# **Challenges Of Post-Pandemic Novice English Teacher Education**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

The pandemic has generated new dynamics in various fields, including education. Hence the need to analyze its scope and its repercussions on the various actors that are part of the educational community, analyzing its implications, especially in the current moment we are going through, since the post-pandemic era has forged new dynamics that are still unknown to many of those involved in the school.

The purpose of this article then, is to present some considerations and reflections around the circumstances that currently exist in the post-pandemic era, raising some recommendations and considerations, so that this crisis becomes opportunities for innovation and teaching, especially in the field of English as a foreign language.

**Keywords:** postpandemic, teacher training, novice, novice teacher

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

Undoubtedly, the pandemic has captured the interest of many academics in the field of education, focusing their thoughts on the way of becoming a school, to lead them to reflect, rethink and discuss the teaching exercise that can be developed in a particular way by apprentice teachers, for being a field that definitely requires multiple transformations regarding the pedagogical field that is reflected in the space of the teaching practice, where it is possible to appreciate all those initiatives product of this exercise of configuration of the preparation of this apprentice teacher in this particular moment that they had to assume, without being prepared for this moment.

had to be offered to this new teacher, which leads to weigh the new profile required for the school of the future, which poses challenges according to the circumstances of the moment, facing the framework required by digital technologies that were incorporated into school, which demanded a teacher open to these new challenges and a student with multiple expectations and resilience.

Based on the above premises, this new English teacher configures as a fundamental basis, the rethinking of the knowledge imparted in the programs that educate him/her, this is how the use of technological means applied in the classroom, had to become the central basis of his/her education, in such a way that made them active actors of the educational scenario, with their teaching actions, to project themselves with a different view to the one they had been seen.

These new processes definitely give meaning to the projection of the teacher of the future, who recognizes and endorses himself as a being of change, in a virtual world in which he is offered multiple possibilities, which lead him to constantly modify himself, in a changing society, which determines him as a subject with possibilities of transformation, with a different action, in an educational context that imposes multiple challenges, possibilities and opportunities, for which his mind must always be open to change, to the possibility of modification mediated by the new alternatives offered by the cybernaut world, which leads him to take an attitude enriched by traditional knowledge within the context of teaching practice.

Cabero et al. [2] explains it well when they state that the digital revolution has generated multiple opportunities in the educational context, especially for the accessibility and equity of those who learn, however, it is undeniable that to occur in this type of conditions, it is essential to have devices that facilitate access to school, Bastidas [3] makes great contributions in this regard, specifying that given the limited possibilities of electronic devices and poor connectivity in the homes where classes were held, it is undeniable that in order to have access to school in this type of conditions, it is essential to have devices that facilitate access to school.

Thus, although school teachers are aware that they must adapt to change, it does not necessarily mean that they are skilled in adapting to varied environments, since theoretical knowledge and practice are two unequal knowledge and in the particular case of elementary school teachers, some of them have become accustomed to exercise the same pedagogy, regardless of the changes in the classroom, but not their aptitude to provide educational spaces so that teachers in training could have the experience of developing classes in times of pandemic, In this sense, it could be seen that many of them left their comfort zone and reconsidered the way they were teaching, which represented progress, because now they understand what it means

to adapt to new environments and pedagogical situations, imposed by the unpredictability of the moment, as is the case of the pandemic, giving more visibility to the context and the reality of the moment, Prieto and Ramirez [4] raises various explanations related to this issue that are very relevant to the perspective that is being channeled here.

It is common to find many teachers in training who, in spite of the new conditions imposed by the pandemic, which forced them to use other spaces that made contact with the school feasible and then the school came into contact with the homes where the children had to have access to knowledge, It is worth stopping to think that even these learners continue to use traditional ways of teaching, this situation delays the great transformations that are required, thus postponing the achievement of advances in the ways of teaching supported by technology.

Before moving on, it is important to recognize that the pandemic became an opportunity of high impact, especially for teachers in the process of education, because this chaos forced them to rethink their pedagogical action, leading them only to a teaching practice mediated by the use of electronic elements, because without them, it was definitely impossible to be developed the sessions, from all this it is recognized, It is recognized that in this way the professional training of these new teachers was strengthened, which together with the skills that this population has in the use of technological tools, allowed the development of this pedagogical space in times of pandemic, overcoming multiple adversities that were presented for its development, achieving at the same time to strengthen their creative and pedagogical ability during the advancement of the practice sessions.

To this end, Ramirez et al. [5] make a first approach to the advantages offered by electronic devices, rescuing its ease to establish an interaction and connection between subjects, in the particular case of the practice, during the pandemic the novices had to resort to devices such as cell phones, organizing WhatsApp groups, sending guides with novel and striking designs, which captured the attention of children and their parents thus facilitating teamwork between parent and child, similarly meetings were proposed through various platforms, Similarly, meetings were proposed through various platforms that facilitated communication between members of the school, giving a sense of proximity, empathy, solidarity and reciprocity among members of the educational communities, generating environments conducive to openness to the ways of carrying out the content, which increased should be flexible, to reevaluate and include other issues that became of considerable importance during the pandemic, which are related to emotional factors, environmental aspects and self-care and conservation of life during the pandemic.

Now we understand how Cardenas and Ramirez [6] emphasize the ease of use of electronic media, allowing interpersonal relationships to develop in virtual spaces mediated by devices, which can be accessed at any time, without the place where they take place being important, but the immediacy of their reaction to the message posted, especially in groups, who in times of pandemic, should be very aware of this means of communication, situation that allows to affirm that definitely the technology came to be incorporated in the school and it is almost impossible to get rid of it, for having become a facilitator of the pedagogical exercise, of the practicing teacher, it is clear that to achieve this it is necessary to have the devices and access to technology and connectivity, otherwise, this knowledge acquired in times of pandemic would be condemned to be forgotten and left aside completely in the school especially the public ones, which would be quite negative for the educational community.

From this idea it is clear that the State should definitely take ownership and responsibility for this situation because they are the main responsible for the knowledge developed and acquired by novice teachers to be promoted in post-pandemic times, as long as the conditions are met to carry it out in the real context of public schools and even more so in rural or distant schools that lack even electricity or facilities that promote access to technology.

In this regard, it should be said that the impact of digital tools has been very powerful in the development of teaching practices, where interaction in times of pandemic was only possible through the use of various facilitating devices of the school environment and the synchronous meeting of its members, as previously explained, and to which students in training had to be recursive in order to overcome the situation and comply with the institution carrying out their teaching practice even in adverse conditions.

# Influence of ICT in the education of future English teachers.

At the beginning of this reflection, it is worth noting that technology has become a fundamental element in all daily activities, from which the pedagogical processes that take place inside or outside the classroom have not escaped, and whose influence was mostly visible in times of pandemic.

In order to understand and explain the profound transformations that have taken place in education due to the impact of technology, it is necessary to mention digitization, as it goes hand in hand with the digital revolution, according to Carnero, Toscana and Díaz (2021), [7] has led to a profound transformation and a change in the pedagogical way of doing and acting of neophyte teachers, In the first instance, its incidence is noted in the space of teaching practice, where the neophyte teachers evidenced their training process and it is precisely here, where the opportunity to start implementing these various pedagogical models is given in such a circumstance.

In short, it is then a matter of facing the challenge of change that drives the proposal of new forms of pedagogical experiences based on technological elements, which in the case of foreign language teaching are being of great support, using advantages such as speed, economy and efficiency of technology recognized by Gonzalez et al. [7]

All this, not to mention the barrier of time and distance that is broken through the use of technology and the invisibility of physical classrooms, to give way to the use of platforms that, as explained by González et al (2021), [7] become very useful and welcome tools at all levels of language proficiency, without considering the variable of age, since many people can easily access this type of technological frameworks to learn any knowledge, highlighting in a notorious way, its usefulness at the time of learning a foreign language, without discriminating by social status, gender, age and time, for being quite beneficial and broadly inclusive.

On the other hand, as pointed out by Gonzalez et al [7], the possibility of asynchronous encounters, propitiated only by technology, is quite profitable, because by breaking the difficulties of both time and access to knowledge, the classic direct and face-to-face communication of the traditional school is challenged to enter into other new forms of communicative interaction mediated by various technological devices.

It is therefore accepted, as Julian de Zubiria says [1]that technology has forced teachers to adopt new teaching strategies, in order to reach especially those communities with difficult technological access, where despite the existence of multiple tools, they did not have access to knowledge, leaving latent the problem of disconnection that existed in many places in our country, however, However, there are many examples in which it is evident that teachers are able to overcome any difficulty that may arise, which is why many of them used other technological means, such as radio, printing, perifoneo, voice to voice and television, in order to ensure that children had access to knowledge, especially in those remote and difficult to access places, where technology and even basic services such as water and electricity were not available.

Admittedly, the reflections of Dr. Zubiria [1] who recognizes that during the pandemic, the educational community had to adopt new strategies and ways of imparting knowledge, so that they were within reach of the conditions in which students and their families lived, imposing the use of tools of public character, of easy access, whose existence was common in the homes of all families, talking about radio and television when they did not have a computer or a modern electronic device or

resorted to methodological alternatives such as learn at home or the teacher or to programs presented on institutional channels.

If this situation is considered globally, e recognize that this type of digital communication tools, proved to be more dynamic and friendly to the environment, facilitating the approach to knowledge, especially because in a very short time, teachers especially in the official educational sectors located in remote or peripheral areas that had very little technological access, were forced to incorporate television and radio programs to their content, This way, children were able to get to school without so much difficulty, knowing the low impact on the planet, when using these resources to access knowledge and six less I the impact on the planet especially when people chose to use means other than paper that has traditionally been very prominent in the classroom school and that reaches a great impact on natural resources.

It is worth mentioning that new government policies are required to allow access to technology to all populations, given that during the pandemic there was evidence of the incidence of lack of devices and lack of connectivity in homes, especially those of the less favored classes, who due to their economic condition did not have the opportunity to attend school, This fact has yet to be defined in terms of its impact on the learning of children, who had to be kept away from school due to their socioeconomic condition, revealing even more the existing gap between private and public schools and the few or no opportunities provided by the State to this type of population.

We delve a little deeper into this topic, to strengthen the idea of awareness of the need to move to much more sustainable and sustainable economies over time, as stated by Gracia-Blanco, [8] which during the pandemic became much more evident by generating the need to develop new skills that allow a better life, facilitated by the adaptation to the new changing and transforming reality, leading to an easy adaptation to the challenges faced by these new circumstances, which leads to be aware of the need to preserve and care for the planet, for future generations.

In fact, to analyze the environmental issue, which undoubtedly concerns us all, it is important to be approached with an open and adaptable vision, within which one must be aware of the essential role of teachers and educational staff, as well as parents, as they are key players in the response to the demand for care of the planet, in response to it, In response to this, the definition of the new emerging demands that arose as a result of the social and health pandemic in which we were involved was notorious, fact that led to rethink and readapt the development of school activities, shaping from one day to the next the curricular organization, the diversification of media, formats and platforms, in which the school could develop, always seeking inclusion and relevance.

These practices of the new school caused an undeniable change in all the agents involved in education, who were much more aware of the importance of collaboration, teamwork, as well as the orientation of activities that allowed the involvement of all members of the family, becoming at the same time an emotional support, which allowed to overcome the mental health of students and some members of their environment, to become a determining factor in today's society, during and after the pandemic to survive all the emotional shocks that were experienced during this time.

# Considerations about the teaching experience during the development of novice teachers' practice in times of pandemic.

In the first instance, it is suggested that their instruction should be based on the development of integral subjects, who have a broad capacity for analysis of the environment, so that they can propose and implement pedagogical strategies, with which they can respond to the needs of the context, the care of the planet, the conservation of species, in the research of adaptation to the environment that surrounds them.

This leads to consider the importance of its malleability, in the words of Cela et al. [9] teacher education should "contribute to the formation of new citizens for new challenges, with competencies in a constant process of redefinition in a changing context" (p.406). This argument suggests the need to consider this as a fundamental factor, especially because during the pandemic, the teacher had to adapt his pedagogical practice to a completely unknown model, almost overnight, a fact that also forced him to be creative, resilient and experimental, in order to reach his students.

It is also worth emphasizing the need to train teachers with a broad knowledge of technology, so that they can apply it in the development of their classes, which, according to Fuerte [10], indicates that education is required in a framework in which, Carneiro et al [11] emphasize the importance of the use of these tools, especially when they are immersed in the teaching practice, thus proposing the implementation of multimodal methodological approaches inside and outside the classroom, in classroom, virtual and asynchronous as well as synchronous modalities, that generate awareness of the care of the planet, avoiding the use of non-renewable materials and educating on how to be part of a society immersed in the use of technological devices, which become a central objective of any pedagogical exercise but always with caution not to generate dependence or state of slavery to the use of digital devices.

Let us now look at the teacher in training, seeing him as a subject with emotional needs who had to face all his economic and family shortages, desolation due to the loss of his relatives and in many cases even being victims of the symptoms of Covid-19 and not having the minimum health conditions to face them, however, his resilience capacity accompanied by his life purposes, allowed him to overcome these conditions that for many seemed impossible to be solved, but that the accompaniment and the listening attitude of the practical teaching director, the head of the subject and the children turned out to be invaluable for the overcoming of those emotional factors, which influenced their condition of being and their formation as sensitive teachers, facing their affective needs and those of their students, pushing them to continue their teaching practice in spite of their restrictions and personal complications.

It is important to note here the urgency of promoting the formation of values in future teachers in their dimension of being, in such a way that they are able to act with an emotional intelligence that allows them to connect with the other, but that at the same time leads them to proceed in a balanced and adequate way, facing the emotional needs of the students, Trujillo [12] addresses this point by highlighting the formation of skills and abilities that enable an assertive reaction capacity, explaining that the teacher must have a broad knowledge and adequate management of emotions, which allows him/her to have a socioemotional competence, to be able to understand his/her feelings, those of the children, of their caregivers and of all the people who are part of the school.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

In accordance with the objective of this research, a reflection was made on the incidence of the use of technology during and after the pandemic in a public elementary school, in a group of teachers in training who assumed the practice, analyzing the implications and scope considering Cruz (2004), [14] this study was approached considering the qualitative paradigm, whose central axis is the interpretation of the researcher based on a theoretical foundation with which it was sought to examine and decipher the observed phenomenon, for this, Ramirez et al. [5] who highlight the importance of the reflective look that the classroom researcher must have, when assuming this type of methodological approach.

#### **Population**

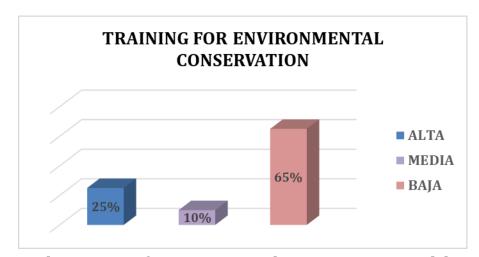
Regarding the population that took part in the study, there were 22 students of a bachelor's degree program in English, of which eight were men and fourteen women, whose age range ranged between 20 and 25 years, who participated for a period of one year, developing the teaching practice in an official school, whose space is part of the

curriculum of a bachelor's degree in classroom mode, in a public university in Bogotá, but who in times of pandemic went to asynchronous spaces.

As part of the methodological approach, it is pertinent to clarify that during the pedagogical practice, teachers approached readings that touched on the incidence of the digital era in the teaching practice, during and after the pandemic, after that, a survey was applied, considering the rationale presented by Ramirez et al. [5] who explain that this type of instrument is characterized by being easily accessible and simple to apply; In this instrument, the participants gave their opinion regarding various topics, showing how the digital topic was considered or not, within their education process, as future English teachers. Similarly, there was an asynchronous meeting space, considering this experience with an investigative look accompanied by a reflective and critical position, in which they sought to identify successes and failures, as well as the stumbling blocks identified as learning opportunities in the context of the development of this teaching practice, which were assisted by the director of teaching practice, in an asynchronous manner.

#### 3. ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

In addition, taking into account that one of the fundamental axes of discussion that the English teacher should consider is to advocate for a sustainable society for future generations, we inquired about the relationship between their training process and their practices for the care of the environment, graph one (1) shows to what extent they are being trained to face climate change and natural disasters.



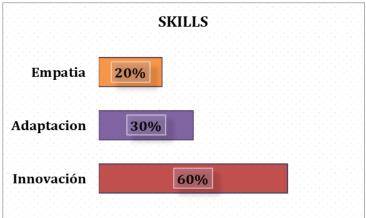
**Graph 1. Training for environmental conservation. Own elaboration** 

As shown in the graphic 1, 65% of those surveyed recognize the low level of training they receive in environmental issues, although it is pertinent to add that the interns are

aware of the role they play in changing the mentality regarding the management of climate change and its impact on the planet, from which it is clear that many of them proposed developing environmental issues in the English class, with the purpose of generating awareness of the risk that humanity runs by not taking care of the planet's resources.

Regarding this question, some clarify that they are being trained as critical individuals, even with all this, they realize that there is a lack of inclusion of relevant elements related to environmental issues, recognizing them as central axes of their training process, therefore they should be deepened throughout their curriculum, even more, some think that these topics are treated within the academic spaces in which they are immersed, but are unfortunately not applied in a real educational context of which they are part, showing themselves in agreement with the need to be included within the program that educates them, adducing one of the informants the following: "within my university education I have received multiple knowledge and within these about climate change and natural disasters... but I have not received training specifically on protocols for prevention and action in the face of a disaster." From this we can deduce, the low margin of information received by this student, in topics related to environmental awareness, which our educational communities currently require.

In addition, they were asked about the competencies and skills that should be fostered in the curriculum that educates them to be English teachers, in order to respond to the ever-changing needs of today's world. The results of their responses can be seen in graph 2.

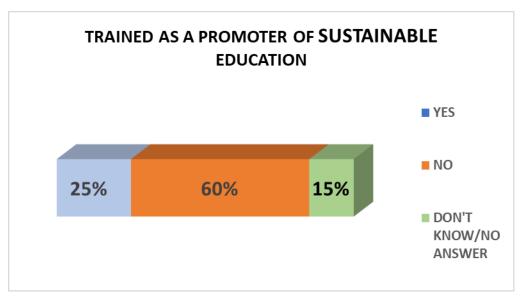


**Graph 2. Skills. Own elaboration** 

Attending to the results obtained on the subject of skills, the predominant one was innovation, with 50%, which according to the opinions collected, must be developed at the same time that new changes and technological advances arise in the educational context, so that, the novice English teacher is able to use all kinds of tools, as new technological advances arise; when arriving here it is worth mentioning Cela [9] who

recognizes that digital competence in teachers has become" a nuclear role in their teaching performance. " (p.406) from this statement highlights the importance of developing digital competence, within the programs that educate beginning teachers, so that they are able to generate changes and improvements, both in the artifacts they use, as well as in the processes and procedures arising from the use of technological tools, with which classes can be implemented and developed, in this way their use will become effective and useful, both for practicing teachers, as well as for trainees.

On the other hand, we sought to know if they are trained to be involved in sustainable education. The results of the opinions are shown in the graph 3.



Graph 3. Trained as a promoter of sustainable education. Own elaboration

From this figure 3, it can be observed that only 25% of the respondents accept that they are being trained as educators promoting sustainable education, the rest of them, which corresponds to 75%, do not consider it so, in that sense, some of them thought that their answer was due to the following specifications, among others: The curriculum offered by the degree focuses on training teachers with a high professional competence, but with a low awareness of the need for further studies, and with little concern for raising a change in the face of disturbing and urgent problems, of a structural change in the economic model that is developed in our country, thus there is no academic space, whose focus is the development of a teacher, who promotes a sustainable practice.

Finally, in this line of discussion, it is appropriate to refer to Cela [9] who defines that teacher training should be in pursuit of the construction of a new citizen, who seeks to meet the new challenges that society imposes, for which it requires competencies in constant transformation, facing the demands of a dynamic and constantly evolving context. It should also be noted that this author Cela [9] considers that digital

competence drives quality training in future teachers, which is developed in a framework of continuous change.

The thinker Zubiría [1] makes a very relevant approach regarding the basic skills and knowledge that the future teacher must have in relation to reading, writing, gratuity and listening that, according to his criteria, will serve as fundamental bases for the pedagogical actions of the novice to show the ability to adapt, empathy and acceptance for others and their environment, with communication and interaction based on dialogue, adding also the ability of self-management framed in the possibility of identifying successes and failures, leading to an opportunity for permanent improvement of their professional performance and not as a punishment, a situation approached in this way in some cases.

All of the above, together with the fact that teachers in training, when they are involved in a pedagogical activity within the school, must be involved in research processes that allow them to investigate and reflect on their work, leading them at the same time to share ideas, to be open to comments, criticism and willing to change, in any situation that may arise as part of a team that leads them to enrich the initiatives and proposals of each school institution.

## **CONCLUSION**

Of course this is a point to recognize that, although future teachers are aware that they must accommodate to change, it does not necessarily mean that they are willing to adapt to the conditions that the environment imposes on them, since it is noticeable that for many of them it is almost unattainable to establish a connection between both theoretical and practical elements.

With the aforementioned caveat, it is worth recognizing that the pandemic forced to leave that comfort zone, to have to rethink the entire pedagogical design that had been implemented slowly and had to be abruptly changed, making the teacher's activity more flexible to the demands of the school environment at that time and to the chaotic situations that in many cases it was difficult to handle, both to exercise his role as a teacher in training, as well as for children and parents, who had to assume different roles.

At this point of the meditations, the convulsed world in which it was immersed at this time, and that at present even in the aftermath of this process, demands to be aware of the need to educate a teacher with great capacity to assume changes, accompanied by a comprehensive training that leads him/her to be proactive and flexible in his/her pedagogical actions, with an inquiring and critical look, thus allowing

him/her to open a range of possibilities from research in every situation that arises inside or outside the school, and that concerns his/her actions and his/her condition of being a teacher.

It is worth noting that in university programs that educate teachers, the beginning of teaching practices takes place from the first semesters, a fact that allows them to have the opportunity to contrast the real contexts where their professional performance will occur later on, strengthening their research perspective, breaking the imaginary that they bring, to allow them to establish from the first semesters what will be their field of action, channeling it to seek a comprehensive teaching profile.

This recapitulation leads us to affirm that, in the current technological change, it is indispensable for future teachers to strengthen their knowledge in this field, in such a way that they put it within reach of their professional performance, taking into account that they must constantly be updated in the use and application of technologies in language teaching.

Finally, it highlights the need to be aware of how our existence and the actions we take affect the planet, a reason that makes us think about the leading role of future teachers in proposing alternatives that contribute to slowing down the deterioration of our environment, seeking alternatives that prevent the advance of this damage to the planet, to become participants, protagonists and beneficiaries of a change, however small it may be, that will promote the care of the environment.

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