

# ADJUNCT INSTRUCTORS: GENESIS OF A CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

PROFESORES DE CÁTEDRA: GÉNESIS DE UN PROGRAMA DE DESARROLLO PROFESIONAL

ENSEIGNANTS VACATAIRES: GENÈSE D'UN PROGRAMME DE DÉVELOPPEMENT PROFESSIONNEL CONTINU

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## ABSTRACT

Professional development programs (PDP) at the university level have been designed for full-time professors with the aim of enhancing their knowledge and practices. However, PDP programs focused on adjunct foreign language (AFL) instructors are not usually developed because of time, space, and contract constraints. In this article, we present a PDP that resulted from program restructuring targeting AFL instructors in a specific section at a public university in Colombia. The program is guided by a practical-critical paradigm and is divided into four “families of models” adapted from Joyce & Calhoun (2010): individual support, construction of personal and professional service, social knowledge, and instructional and curricular initiatives. Each model comprises many strategies, including the following: selection, induction, mentoring, peer-coaching, coaching, study groups, communities of practice, chats, training sessions, teacher portfolios and action research. The aim of the program is to promote the participation and involvement of AFL instructors for the enhancement of informed practices and experiences based on theory and enriching relationships with administrators and among colleagues.

**Keywords:** continuing professional development, adjunct foreign language instructors, practical-critical paradigm, professional development models, professional development strategies

## RESUMEN

Los programas de desarrollo profesional docente se ofrecen en las universidades, especialmente a profesores de tiempo completo, con la intención de mejorar su conocimiento y sus prácticas. No obstante, los programas de desarrollo profesional ofrecidos a profesores de lenguas extranjeras bajo la modalidad de cátedra no se desarrollan a menudo por diferentes circunstancias relacionadas principalmente con el tiempo, el espacio y el tipo de contrato. En este artículo presentamos un programa de desarrollo profesional que nació de la reestructuración de una iniciativa de desarrollo docente que ya existía y que pretende incluir a todos los profesores de cátedra por medio de cuatro familias de modelos: apoyo individual, servicio personal y profesional, construcción social del conocimiento, e iniciativas instruccionales y curriculares. Cada modelo comprende diferentes estrategias: selección, inducción, mentoría, apoyo entre pares, acompañamiento individualizado, grupos

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de estudio, comunidades de práctica, conversatorios, capacitaciones, portafolio docente e investigación acción. El programa está guiado por un paradigma práctico-crítico que combina la práctica, la reflexión y la acción. Nuestro propósito es incentivar la participación y compromiso de los profesores de cátedra de lenguas extranjeras para promover prácticas informadas, experiencias basadas en la teoría y relaciones enriquecedoras con los administradores y entre colegas.

**Palabras clave:** desarrollo profesional continuo, profesores de cátedra, paradigma práctico-crítico, modelos de desarrollo profesional, estrategias de desarrollo profesional

## RÉSUMÉ

Dans les universités, les programmes de développement professionnel des enseignants sont offerts en particulier aux enseignants ayant un contrat permanent avec l'intention d'améliorer leurs savoirs et leurs pratiques. Toutefois les enseignants vacataires ne peuvent profiter de ces programmes étant donné le type de contrat auquel ils sont soumis et donc le temps dont ils disposent. Dans cet article, nous en présentons une version créée à partir de la restructuration d'un programme de développement personnel déjà existant. Cette nouvelle version prétend accueillir tous les professeurs vacataires en leur offrant quatre modalités: soutien individuel, encadrement personnel et professionnel, construction sociale de savoirs, initiatives pédagogiques et curriculaires. Chaque modalité propose différentes stratégies: sélection, induction, encadrement, soutien de la part des pairs, accompagnement personnalisé, communautés de pratique, groupes de discussion, formation continue, portfolio des enseignants et recherche-action. Un paradigme pratique et critique structure ce programme en combinant la pratique, la réflexion et l'action. Notre objectif est d'encourager la participation et l'engagement des enseignants vacataires en langues étrangères afin de promouvoir des pratiques éclairées, des expériences basées sur la théorie et des relations enrichissantes avec les administrateurs et leurs collègues.

**Mots-clés :** développement professionnel continu, enseignants vacataires, paradigme pratique-critique, modèles de développement professionnel, stratégies de développement professionnel

## Background

The continuing professional development program (CPDP) described in this article was developed at a language school at a public university in Colombia. The language school encompasses two undergraduate programs, one outreach program, and one extension program. The outreach program offers English, French, Italian, German, Turkish, Portuguese, Japanese, and Chinese language courses aimed at undergraduate and graduate students at the university. The outreach program was the first to have the CPDP implemented. In 2013, both the outreach program and the language school approved the proposal for a professional development program (PDP) that fit the descriptions of Díaz-Maggioli (2003), Head and Taylor (1997), and Lozano Correa (2008), as cited in Gómez Palacio, who says the PDP should be

a continuous process in which a teacher makes reflections, thinks about his/her teaching practices, identifies his/her abilities to perform different activities, and what he or she is capable to learn by himself or herself in order to voluntarily make changes in his/her teaching practices. In this process, the teacher discovers his or her true professional self—something that cannot be carried out without the firm awareness that a shift must be made in his/her professional inner self and not only as a result of external agents' influence. (Gómez Palacio, 2014, p. 6)

The program is still running, and includes professional development strategies such as chats, mentoring, coaching, and training sessions. The aim of the chats (conversation groups) is to open a space for adjunct foreign language (AFL) instructors to talk about their own business, as, according to Zepeda (2008), conversation groups have the quality of being controlled by the participants (p. 5). Chats have mainly focused on foreign language (FL) instructors' training and educational needs, which shape the agenda.

When adjunct instructors feel that there are some topics that should be addressed in privacy, they

make an appointment to speak with the coordinator. The PDP coordinator—who happens, in this case, to be not only a FL instructor, but also a certified professional coach—runs coaching sessions when adjunct instructors ask for private conversations. These sessions are intended for AFL instructors who have encountered constraints in achieving their professional advancement goals.

Training sessions and workshops have also been part of the program. They are held once per semester and are prepared by other coordinators working for the outreach section and by the faculty committee. Members of the faculty committee are welcome to suggest topics for discussion at the training sessions since they are aware of both the AFL instructors' needs and institutional changes.

On December 14, 2014, the academic council of the university issued *Acuerdo Académico 467*, which established a new FL policy, and the new Institutional Foreign Language Program (*Programa Institucional de Lengua Extranjera*) was created. This program is managed by the School of Languages' outreach section. Afterwards, the faculty committee approved the CPDP for the Institutional Foreign Language Program. In 2015, prior to the implementation of the program, the theoretical foundations of the new CPDP were laid out. The same year, a PDP team was put together to work on the following activities:

- To diagnose the English as a foreign language (EFL) program provided by the School of Languages to faculty from other departments and the university's administrative staff. The results were presented to the coordinators of the outreach section.
- To write the CPDP master document
- To support the coordinators in charge of administrative issues, curriculum, evaluation, online courses, and professional development

to create five training modules for prospective FL instructors (Introductory Module, Training Module, e-Moderation and Online Assignments Module, Evaluation Module, and Teacher Professional Development Module<sup>1</sup>). These modules were created in addition to the CPDP.

The diagnosis of the EFL program aided university faculty and administrators in determining the state of the program, whose coordinating post had remained vacant for over a year. To carry out the diagnosis, a questionnaire was created using the Google Forms tool and sent to all adjunct English instructors in the program. Focus groups were conducted with adjunct English instructors, two former coordinators, a former manager of the outreach section, as well as an administrative employee. The results highlighted the need to restructure the EFL program for university faculty.

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Regarding the master document for the CPDP, two members of the PDP team completed two tasks simultaneously: creation of the profile for the outreach section's prospective AFL instructors, and gathering literature to support the CPDP proposal. An annotated bibliography with sixty-two resources (according to our file in the drive uploaded in May 2015) was created with all the information that would be needed to support the CPDP. This information was useful for specifying the professional development models and strategies that frame the program presented in this article.

The PDP team supported the coordinators who designed the five teacher development modules for the new EFL program by providing a module format that guided the creation of the academic

pieces. Moreover, meetings were carried out to exchange ideas, clarify doubts and discuss other issues related to the creation, implementation, and evaluation of both on-campus and virtual modules. By the second semester of 2016, the faculty committee (PDP team and program coordinators) finished the modules, and on-campus workshop sessions were then planned and presented to AFL instructors who responded to the invitation to participate in the professional development opportunity. Twenty AFL instructors attended the on-campus teacher workshop modules and finished the induction process for the Institutional Foreign Language Program (Programa Institucional de Formación en Lengua Extranjera) satisfactorily in 2016, and by 2017, the virtual classroom with the modules was ready to be launched. Up to now, 22 more AFL instructors have finished the modules for a total of 42 instructors. The groups in the virtual classroom have reached the maximum of 20 participants due to high demand for all modules. These modules are a prerequisite for AFL instructors to become English instructors in the new EFL Program.

The PDP team also created a document containing information about prospective personnel processes and functions. Under the title "Characterization of the Functions of the Services and Extension Area, Teacher Professional Development Program, Language School, University of Antioquia, 2015,"<sup>2</sup> this document describes the duties and assignments of the department head, each of the coordinators' working roles, and the different tasks they should perform in their respective positions in the outreach section.

1 The following are the original names of the modules in Spanish: *Módulo Introductorio*, *Módulo de Formación*, *Módulo de e-Moderación y tareas en línea*, *Módulo de Evaluación* and *Módulo de Formación y desarrollo profesional docente*.

2 The following is the original name of the document in Spanish: *Caracterización de las funciones del Área de Servicios y Extensión, Programa de Desarrollo Profesional Docente, Escuela de Idiomas, Universidad de Antioquia, 2015*

For the completion of all the above-mentioned activities, the PDP team worked in small groups. While two PDP team members were working on the diagnosis of the EFL program, another two members worked on the master document. They

all got together as a team to report their successes and constraints and to exchange feedback. Table 1 shows the team members (using pseudonyms) and their affiliation with the university, years of working experience, and assignments within the team.

**Table 1** PDP Team Members

Team members	Affiliation with the university	Years of working experience	Assignment within the team
Professor Velásquez	Tenured professor	20 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create the proposal</li> <li>• Coordinate the PDP</li> <li>• Coordinate the team</li> <li>• Write the PDP master document</li> <li>• Do teacher characterization</li> <li>• Support “Módulo introductorio”</li> <li>• Create “Módulo de Formación y Desarrollo Profesional Docente”</li> </ul>
Professor Martínez	Provisional professor	9 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate the EFL program for different faculty and administrative personnel within the university</li> <li>• Diagnose the EFL program for different faculty and administrative personnel within the university</li> <li>• Create the document <i>Caracterización de las funciones del Área de Servicios y Extensión, Programa de Desarrollo Profesional Docente, Escuela de Idiomas, Universidad de Antioquia, 2015</i></li> <li>• Give feedback on documents written by the team</li> <li>• Support “Módulo de e-Moderación y tareas en línea</li> <li>• Create “Módulo de Formación y Desarrollo Profesional Docente”</li> </ul>
Professor Gaviria	Provisional professor	18 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an online community of practice</li> <li>• Give feedback on documents written by the team</li> <li>• Create “Módulo de Formación y Desarrollo Profesional Docente”</li> </ul>
Professor Vélez	Adjunct instructor	14 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create the annotated bibliography</li> <li>• Write the PDP main document</li> <li>• Give feedback on documents written by the team</li> <li>• Support “Módulo introductorio”</li> <li>• Create “Módulo de Formación y Desarrollo Profesional Docente”</li> </ul>
Professor Agudelo	Adjunct instructor	18 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnose the EFL program for different faculty and administrative personnel within the university</li> <li>• Do teacher characterization</li> <li>• Give feedback on documents written by the team</li> <li>• Support “Módulo de Evaluación”</li> <li>• Create “Módulo de Formación y Desarrollo Profesional Docente”</li> </ul>

When designing or restructuring a CPDP for AFL instructors, it is necessary to take into consideration the specific circumstances and features of the instructors' working life at the university. Time, spaces, and contexts vary between instructors and professors according to the nature of their affiliation, such as paid-by-the-hour or tenured. Differences may also be found within the same rank, considering the students, programs, and places in which they teach. For this program, we took into consideration a definition of professional development, a paradigm that defines the philosophical principles for the program, four professional development models, and several professional development strategies that make it possible to extend the support of the outreach section to more faculty members.

### Continuing Professional Development

According to Díaz-Maggioli (2003), professional development is a continuous and evolving learning process, encompassing "self-disclosure, reflection, and professional and personal growth" (p. 1). This kind of program should be maintained over time in communities of practice because the definition frames a goal of offering a program that is not a one-shot training but an ongoing accompanying effort for teachers to advance their career at their institution.

This does not mean that training sessions are not held, but instead that additional strategies are presented to keep up instructors' investment in their own learning and advancement after attending workshops or training sessions. All of this is encompassed in nested pedagogical orientations, as proposed by Cummins (2009). He considers training necessary as a way to broadcast information and skills through a transmission-oriented approach. Moreover, he proposes a social constructivist approach in which training is included and extended by enhancing higher-order thinking abilities (e.g., creation of new knowledge, the co-construction learning approach, and collaborative inquiry). Finally, he puts forward a transforma-

tive approach, which comprises transmission-oriented and social constructivist approaches by gaining insight into how knowledge intersects with power, and how realities might be transformed through social action (Cummins, 2009, p. 43).

Echoing our vision of the CPDP, Head and Taylor (1997) define professional development as a process focused on teachers' personal awareness and willingness to generate changes, that is, as a self-reflective process to challenge old habits that requires self-motivation. In the same vein, Díaz-Maggioli (2003) and Head and Taylor (1997) emphasize the importance of teachers' willingness to participate in these types of programs.

Teachers should receive orientation on the most needed elements for their professional and personal interests. Even though some information is to be provided in workshops or training sessions, any doubt or interest arising from them are to be worked out with teachers through more personalized activities, as described in the following sections.

### The Search for a Paradigm

The professional development program followed a practical-critical approach inspired by Alonso (1994) and Cárdenas, González, and Álvarez (2010). Alonso (1994) proposed technical, practical, and critical paradigms in professional development programs. The technical paradigm is addressed to teachers who, according to Alonso (1994), are worried about how to do what one is told to do (p. 1). They think an expert is the person who knows and says what needs to be done. Faculty who are guided by this paradigm are very efficient in their job, but do not question why some tasks must be done. A professional development program under the technical paradigm regards teachers as individuals who need to be trained, and gain a pre-established knowledge, which in turn needs to be conveyed to students in the same way as it was acquired by teachers. This paradigm focuses mainly on the cognitive and

individualistic aspects of the teacher, overlooking teamwork and/or interpersonal skills development, such as competences required to teach and develop professionally.

As to the practical paradigm, it sees teachers as thoughtful individuals who are concerned about their education and about looking for alternatives that better meet their students' needs. Language teachers would analyze their context and use the information to select actions that create a better way for their students to learn the language. In the practical paradigm, teachers are flexible individuals who are able to reconsider their teaching styles and adopt new methods (Alonso, 1994). They even consider the possibility of challenging their own beliefs and pedagogical assumptions (Fullan, 1982).

Under the critical paradigm, teachers are regulated by the practical paradigm but are also conscious of the limitations that the impositions of that system involve (Alonso, 1994, p. 5). Thus, teachers not only reflect on their practices, but also the context in which they work, and how that context and the conditions surrounding them hinder or ease their professional and personal development.

Likewise, in the critical paradigm, the learning community is participative and democratic; it reflects on itself and is committed to education development (Carr & Kemmis, 1998). This means that in a professional development program that is ruled by a critical paradigm, teamwork promotion and development are a must.

The practical-critical paradigm adopted for the present CPDP takes some features from both the practical and critical approaches and fuses them to create one that better adapts to our context. As stated by Cárdenas et al. (2010), a practical-critical paradigm intends to generate a dialectical exchange between reflection and action in which the teacher reflects on his/her teaching practice to learn from it, adopts a critical position regarding

his/her social reality, then proposes individual and collective changes.

*Conditions for the application of a practical-critical paradigm in a CPDP*

In consonance with Cárdenas et al. (2010), a professional development program under a practical-critical paradigm must meet certain conditions (p. 56), which are listed below.

First, the program will be structured based on the teachers' academic, working, and personal needs, as well as the specific context of the university.

Second, teachers' growth will be based on knowledge acquired from their experience. The program will enhance processes of reflection upon their pedagogical practice and seek to ensure the continuity of these processes over time.

Third, a collective construction of knowledge will be promoted. In addition to this, teachers' growth by means of dialogue (chats) and collaboration is to be enhanced, so that there can be an impact on teachers' pedagogical practices and consequently their students' learning.

Fourth, the program will strive for an equilibrium between practice and theory so that, as proposed by Kumaravadivelu (2003), a theory about practice can be generated from reflection and action (p. 35). Similarly, the CPDP will help make teachers' practices and decisions informed and contextualized (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 28). The establishment of groups with similar interests and academic communities will also be encouraged among teachers (Cárdenas et al., 2010, p. 56) through models and strategies to be explained below.

Fifth, the program will support action-research processes among teachers as a professional development strategy (Cárdenas et al., 2010; Hismanoglu, 2010; Kennedy, 2005; Zepeda, 2011) so that teachers may generate new knowledge that can, in turn, be applied in the classroom (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 35).

Sixth, the program will seek to develop autonomy in teachers in different aspects, such as affective, intellectual, cultural and social. As stated in the definition, emphasis will be placed upon the voluntary nature of teachers' participation in the activities carried out (Cárdenas et al., 2010, p. 53).

Seventh, the scope of the evaluation of the program will be focused on the process rather than on the results (Cárdenas et al., 2010, p. 53). It is important to consider that the CPDP is expected to be a long-term program. Therefore, it is more suitable to expect a planned, reflective, and ongoing process that makes room for teachers' performance improvement using the proposed strategies, rather than an immediate result.

Finally, coaching, study groups, communities of practice, and other strategies will be developed to overcome the *expert paradigm* (Cárdenas et al., 2010, p. 53), which considers that only some professionals are owners of knowledge in a certain area, in this case professional development. In such a way, all teachers may become sources of information, experiences, and ideas, as well as providers of constructive feedback for their peers.

In conformity with this paradigm, the CPDP of the outreach section proposes a mixed model comprising different strategies to suit adjunct instructors' professional and personal development. We will describe in detail each of the models and strategies supported by theory, explaining how they may be implemented for adjunct instructors' continuing professional development.

### Professional Development Models and Strategies

In this section, we will present the four "families of models" to be implemented in the CPDP, which is currently under reform at the aforementioned public university: 1) supporting the individual, 2) professional and personal services, 3) social construction of knowledge and action, and 4) curricular/instructional initiatives (Joyce & Calhoun, 2010). Those models arose from the

literature review that we conducted, and at this time we have not implemented all of them. This is a methodological article; although it is not based on research, it shows the genesis of the program and how it was created. It describes how a program was conceived for a group of teachers with unique features and constraints that had not been sufficiently addressed by past research. We offer an innovative methodology for the creation of a CPDP for AFL instructors.

Regarding the strategies we have implemented so far, we can say that they have worked well. The chats, for example, have been used since 2013 to inform AFL instructors about the modification of the university language policy. Teachers have discussed several topics, including the following: *distress that the new policy brings; andragogy vs. pedagogy; AFL instructors' feelings regarding the new policy change; coaching as a strategy for change; university agreement 0467, 2014; transitioning from the four-abilities program to the institutional program; and a chats evaluation.*

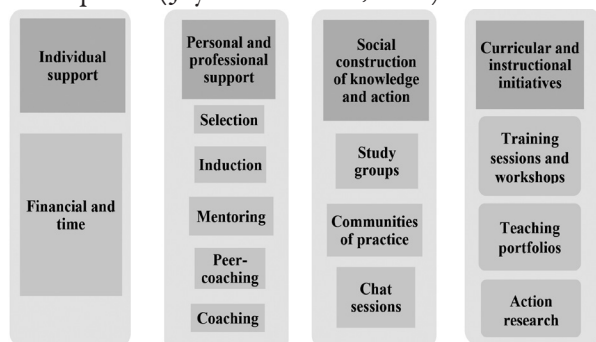
The coaching sessions conducted as a strategy for the AFL instructors' professional development generated the idea of carrying out a research project because visits from AFL instructors to the coordinator to discuss their issues have tremendously increased over the years. The demand of the instructors to be heard by the PDP coordinator led the head of the department, the PDP coordinator, and an advisor from the human resources office to decide that the PDP coordinator would be able to hear only two instructors per semester and address their issues.

The mentoring program inspired an article that a mentor and mentee were writing together by the time we submitted this article. Additionally, the training sessions that have been carried out since 2013 have helped AFL instructors understand what changes the new language policy has brought to the university's FL programs. These are some of the workshop sessions we have offered to AFL instructors: The Role of Rubrics



in Formative Evaluation (Picón Jácome, 2013); English for Academic Purposes: A Proposal for the Services Section Courses (Quinchía Ortiz, 2013); Coaching as a Strategy for Change (Gómez Palacio, 2014); Classroom Projects (Tordecilla Espitia, 2015)<sup>3</sup>; Figure 1 shows the “families of models” we adapted from Joyce and Calhoun (2010). Following the figure, we explain each model and strategy.

**Figure 1** Models and strategies for teacher professional development (Joyce & Calhoun, 2010)



### *Supporting the individual*

Under this model, teachers are supported with time and money by the institution at which they work to attend academic events or enroll in continuous education. Paid leave, permissions and fees are included in this model (Joyce & Calhoun, 2010, p. 10). The program intends to provide teachers with information about the opportunities and benefits of attending academic events locally, nationally and abroad. In addition, discounts are available for enrolling in postgraduate studies at the university, as well as opportunities to participate in sports and cultural events, among others.

### *Professional and personal services*

In this model, some instructors or administrative staff are charged with the task of supporting

other instructors who may need to improve in a specific area. This type of support can be open or structured. Current plans are for the model to move from a supervisory mode to a collegial mode (Joyce & Calhoun, 2010, p. 10). The strategies comprising this model are explained below:

### *Selection*

Two processes will be carried out during the selection process, namely, a curriculum vitae and certification review, and an interview that allows administrators to identify the candidate teachers' profile. This calls for an array of domains and strategies proposed by Strong and Hindman (2003), as explained below.

1. Professional requirements including content knowledge, certifications, and pedagogical knowledge.
2. The teacher as a person: having a positive attitude, being reflective, and showing high expectations regarding themselves and their students.
3. Classroom management and organization: more than silence and perfect order, finding out what strategies the teachers implement for having an appropriate and productive learning environment.
4. Accuracy in teaching: establishing priorities, setting suitable class objectives, and developing class activities to help students achieve the objectives; creating situations in which students feel confident to take risks; using the target language in any situation.
5. Teaching performance: inquiring about how the teacher leads the classes in a way that ensures students' needs become the focus of the class through strategies such as problem solving, guided practice, apposite feedback, etc.
6. Monitoring and evaluation: finding out how the instructor checks students' progress to ensure the teaching process suits individual

<sup>3</sup> The following are the original names of the training sessions in Spanish: *El rol de las rúbricas en la evaluación formativa* (Picón Jácome, 2013); *Inglés con propósitos académicos: Una propuesta para los cursos de la Sección de Servicios* (Quinchía Ortiz, 2013); *El coaching como estrategia de cambio* (Gómez Palacio, 2014); *Proyectos de aula* (Tordecilla Espitia, 2015).

needs and allows them to overcome difficulties and strengthen skills.

In the same way, Strong and Hindman (2003) suggest that the interview ask instructors about their participation in professional development programs and how the programs have influenced their teaching practices. It should also inquire about how they create an appropriate learning environment and ask them to describe the main components of their classes and how they organize them. Instructors should be expected to talk about the activities carried out inside the classroom and how they relate to the proposed objectives.

Strong and Hindman (2003) also propose microteaching activities; however, due to limitations regarding time and resources, it will not be applied in the outreach section's selection process for candidate instructors.

#### *Induction*

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An effective induction is a systematic process carried out to address the personal and professional needs of novice teachers or newly arrived teachers (Gold, 1996). As stated by Wong (2002), an adequate induction process is the best way to support, develop and enhance a learning attitude that is sustained over time by teachers. It is necessary to develop an induction process consistent with both the institution and teachers' needs. This induction must be related to teaching-learning processes and legal issues regarding employee rights and duties. Furthermore, an induction process allows incoming teachers to meet different members of the institution, making their adaptation easier and more productive. Likewise, it is a good opportunity for people at the institution to get to know the person who is joining the faculty and is a valuable chance to identify skills and knowledge or aspects that may need some improvement. Five teacher training modules were created to provide induction to new AFL instructors who will be part of the faculty of the university's new Institutional Foreign Language Program (Programa Institucional de

Formación en Lengua Extranjera). The five modules are introduction, formation, e-Moderation and online tasks, evaluation, and the teacher CPDP.

#### *Mentoring*

This strategy brings together one experienced and knowledgeable teacher with a teacher who is new to the position, profession, or institution (Butcher, 2002; Díaz-Maggioli, 2003; Clutterbuck, 1991 as cited in Kennedy, 2005). The mentor may provide advice, support, stimuli, and model strategies to the other teacher, and offers opportunities to reflect on the experience and the process itself (Díaz-Maggioli, 2003). Both new and seasoned teachers will have an opportunity to receive mentoring from another teacher who has more experience in aspects related to the job. Like the other strategies, this one is not compulsory. What is important, however, is for institutions to make mentoring available to faculty who feel the need to be guided in certain aspects of their profession. We hope that they take advantage of this type of process in both roles: as a mentor or as a mentee.

#### *Peer-coaching*

This strategy differs from mentoring in that, here, both instructors have similar education backgrounds, experiences and interests. Under this strategy, both teachers support each other by means of a three-phase accompanying practice—planning, observation and feedback—by following the clinical supervision model proposed by Cogan (1973) as cited in Díaz-Maggioli (2003). Benefits include the following: avoiding teacher isolation, establishing collaboration rules, building knowledge together, sharing successful practices, and promoting reflective practices (Thorn, McLeod & Goldsmith, 2007, as cited in Hismanoglu, 2010, p. 922).

#### *Coaching*

Coaching consists in helping people identify their skills, tools, and available resources for increasing their potential so they can achieve what they want

and reach the desired place or state. According to Whitmore (2009), a coach can be any professional who has a certification in coaching and who is willing to help other people. A coach helps the coachee to find better resources and different alternatives, challenges the coachee through tasks, and helps the coachee aligns his/her life with his/her expectations. A coach is expected to have certain qualifications and qualities, such as having a certification in coaching techniques, and having knowledge, experience, credibility and authority. On the other hand, the coachee is expected to be a person who is willing to change, who wants to explore his/her beliefs and who is willing to commit with his/her actions (Cubeiro, 2011). By means of educational coaching, an AFL instructor can develop different abilities relevant to his/her profession, e.g., leadership, teamwork, creativity, and innovation, among others (Bou Pérez, 2007, as cited in Lozano Correa, 2008, p. 133).

### *Social construction of knowledge and action*

In this model, learning communities are an essential component in teachers' professional development (Joyce & Calhoun, 2010, p. 13). Study groups, communities of practice, and action research are part of this model. The strategies included in this particular model are study groups, communities of practice, and action research.

#### *Study groups*

Study groups are made up of teachers and/or administrators willing to share ideas, plan lessons, analyze student artifacts, and even discuss education policies (Murphy, 1992, p. 72). Another activity to be done in study groups is analyzing and discussing literature about the profession and related topics. In the context of FL education, these groups encourage FL teachers' interaction and communication in the language they teach (Díaz-Maggioli, 2003). Study groups favor teacher reflection over teaching-learning processes developed by teachers in the classroom in the teachers' courses.

### *Communities of practice*

These are groups of professionals who share interests, passions, challenges, or concerns related to a specific topic, aiming to deepen their knowledge and expertise in a certain area and interacting on a continuous basis (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). In the case of FL teachers' professional development, communities of practice offer a valuable opportunity to share ideas about curricular development, lesson planning, materials' creation, and evaluation, among others. Beyond onsite communities of practice, there are virtual communities of practice, which emerged as a result of the need to communicate and integrate information and communication technology (ICT).

#### *Chat sessions*

As stated by Zepeda (2008), chat sessions have the wonderful quality of being controlled by all the participants. In these sessions, teachers interact informally, discussing different topics related to the profession and the context in which they work. Along with the adjunct instructors belonging to a foreign language section at the Colombian public university, these chat sessions have been held since 2013.

### *Curricular and instructional initiatives*

In this model, training sessions and workshops are an important part of the professional development process. Usually, new teaching methods or curricular modifications are shared in these gatherings (Joyce & Calhoun, 2010, p. 13). The initiatives include teaching portfolios and action research as strategies for the teachers' professional development.

#### *Training sessions or workshops*

This is a professional development strategy in which teachers come together to acquire knowledge about a specific topic. For the purposes of this CPDP, English, methodology and teaching techniques are the focus of learning (Head & Taylor, 1997, p. 9). Training sessions or workshops offer

the possibility of sharing new or relevant information that is meaningful for all professionals in a given field. In addition to this, these spaces make it possible to integrate different members in a specific time and place and create and sustain interpersonal and professional relationships that continue over time through study groups, communities of practice, or less formal practices.

Joyce & Calhoun (2010) propose two types of training sessions. One is horizontal transference, and the other is vertical transference. On the one hand, horizontal transference refers to a transition that is easily made between what teachers learn in the training session and what they do in the classroom. Teachers do not need to apply many adaptations or changes because what they see in the workshops can be effortlessly put into practice or is already in their teaching repertoire. On the other hand, vertical transference refers to activities that cannot be implemented in the classroom in the same way it is proposed in the training sessions or workshops. This is due to the fact that teachers need to not only put the ideas learned into practice, but also adapt some aspects to their contexts, their teaching and even their beliefs to be able to implement what they have come to know. For instance, a teacher who is not used to implementing inductive models will likely need to develop other types of materials, activities, and instruction to guide his/her students in this new model (Joyce & Calhoun, 2010, p. 101).

In addition to this, the training sessions will be guided by the nested pedagogical orientation proposed by Cummins (2009). In this orientation, there are three approaches that broaden and deepen the knowledge that teachers acquire. First, the transmission-oriented approach, whose goal is to transmit information and skills during the workshops or training sessions. Second, the socio-constructivist approach, in which the information and skills obtained are enriched by including the development of higher-order thinking abilities such as knowledge, understanding, co-construction, and collaborative inquiry. Third, the

transformative approach, which helps trainees to gain insight into how knowledge intersects with power, and how realities might be transformed through social action (Cummins, 2009, p. 69).

### *Teaching portfolio*

“A portfolio is a systematic collection of teaching artifacts and reflections” (Díaz-Maggioli, 2003, p. 2). Portfolios offer documented evidence of the teaching-learning process that teachers perform in a specific context. They allow teachers to reflect on the content and activities of their courses. In addition to materials and personal reflections, portfolios may include student artifacts. In our program, portfolios are expected to be a personal tool as well as a form of community support: personal because the teachers will be able to reflect on their job, their weaknesses, their strengths, and how their teaching practice evolves over time; and community support because the materials included in the portfolio may be shared among colleagues by means of a materials bank or community of practice to enrich others’ classes and enhance their students’ learning.

### *Action research*

According to Ferrance (2000) as cited in Hismanoglu (2010), in action research participants systematically examine their own educative process and implement research techniques. Through a professional development strategy, teachers focus on the difficulties they have identified and work autonomously or collaboratively to resolve those situations. Some steps for performing an action-research project are selecting a place to carry out the research, identifying something the teacher wants to change, deciding on appropriate tools for collecting the data, collecting the data, and analyzing the results based on the initial objectives (Nunan, 1992, as cited in Hismanoglu, 2010).

The main advantage of action research, as stated by Fandiño (2006), is the enhancement of reflection on professional and social practices, behaviors, and beliefs. Moreover, this strategy

contributes to one of the most important objectives for the teachers who participate in the PDP, which is moving from acknowledging and understanding difficult situations to committed actions that improve practices and processes to solve the problems that were identified.

## Conclusion

The professional development models and strategies proposed by the authors whose work framed the creation of this program, such as Díaz-Maggioli, 2003; Hismanoglu, 2010; Joyce & Calhoun, 2010; Kennedy, 2005; and Zepeda, 2011, offer a variety of options for AFL instructors who need alternatives that can be adapted to their specific contexts. In our particular case, the possibilities for teacher professional development were conceived and practically tailored to fulfill teachers' expectations and necessities regarding time, space, and interests. These strategies aim to promote our teachers' integral development (González, Pulido, & Díaz, 2005); their constant support and professional reflection as well as a more efficient diffusion of information (Kumaravadivelu, 2003); increased teacher participation; and a humanizing teaching style that redounds to teachers' personal and professional benefit (Díaz-Maggioli, 2003, p. 4).

It is essential to bear in mind that the CPDP at this public university's outreach section focuses on both professional and personal aspects because it regards teachers as human beings who are made up of feelings, emotions, perceptions, identities, academic training, work experience, professional development needs and interests, and all other aspects connected among them. As stated earlier in this methodological paper, these are the reasons for the selection of the paradigm, models, and strategies of the program. The practical-critical paradigm proposed by Cárdenas et al. (2010) and Alonso (1994) guides this professional development program and intends to lead teachers towards a different perspective about teaching and learning. AFL instructors may become active

and critical participants in a context where their role in higher education is not only to teach a different language, but to have access to different information and be able to analyze it critically. It also provides students with tools for questioning current practices and decisions regarding their education, so their voices can be heard and taken into account, including for the teachers' own personal and professional growth.

Although the design of this continuing professional development program is not the result of a systematic research study, it is the result of a literature review, considerable reflection, and a group discussion among teachers, both tenured and adjunct, guided by their coordinator's criteria. Furthermore, with the design of the program, a characterization of the teachers currently working at the outreach section was developed to identify the faculty's profiles, characteristics, and needs. This characterization was crucial for presenting the proposal of the CPDP we discussed in this article. In the meantime, the objective of the faculty members in the CPDP is to start and continue with the implementation of the different strategies and evaluate the impact they have on the participating teachers.

We hope this to be a valuable contribution to the design of CPDPs intended for the complex situations AFL instructors, such as working in different locations, lack of stability, and difficulty attending professional development courses or events because time issues constrain their participation (Velásquez & Bedoya, 2011). We also expect to continue providing AFL instructors in the outreach section with more information, support, and ideas as it has been done through the strategies that have been implemented so far (chats, coaching sessions, mentoring, modules) and the additional ones presented here. It is our aim to implement these in the near future, always keeping in mind that all processes are evolving and that teacher participation, context knowledge, and suggestions are enriching and valuable for the entire educational community.

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