, prospect EFL preservice teachers could be provided with effective guidance and support in their training.

6.3. Research delimitations and limitations

It is noteworthy to remember that this study only investigated the perceptions of a small sample of EFL pre-service teachers in the University of Quintana Roo, in Chetumal, who took part voluntarily in the research while carrying out their six-week practicum. The aim of this research was to explore the support they received merely from their Práctica Docente I teacher. In order to do this, data were collected through semi-structured and open-ended interviews, and personal narratives to carry out later a thematic analysis. However, as a thematic analysis depends on the understanding and elections of the researcher, this work was limited by the subjectivity of the researcher. To compensate for this limitation, the coding and analysis of data was examined closely by the dissertation supervisor.

Particularly, the participants already knew the researcher; hence, this situation may have influenced in the participants' responses, since they could overly cooperate and answer what they considered would be useful for the research. Nonetheless, to avoid this, an effort was made to create an honest atmosphere where participants would feel free to comment on their own perspectives. In addition, the researcher worked with each participant's pseudonym when analyzing the data to prevent herself from correlating material with particular individuals.

Likewise, considering that the current study employed purposeful sampling, results may not represent accurately the perceptions of other pre-service teachers in the area, city and country. Therefore, results cannot be generalized to other populations. Nevertheless, the results of this work may be applicable in other contexts which may match the research context. This means that transferability may be possible.

Another limitation for this study was the time framework for data collection because it was limited to a period of six weeks. Data were collected in three instances: at the beginning, midpoint, and end of the EFL pre-service teachers' practicum. Subsequently, some interviews were conducted in a period when participants were busy because of exams or projects. This means, the meetings for the interviews were put off to when they were available. Lastly, having

only one instructor teaching both courses of Práctica Docente I was an unexpected limitation, since originally this study wanted to identify if there was variation regarding the support different teachers provide to their pre-service teachers when conducting their practicum.

6.4. Implications for further research

The main goal of the current study was to explore the perceptions of a small sample of EFL pre-service teachers towards the support they received while in their six-week practicum. Further research should therefore address the same issue in the forthcoming courses of the EFL pre-service teachers' practicum with a large number of participants and different practicum teachers/supervisors to provide a broader view of how the EFL pre-service teachers are supported. It is necessary to conduct further research on this issue to ensure the EFL pre-service teachers are provided with enough support in the beginning of their practicum to later let them gain a more autonomous role in their teaching. Marais and Meyer 2004 emphasised that it is crucial for teacher trainers to acknowledge the factors that impede student teachers having a positive practicum experience so they can improve the relationship between student teachers and their supervisors.

Moreover, it would be interesting to carry out a quantitative study on the various ways the EFL pre-service teachers are supported to identify which ones are the most and least beneficial sources of support. Having knowledge of those sources could allow practicum teachers/supervisors make modifications in the various ways they provide guidance and support. A future study investigating how valuable peer support is should be conducted as well to provide an understanding of the importance of having a helping hand in the practicum. Additionally, it would be appealing to investigate the effects of using Facebook or other social media platforms to share experiences and provide the EFL pre-service teachers with constructive feedback with either a qualitative or a quantitative study. Lastly, it would be interesting to explore the perceptions of the alumni of the English Language Major who are already working in the field to identify how their experiences in their practicum shaped the teachers they are now and to provide more data for the improvement of the practicum courses. The aforementioned research would be of great help to strive for enhancements to prepared quality English teacher in the UQRoo.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1

Universidad de Quintana Roo
Maestría en Educación

Hoja de información para el participante

"The EFL Pre-service Teachers Perceptions on their Práctica Docente I Teachers' support"

Estimado estudiante:

El propósito de estas entrevistas es explorar las percepciones que poseen los docentes en formación de inglés sobre el apoyo que reciben de sus profesores de la asignatura ACPLE-144 Práctica Docente I. Consiguientemente, para realizar esto se llevaran a cabo tres entrevistas, las cuales serán audio-grabadas, a lo largo de sus seis semanas de inmersión en escuelas públicas locales (al inicio de sus prácticas docentes, durante y al final de estas). Las fechas de dichas entrevistas se le darán a conocer vía correo y/o número telefónico.

Al aceptar participar en este estudio, se le informa que su participación o falta de esta no afectará su calificación de la asignatura de ninguna manera. Asimismo, se le comunica que usted puede abandonar el estudio en cualquier momento sin dar ninguna explicación y que tiene derecho a evitar responder cualquier pregunta.

Además, no dude en preguntar sobre sus inquietudes con respecto al estudio durante el tiempo de su participación. De igual manera, si así lo desea se le enviará, vía correo electrónico, los resultados del estudio una vez que este esté completado. Es imprescindible que usted esté enterado que recibirá un seudónimo; por lo tanto, su identidad será protegida. También, se le asegura que se tomarán las medidas de protección necesarias para almacenar la información obtenida de estas entrevistas teniendo acceso solo el investigador y si es necesario, el Director de tesis.

Cabe destacar que este estudio no presenta ningún riesgo para su integridad. Esta es una actividad voluntaria y no tiene la intención de evaluar su desempeño. El propósito esencial de esta investigación de corte cualitativo es mejorar la experiencia de futuros docentes en formación de inglés de la Universidad de Quinta Roo, Chetumal el llevar a cabo sus prácticas docentes.

Al firmar esta hoja de consentimiento está de acuerdo en participar en el estudio titulado "The EFL Pre-service Teachers Perceptions on their Práctica Docente I Teachers' support" y comprende todo lo anteriormente establecido.

- **Título del proyecto:** "The EFL Pre-service Teachers Perceptions on their Práctica Docente I Teachers' support"

- **Investigador principal:** Lic. Ana Fabiola Velasco Argente

Yo, _____, he leído cuidadosamente la Hoja de información para el participante y acepto participar voluntariamente en el estudio titulado *The EFL Pre-service Teachers Perceptions on their Práctica Docente I Teachers' support*. Además, se me ha entregado una copia de la Hoja de información del participante y esta hoja de consentimiento informado con fecha y firma.

Comprendo, de igual manera, lo que se me solicita como participante y los derechos a los cuales soy acreedor. Consiguientemente, otorgo mi consentimiento para la participación en dicho proyecto.

_____

Nombre del participante

_____   _____

Firma del participante   Fecha

"The EFL Pre-service Teachers Perceptions on their Práctica Docente I Teachers' support"

Estimado profesor:

El propósito de esta entrevista es corroborar la información que los docentes en formación de inglés provean sobre las percepciones que poseen con respecto el apoyo que reciben de sus profesores de la asignatura ACPLE-144 Práctica Docente I. Consiguientemente, para realizar esto la entrevista será audio-grabada para ser luego transcrita.

Asimismo, se le comunica que usted puede abandonar el estudio en cualquier momento sin dar ninguna explicación y que tiene el derecho a evitar responder cualquier pregunta.

Además, no dude en preguntar sobre sus inquietudes con respecto al estudio durante el tiempo de su participación. De igual manera, si así lo desea se le enviará, vía correo electrónico, los resultados del estudio una vez que este esté completado.

Al aceptar participar en este estudio, es imprescindible que usted esté enterado que recibirá un seudónimo; por lo tanto, su identidad será protegida. También, se le asegura que se tomarán las medidas de protección necesarias para almacenar la información obtenida en esta entrevista teniendo acceso solo el investigador y si es necesario, el Director de tesis.

El propósito esencial de esta investigación de corte cualitativo es mejorar la experiencia de futuros docentes en formación de inglés de la Universidad de Quinta Roo, Chetumal el llevar a cabo sus prácticas docentes. Cabe destacar que este estudio no presenta ningún riesgo para su integridad. Esta es solo una actividad voluntaria.

 Al firmar esta hoja de consentimiento está de acuerdo en participar en el estudio titulado "The EFL Pre-service Teachers Perceptions on their Práctica Docente I Teachers' support" y comprende todo lo anteriormente establecido.

.

- **Título del proyecto:** "The EFL Pre-service Teachers Perceptions on their Práctica Docente I Teachers' support"

- **Investigador principal:** Lic. Ana Fabiola Velasco Argente

Yo, _____, he leído cuidadosamente la Hoja de información para el profesor y acepto participar voluntariamente en el estudio titulado *The EFL Pre-service Teachers Perceptions on their Práctica Docente I Teachers' support.* Además, se me ha entregado una copia de la Hoja de información del profesor y esta hoja de consentimiento informado con fecha y firma.

Comprendo, de igual manera, lo que se me solicita y los derechos a los cuales soy acreedor. Consiguientemente, otorgo mi consentimiento para la participación en dicho proyecto.

_____

Nombre del participante

_____   _____

Firma del profesor   Fecha

APPENDIX 2

Pre-service teachers' interview protocol

Parte 1: Preguntas iniciales

1. ¿Cómo te va en tus prácticas?

2. ¿Dónde estás impartiendo clases?

3. ¿Cómo resultó tu primera clase?

4. ¿Qué es lo que más te gusta de impartir clases ahí?

5. ¿Has tenido problemas impartiendo clases? ¿Cómo cuáles?

6. ¿Consideras importante la asignatura de práctica docente en tu formación?

7. Antes de que empezaras tus prácticas docentes ¿podrías mencionarme las actividades (tareas o ejercicios) que se realizaban para esta clase, por favor?

8. ¿De qué forma te ayudaron o prepararon estos ejercicios para tus prácticas?

9. ¿Podrías contarme sobre los aspectos a considerar para tener obtener tu calificación en la asignatura, por favor?

10. ¿Cuáles consideras que son las responsabilidades que el profesor de práctica docente tiene? ¿Cuáles responsabilidades adicionales consideras debe tener?

11. ¿Cuáles consideras que son las cualidades que el profesor debe poseer? ¿Por qué?

12. ¿Qué tan frecuente te reúnes con tu profesor de PD para discutir cuestiones respecto a tus prácticas?

Parte 2

1. En general, ¿cómo describirías el desempeño de tu profesor de PD hasta el momento?

2. ¿Qué tipo de apoyo has recibido por parte de tu profesor de PD hasta hoy?

3. ¿Qué tan significativo es para ti que supervisen tus prácticas docentes?

4. ¿Cómo describirías el desempeño de tu profesor como supervisor?

5. ¿Cuál es la importancia que tiene para ti la retroalimentación?

6. ¿Cómo describirías la retroalimentación que recibes del profesor? ¿En qué aspectos de tu práctica recibes retroalimentación?

7. ¿Qué tan esencial es para ti que tus planes de clase sean revisados?

8. Al planear tus clases/actividades, ¿has tenido algún inconveniente/problema? Cuéntame sobre eso, por favor.

9. ¿Qué tipo de apoyo recibes por parte del profesor para resolver estas dificultades?

10. ¿Cómo sabes que los materiales que has diseñado o adaptado son adecuados para los alumnos?

11. ¿Qué tipo de asistencia recibes por parte de tu profesor de práctica docente para el diseño y modificación de tu material?

12. ¿Qué opinas sobre las reflexiones que necesitas realizar?

13. ¿Cuál es la importancia que tiene para ti la reflexión de tus prácticas?

14. ¿Cómo crees que el apoyo que te brinda tu profesor en general (supervisión, retroalimentación, revisión de planeaciones de clase y materiales diseñados, reflexiones) influye en tu desempeño como docente?

Entrevista final

15. ¿Hasta qué punto consideras que tus prácticas docentes te preparan para impartir clase de inglés como lengua extranjera? ¿Por qué?

16. ¿Cómo crees o consideras que la supervisión de las prácticas docentes y el apoyo que se te brinda en general puede ser mejorado?

APPENDIX 3

Supervisor´s interview protocol

Parte 1: Preguntas iniciales

1. ¿Por cuánto tiempo lleva impartiendo la asignatura de PD?

2. ¿Qué es lo que más le agrada de impartir esa asignatura? ¿Por qué?

3. ¿Qué tan importante es la asignatura de PD para los alumnos?

4. ¿Cuáles cree que son las responsabilidades y cualidades que debe de tener un profesor que imparte la asignatura de PD?

5. ¿Qué tanto apoyo deben recibir los alumnos durante sus prácticas? ¿Porque?

6. ¿Qué apoyo o ayuda les brinda a sus alumnos de Práctica?

7. ¿Qué tan frecuente se reúne con sus alumnos de práctica para discutir situaciones respecto a sus prácticas, dar retroalimentación, planeación de clase, diseño de material, etc.?

8. ¿Qué aspectos evalúa de la clase de Práctica Docente I?

9. Antes de iniciar sus inmersiones los alumnos toman clase, ¿podría mencionarme las actividades (tareas o ejercicios) que estos necesitaban realizar antes de que inicien sus prácticas, por favor?

Parte 2:

1. Para usted ¿cuál es la importancia de la supervisión de los alumnos?

2. ¿Cómo describiría la supervisión que les brindo a los alumnos?

3. Para usted, ¿cuál es la importancia de la retroalimentación para los alumnos de PD?

4. ¿En qué aspectos se debe dar retroalimentación? ¿Por qué? ¿Cómo describiría la retroalimentación que les brindó sus alumnos?

5. ¿Considera que sus alumnos tuvieron problemas para planear las sesiones de clase que impartieron?

6. ¿Qué tipo de apoyo tuvieron sus alumnos para que estos planearan adecuadamente su clase o sus actividades?

7. ¿Cree usted que los materiales diseñados o modificados por sus alumnos fueron adecuados para sus estudiantes?

8. ¿Qué apoyo requirieron sus alumnos para diseñar o modificar su material?

9. ¿Qué tipo de reflexiones realizaron sus alumnos sobre sus prácticas?

10. ¿Qué aspectos de la práctica docente considera que influyó más en sus alumnos?

APPENDIX 4

Guide for EFL pre-service teacher's personal narrative

Escribe una narrativa (1-2 cuartillas) respondiendo las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Qué opinas sobre el apoyo que recibiste por parte de tu profesor (a) de Práctica Docente I <u>durante tus prácticas</u>? ¿Por qué opinas eso?

    Toma en cuenta y cubre los siguientes puntos:
    a. La supervisión
    b. La retroalimentación
    c. Las revisiones de planes de clase/materiales
    d. Ayuda con las reflexiones

2. ¿Fue suficiente el poyo que recibías en cada uno de esos aspectos? ¿Por qué?

3. ¿Cómo te beneficiaste del apoyo que recibías por parte de la profesora durante tus prácticas?

4. ¿Qué aprendiste en la asignatura de Práctica Docente?

5. ¿Hasta qué punto consideras que las prácticas docentes que realizaste te prepararon para enseñar inglés?