

English Foreign Language Teachers' Perceptions of the Implementation of Task Based Language Teaching in Chile

by

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ABSTRACT

English Foreign Language Teachers' Perceptions of the Implementation of Task Based Language Teaching in Chile

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) has been widely studied in several foreign language contexts, but little research has been conducted in Latin American countries and none about teachers' perceptions of TBLT implementation in Chile. Thus, this qualitative interpretive study seeks to explore the perceptions that English language teachers in secondary schools in Chile have of the implementation of Chile's new TBLT reform. The study also aims to uncover the meaning that those perceptions have regarding English as a foreign language (EFL) education in Chile.

In order to respond to the research question: *How can Chilean EFL teachers' perceptions of the implementation of TBLT at the secondary school level inform us about teaching English as a foreign language in Chile?* nine volunteer participant Chilean EFL teachers were interviewed. The 16.5 hours of data were transcribed, analyzed using NVIVO and interpreted through a social constructivist lens.

The data analysis indicates that teachers tend to have conflicting perceptions of TBLT implementation in Chile. While all teacher participants acknowledge and value the benefits that arise from the approach, the continuous implementation of TBLT over time is fraught with challenges in some contexts. Data revealed benefits for the L2 lesson, the students, for soft skill development, for motivation, and L2 improvement. The challenges emerged from the approach itself, from the educational actors, such as the teachers, the school administrators, and/or the students. From the educational system challenges included the standardized examinations,

learning resources, teacher-training, teacher evaluation, and the inclusion program, and from the social context teachers reported having limited opportunities to use English, and struggling with societal problems. Additional challenges from each actor are documented in detail.

The data analysis revealed that in order to successfully implement TBLT over time, five key factors need to be aligned: teachers' understanding of TBLT, teachers' positive attitudes towards the approach, teachers' adequate target language level, school administrators' support and positive attitudes of students.

The findings exposed successes and challenges brought on from some of the numerous ministerial endeavours to improve Chilean education. Although they could be redesigned for increased access, teachers appreciate the numerous professional development opportunities they are offered to improve their language and pedagogy skills as well as the total immersion camps for the students, all free of charge. Meanwhile, the role of the school administrators needs to be revisited so as to give all students and EFL teachers access to the opportunities offered by the Ministry of Education.

PREFACE

This thesis is an original work by Marcela Isabel Herrera-Farfán. The research project, of which this thesis is a part, received research ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board, Project Name “EFL Teachers’ Perceptions of TBLT in Chile”, No. Pro00060932, January 29, 2017.

DEDICATION

To my dad and my mom, who are, have been, and always will be an inspiration for me.

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Chapter One: Introduction

The purpose of a Doctorate in Education is to research exemplary practice. In this dissertation, I explore the implementation of Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in Chile, particularly through the eyes of some of the teachers who are implementing this initiative. The ways teachers understand and perceive their teaching, or the approaches they are mandated to use, directly impact their practice and thus the implementation of this national program (Pajares, 1992; Richardson, 1996). Thus, the study aims to identify and understand the factors that have impacted teachers' perceptions of TBLT as a mandated approach to teaching English. The English language has become a key language to connect the world. It has even been considered a *lingua franca*, meaning that peoples of different languages (other than English) can still communicate using English as a common language (e.g., Jenkins, 2000, 2007). Since English has become so relevant in most countries of the world, many countries, including Chile, have opted for English as the main second language (L2) to be taught in their public schools.

However, in Chile and in many countries where English is taught as a foreign language (FL), English language learning (ELL) has not gained the expected results. In these countries, English is mainly taught through traditional methods that emphasize grammar structures without much attention to communication. With communication skills being the main goal of language learning, and students lacking in these skills even after earning high scores in traditional grammar testing, researchers and teachers have started to pay attention to teaching approaches that combine grammar and meaningful communication. In this way, TBLT has arisen as a highly communicative approach that offers teachers and students the opportunity to explore teaching and learning an L2 through meaningful and real-life tasks.

Although TBLT has experienced success, especially in second language (SL) contexts, it has become challenging for teachers to implement, especially in FL contexts (e.g., Carless, 2007; Cheng & Moses, 2011; East, 2014; Hadi, 2013; Hu, 2013; McAllister, Combes, & Perret, 2012) (See Appendices B and C).

Following the social constructivist epistemology that knowledge is socially constructed (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011) and that the history and the context in which people live influence their perspectives (Creswell, 2014), I will start this introductory chapter describing the context in which the research took place. Thus, I will firstly provide an overview of the Chilean educational context by focusing on information about English as a foreign language (EFL) education in Chile, including the actions that the Ministry of Education has taken to improve the standards of teaching this language in the country. Secondly, I “locate myself” and present the aspects that personally motivated me to conduct this research and also that influence my interpretations. As a researcher, I am also aware that my own lived experiences are also an important part of the research process because they can be considered as experiential data, which “not only give added theoretical sensitivity but provide a wealth of provisional suggestions for making comparisons, findings variations, and sampling widely on theoretical grounds” (Strauss, 1987, p. 11). Then, I present the research questions and finally the significance that this study may have for EFL education in Chile.

Chilean Educational Context and EFL Education in Chile

Chile. In this section I firstly introduce some brief geographic and demographic information. I then portray the Chilean educational context, including Chilean teachers’ sentiments toward this context.

Geographic and demographic information. Chile is located at the Southwest tip of South America and it has a population of 18.160.643 (“Chile Population 2018,” 2018). It is divided into 15 political regions that all share the same national curriculum. See Figure 1.



Figure 1. Map of Chile. (Mapa de Chile, n.d.)

General educational policies. Education is divided into four levels: pre-school; primary – Grades 1 to 8; secondary – Grades 9 to 12; and tertiary education. Secondary education is divided into scientific/humanistic and technical/professional education.

In Chile, schools are divided into four categories: *public, subsidized, private, and delegated administration schools* (Centro de Estudios Mineduc, 2016) (See *Types of schools* in Appendix A). The following table (Table 1) summarizes some statistical data that portrays the different types of schools in Chile.

Table 1

Teacher:Student Ratio as Estimated Through Multiple Data Sources (“Las claves de la política nacional docente,” n.d.; Centro de Estudios Mineduc, 2016).

	Public schools	Subsidized schools	Private schools	Delegated administrative schools
Percentage of schools N=11.858	44% 5.234	50% 5.950	5% 604	1% 70
Percentage of students N=3.550.837	36% 1.273.530	55% 1.942.222	8% 288.964	1% 46.121
Percentage of teachers N=230.142	44% 101.820	45% 103.891	10% 22.179	1% 2.252
Student-teacher ratio	13	19	13	20
Monthly fees		Up to 85.000 Chilean pesos. (\$173.00 CAD)	Up to 600.000 Chilean pesos. (\$1,223.00 CAD)	

The Ministry of Education has registered 230,142 teachers in the country: 74% are women and 26% men (Centro de Estudios Mineduc, 2016). While teachers’ salaries are undergoing a transition due to current educational reforms, the current salary for teachers with a defined workload of 44 hours a week, may go from 7.756.420 to 16.320.100 Chilean pesos a year ¹ (\$16,588.48 to \$34,903.43 CAD approx.) depending on the years of experience and the teacher evaluation results (See definitions in Appendix A) (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 2017).

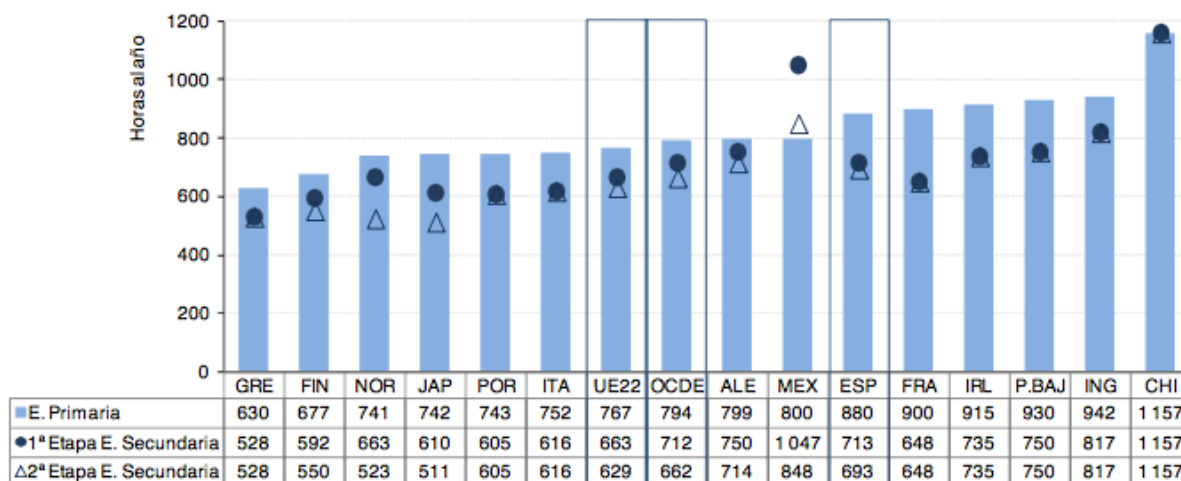
¹ For a reference, basic expenses may cost: 1 litre of milk - \$778 Chilean pesos (CAN 1.54); 12 eggs - \$ 2.073 (CAN 4.11); 500 grs boneless chicken breast - \$ 2.471 (CAN 4.90); average utilities: heating, electricity, gas - \$ 94.118 (CAN 186.74); monthly ticket public transport - \$35.783 (CAN 71.00); monthly rent for 85 m2 furnished accommodation in expensive area \$694.862 (CAN 1.378,67) (“Cost of living in Chile,” n.d.).

Based on the above statistics the Chilean educational system is considered to be market-oriented and is characterized as promoting socioeconomic segregation. This has been the consequence of policies approved during the dictatorship of the 1980s when the creation of subsidized schools separated the public and private ones (Valenzuela, Bellei, & de los Ríos, 2013). The idea was to provide a better quality of education for those students whose families had the means to contribute to their children's education. One consequence of this system has been the huge educational segregation of students in private, subsidized and public schools (Educacion 2020, n.d. a). Moreover, the OECD has concluded that Chile has the largest number of students in the private and subsidized sector among all countries in the OECD group (British Council, 2015). This segregation is also enhanced as public schools have fewer students and since their administrations (municipalities) receive funding based on the number of students, the less funding they receive, the less resources and opportunities they can offer students. In brief, students in public schools have been receiving poorer quality education. However, the Ministry of Education mandated in 2014 that all subsidized schools either become private or public (corporation) in an attempt to diminish the educational segregation in Chile (Ministerio de Educación, 2014a) (See definitions of Types of schools – subsidized schools in Appendix A). This transition had just taken place during the time of data collection.

Regarding the teachers' working conditions, OECD (2015) indicates that Chilean teachers' workload is higher than that of many other countries: Chilean teachers work 1,103 hours a year in primary and secondary schools with the OECD average being only 782 hours in primary schools, 694 hours in junior high schools and 655 hours in secondary education schools. In addition, most of their workload is spent in the classroom leaving only a few hours to prepare materials and lesson plans and/ or correct tests (Centro de Estudios Mineduc, 2015). Figure 2 clearly shows this difference (Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2017, p. 54). In

addition, teachers in private schools work fewer hours, thus further widening the divide between public and private schools.

Gráfico 3.6 (extracto de la Tabla D4.1):
Organización del horario de trabajo de los profesores en instituciones públicas. Horas de enseñanza (2015)
Número de horas de enseñanza netas al año.



Nota: Los países están ordenados de mayor a menor según las horas de enseñanza del profesorado de Educación Primaria.

Figure 2. Number of hours dedicated to teaching in the classroom in a year (OECD, 2015).

Government initiatives to improve education in Chile. The Chilean government has been making continuous efforts to improve education for several years. For example, the Ministry of Education has started a literacy campaign to increase the average rate of literacy in the country – the current average is 96% (Mineduc, 2016). In order to supervise the educational results, the Ministry of Education has continuously assessed education/student performance through the *Sistema Nacional de Medicion de la Calidad de la Educación* (SIMCE) since 1988 (Mineduc, 2012). Also, as a result of the current educational segregation and later the ongoing manifestations and strikes that took place during the *Penguin Revolution* in 2006 (See Appendix A), the Ministry has enacted several reforms to improve education and make it accessible for everyone as a right and not for a few as a privilege. For example, since 2003 the compulsory

Evaluación del desempeño profesional docente (Evaluation of teacher professional performance – henceforth referred to as *Teacher evaluation*) takes place every four years for all public-school teachers (See Teacher evaluation in Appendix A). In 2008 the *Ley de Subvención Escolar* (SEP – Law of School Grants) was passed to support schools with at-risk students (See Appendix A). Also, in 2012, the Ministry of Education created two new supervisory agencies: *Agencia de Calidad de la Educación*, which aims is to supervise the performance and educational achievements of the schools according to the state standards; and *The Superintendencia de Educación Escolar* which certifies that schools act according to the educational laws and regulations (British Council, 2015).

One of the most recent changes in education corresponds to the *Reforma educacional* (Educational reform) which started in 2014 (Ministerio de Educación, 2015) and aims to strengthen education from the day-care and pre-school system through to tertiary education, thus guaranteeing high quality free of charge education. Furthermore, in 2014 compulsory education was extended from twelve to thirteen years of education (from kindergarten to Grade 12). In 2015 the reform also included the *Inclusion Law* (See definitions in Appendix A), putting an end to the selective system through tests or mark ranking to enter the best public schools in the country and to subsidized schools (Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional, 2015; Ministerio de Educación, 2015) and giving students access and educational support through the *Programa de Integración Escolar* (PIE – Student Integration Program) (See PIE in Appendix A for more details). Regarding tertiary education, the reform aims to provide free education for students that belong to the most economically vulnerable families (Ministerio de Educación, 2015; Universia, n.d.).

Another important point in the reform directly affects teachers – ‘*La Ley de Carrera Docente*’ and henceforth to be referred to as the *Law of Teaching Career* (See definitions in

Appendix A) (Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional, 2016; “Las claves de la política nacional docente,” n.d.). Passed in 2016, this law aims at strengthening teacher-training programs and teachers’ practice. One of the strategies is the increase of teachers’ salaries according to their performance in the mandatory teacher evaluation and specific subject and pedagogical knowledge tests (“Las claves de la política nacional docente”, n.d.; Ministerio de Educación, 2015). Another strategy is to improve the teachers’ working conditions by increasing the number of non-teaching hours from 25% to 30% and to 35% in the future. Thus, the current modification indicates that teachers will use 70% of their time in front of a class and 30% of their time will be for class preparation and other administrative tasks as assigned by their school administrator (See 70% - 30% in Appendix A for more details).

Teachers’ perceptions of the Chilean educational context. As the context shapes teachers’ perceptions, it is worthwhile to note that despite challenges such as large size classes, low salaries, and a heavy workload, Chilean teachers are generally satisfied with the noble responsibility of influencing young generations (Ávalos & Sotomayor, 2012; Centro de Estudio Mineduc, 2015). The following quote from a teacher-participant in Ávalos and Sotomayor (2012) summarizes this sentiment about teacher careers².

Being a teacher has a tremendous emotional burden for me. I feel that independently of what the media, the people, or the world may think, the task of being a teacher is so great. And I look at the children and I think that one could mark or damage a child forever with your attitudes or your ways of acting, or sometimes with your words.... I do not want to say that we are like apostles, but I feel the emotional load and the responsibility of having the future of these little children in my hands (Ávalos & Sotomayor, 2012, p. 70)

² Translated by Ávalos and Sotomayor.

In addition to overcoming challenges such as the ones previously mentioned, and reciprocally, teachers' perceptions and attitudes toward teaching are directly impacted by the students as well, as the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), that includes data from Chile, reports: "Class size seems to have only a minimal effect on their teaching efficacy or job satisfaction in just a few countries. It is not the number of students, but the type of students that are in a teacher's class that has the largest association with teachers' feelings of self-efficacy and job satisfaction". (OECD, 2016, p. 6)

However, despite Chilean teachers' love for their careers there is a generalized pessimism and, through the years, teachers have joined the educational revolution that started with the Penguin Revolution in 2006, seeking better working conditions, and better quality education in general.

Although the Ministry of Education has been listening to teachers and students' demands, and has been implementing some reforms in education, the results have not always been well-received among Chilean teachers. For example, the creation of the Law of Teaching Career had been requested for some time by Chilean teachers in order to improve the teaching profession and improve their working conditions. However, when the law was developed and sent to the Chilean senate for approval, teachers realized that there were several points that did not benefit them as educators. Teachers expressed particular concern over the process followed in the creation of the Law of Teaching Career, but their request was ignored and the law was approved without the teachers' voices being considered. Teachers also wanted to prevent the approval of the new law as they considered that many of its points did not dignify teachers and put them in a position of competing with one another. For example, they considered that restricting improvement in salaries to the results of their continuous evaluations, was unfair because those evaluations are standardized and do not reflect the actual teachers' teaching and professional

skills. Teachers also demanded a higher number of non-teaching hours and considered the new ‘level system’ to be unfair for them since it focuses on evaluation and not their professional development (PD).. This might push teachers to neglect professional training and teaching and focus only on examinations (e.g., “Docentes en pie de Guerra”, 2015; “Miles de docentes marcharon en Chile”, 2015; Ojeda, 2015; Torres, 2015). Although teachers are aware that the spirit of the evaluation is to encourage them to improve their teaching practice, the general perceptions are rather negative as most teachers see this compulsory evaluation as a burden more than a constructive opportunity (Taut, Santelices, Araya, & Manzi, 2011).

In brief, the Chilean educational system is undergoing a transition towards a better quality education. In fact, despite the challenges teachers face, the numerous educational strategies seem to already be yielding results as, for example, the students’ drop out rate has steadily decreased from 3.7 % in 2012 to 2.5% in 2017 in the public education system (Ministerio de Educacion, 2018) and the EFL language level, although still low, has steadily improved over the past few years (EF EPI, 2017).

How English language is perceived. The English language plays an important role in Chilean society and in general people have a positive attitude towards the English language (Glas, 2013; Rajagopalan, 2009). Rajagopalan (2009), states:

[In Chile t]here is no generalized resentment against the US, nor does any possibly lingering distrust translate into a rejection of the English language. Quite on the contrary, the overall attitude to English amongst Chileans has been described as ‘positive’.

(p. 150)

For example; many people like listening to music in English and, as a result, radios play much music in English too, although the music in Spanish is also widely heard. The television also

offers the option of channels in English through cable television and although many people prefer the option of audio in Spanish, Chilean society has access to many programs from English speaking countries (mainly from the USA, which is the country from which most of the international programming originates). Many Anglicisms have also been integrated into Chilean Spanish, such as jeans, DVD, cd, mall, shorts, gay, donuts, Hip-hop, backstage, casting, bar, brother, bye, ok, cool, crazy, panty, stress, small, medium, large (all these pronounced in the English way). In the business world, Anglicisms are very commonly used as well, since they tend to give the topic more relevance and credibility within the society (Glas, 2013). Anglo cultural practices are also familiar as Christmas is usually celebrated with decorations that include images of snow and snowflakes although in Chile Christmas is summer and very hot. Halloween, which was not celebrated in the past, is now a very common and popular celebration, too. Finally, the English language is also widely used in advertising. For example, some commercials use many English words to refer to typical 'Chilean' situations (Agenciaopendor, 2015) or some fashion commercials are presented entirely in English (Ripleychile, 2016)

The reasons for such openness to the English language may be due to the fact that it has been declared to be the language for doing business (Glas, 2013), or because it gives speakers a sense of higher status in society (Opazo & Jaque, 2014; Urzúa-Carmona, 2006), or because it enhances the status of the country among its neighbors as Chileans are known as 'the English people of Latin America' (Blanco, 2017; Páez & Vergara, 1995), or because the idea of becoming a bilingual country is still in its infancy and it is still difficult to imagine our identity in danger, much like countries such as Japan, have experienced (Kanno, 2007).

EFL education in Chile. In Chile, there is a wide educational gap in education and especially in EFL education for a variety of reasons. The number of hours of instructions and the

starting grade of EFL instruction varies among public, subsidized and private schools. Public schools are characterized by having two hours of instruction per week in primary education and no more than three or four in secondary education whereas subsidized and private schools usually have more per week. In addition, public schools start EFL instruction in Grade 5 and subsidized and private schools, in pre-school. As a result, these varied starting points and number of hours of instruction create a wide educational gap between students in these three types of educational institutions. In such a segregated educational system, the public sector has both the fewest pedagogical hours of instruction and the lowest academic results on the SIMCE test (Educacion 2020, n.d. a; Educacion 2020, n.d. b).

The EFL curriculum in Chile. In order to create a sense of equality across the nation, the Ministry of Education has developed a top-down national curriculum. This curriculum is expected to be implemented in every Chilean school. To ensure that the curriculum is being implemented, the Chilean government has created plans and programs specifying minimal requirements of content coverage for each subject and for each grade. The government has been also testing the success of the plan for EFL in all Grade 11 (3ero Medio) classrooms through the *EFL SIMCE test* (See Appendix A) every second year and more recently, in a sample mode. However, with continued low scores in national and international tests, the Ministry of Education has been developing several strategies and some new have been recently added to improve EFL standards in Chile.

Strategies to improve L2 standards. In order to help its citizens more fully participate in international events and global dialogue, the government of Chile has invested in numerous new programs to improve English language teaching (ELT). Graddol (2006) refers to Chile as a country that is seeking to become bilingual. Becoming bilingual allows Chile to strengthen

commercial relationships not only with English speaking countries but also with those countries that may represent good commerce opportunities and that also use EFL.

Alongside the previously mentioned program development, over the past ten years, Chile has also introduced new teacher-training policies (Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional, 2007; Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional, 2004). These changes are intended to have an impact on curriculum implementation, Chilean EFL textbook development, ELT and student learning. In addition, more recently the government also launched a new program called *Estrategia Nacional* (National strategy) which details a list of 47 actions to be carried out between 2014 and 2030 in order to continue increasing EFL proficiency in the country (Gobierno de Chile, 2014). These strategies involve actions that will impact Chilean families and society in general. Some of the strategies contemplate the mandate of TBLT instruction for Grade 5 and 6 (5to y 6to Básico) in 2012 (Ministerio de Education, 2012) and later in 2013 TBLT was explicitly added to Grade 7 and to Grade 10 (2do Medio). In addition, the strategies include benefits that are provided through the *Programa Inglés Abre Puertas (PIAP* - English opens doors program) (See Appendix B for details) for the students through the the *English Winter/Summer Camps* (National Volunteer Center, 2012; Bridge, Language, Education & Travel, n.d.) and *EFL online courses* (See Appendix A). Subsidized and public-school teachers also benefit as they can have free access to numerous courses and workshops during the *English Winter Retreat* and/ or *English Summer Towns* (See Appendix A), teaching support through the *EFL Teachers' Networks* (See Appendix A), and assistance from a *volunteer native English speaker* (See Appendix A). The strategies also contemplate improving future teachers' EFL skills by granting them a semester to study in an English-speaking country.

Further, the EFL SIMCE test has been changed in two ways. First, it is no longer compulsory for all students in Chile. Second, the government exam is given only by students

from selected schools – both those in which the government has invested additional resources, and those that create a representation of other schools.

Results of EFL education in Chile. In spite of the fact that several of the above proposed strategies have already been implemented for many years, the results of national and international standardized tests show that the students' language level is still low. ELL in Chile has been mainly tested in two ways: nationally, through EFL SIMCE test for students in Grade 11 (3ero Medio), and internationally, through Education First English Proficiency Index (EF EPI) for adults. SIMCE's last report in 2014 indicated that only 25% of the students in Grade 11 reached expected levels and this included mainly students from private and subsidized schools (Agencia de Calidad de la Educacion, 2015). The EF EPI (2017) shows an important improvement in the national score (from 48.75 in 2014, to 51.50 in 2017). However, Chile still remains low in comparison with other countries in Latin America – 7th place, and 45th among 80 countries (EF EPI, 2017). Table 2 from EF EPI (2017) compares the EFL proficiency of Chilean students to those of other Latin American countries.

Table 2

EF EPI Latin American Countries (EF EPI, 2017)

----	-----	Very high proficiency level
----	----	High proficiency level
1.-Argentina	56.51	Moderate proficiency level
2.- Dominican Republic	56.31	
3.-Costa Rica	53.13	
4.- Brazil	51.92	Low proficiency level
5.- Uruguay	51.73	
6.- Mexico	51.57	
7.- Chile	51.50	
8.- Cuba	50.83	
9.- Panamá	50.68	
10.-Perú	50.50	
11.-Colombia	49.97	
12.-Guatemala	49.52	
13.-Ecuador	49.42	

14.-Venezuela	45.71	Very low proficiency level
15.-El Salvador	45.70	

Possible reasons for low English language results. The reasons that account for low EFL levels in Chilean schools may vary. The government mentions variables such as the fact that not every university is accredited, and that the curriculum to prepare EFL teachers varies from university to university.

Teachers' lack of English language proficiency as reported in Li (1998), and deficient teaching skills also seem to be important reasons for low EFL results in Chile (Rojas, Zapata, & Herrada, 2013)

These results suggest a need to examine the EFL teacher-training programs at Chilean universities. Just as the Ministry of Education has stated, a glance at the curriculum in some of the most prestigious universities in the country, suggests that even though current EFL teacher-training programs have a higher number of practicum hours than in the past, they too lack curricular uniformity. In relation to English language proficiency, student-teachers are required to meet high standards in order to meet the requirements of EFL teacher-training programs. In the past, new EFL teachers were required to meet the standards of B1 on the Common European Framework of Reference scale (CEFR); this has now been raised to C1 (Abrahams, & Echague, 2015; Ministerio de Educación, 2014b). In this regard, there is more uniformity among the EFL teacher-training programs since most universities do have a similar number of courses related to ELL. This could mean that the new generations of EFL teachers may be more proficient in the English language but less prepared pedagogically.

Standardized tests might also contribute to low results in English language proficiency since teachers teach to the test (Glas, 2013; Herrera, 2016a). Nevertheless, no study has been conducted to investigate if there is a correlation between what the test measures, what the

curriculum mandates, and what teachers actually teach in their classes. However, the literature offers some insights about the struggles that many teachers face when they have to decide whether to teach their lessons towards the standardized tests or follow the communicative approaches mandated in the curriculum (Deng & Carless, 2010; East, 2012; Herrera, 2016b; Hu, 2013; Kanno, 2007). In addition, one must question standardized tests themselves for as Nunan (2007) states,

They also allow funding to be tied to indicators of achievement. However, an over-reliance on inaccurate or over-simplified standards can lead to less, not more accurate reporting, and establish, even disguise, one view of language teaching and/or learning as the only reality. Not surprisingly, then, the widespread adoption of standards as a key concept in ELT over the last decade or so has been accompanied by much controversy and conflict. (p. 428)

Finally, another factor that might influence students' low English language results may be the top-down nature of all the changes in EFL education and in education in general in Chile. Although the literature reveals, as will be seen in more detail later, that teachers acknowledge several challenges regarding language teaching, no one seems to pay close attention to the fact that curricular changes or implementation of standardized tests, such as the EFL SIMCE test in Chile, are top-down mandates in which teachers feel like only tools or puppets that must complete a certain job. In top-down mandates, the curriculum or a particular test is prescribed by the authorities and teachers have no voice in their implementation. Later the reader will see that these kinds of problems inevitably create an uncomfortable feeling among teachers and as a result, their perceptions and attitudes towards the 'change' are altered. See for example the controversial situation that emerged from the passing of the Law of Teaching Career.

The results presented above indicate that although the standards have improved, much more work still needs to be done, especially in public schools where only a small percentage of students are able to attain the level of international certification in English. The reasons for the low language levels of English show that although there are responsibilities that belong to the educational system, there are also responsibilities that involve teachers and students in the privacy of their classes. Thus, in order to better understand the variables influencing English language performance in Chile, it is key to consider the educational actors' perceptions.

In this study I observed through a social constructivist perspective the EFL teachers' perceptions of their own teaching and their opinions of the approach that the Ministry of Education has mandated – TBLT. In addition, I investigated the teachers' perceptions of factors that may contribute to low results in standardized tests, including teacher-training programs, access to the English Opens doors program, the impact of the Law of Teaching Career, and the educational system and structure in general. From a social constructivist perspective, this study is particularly interested in how all these factors shape teachers' perceptions of TBLT implementation in Chile.

The following section provides an overview of my own lived experiences and how they informed my research topic.

Locating Myself

As will be further explained later, this study uses a qualitative research approach in which people's lived experiences and how they give meaning to them are key to understanding and interpreting certain phenomenon (Merriam, 2009). As a researcher, my own lived experiences are also an important part of the research process because they can be considered as experiential data, which “not only give added theoretical sensitivity but provide a wealth of provisional

suggestions for making comparisons, findings variations, and sampling widely on theoretical grounds” (Strauss, 1987, p. 11). Furthermore, by making my lived experiences explicit, I expose my *horizon* (Gadamer, 1989) and “assumptions, worldviews, biases, theoretical orientation, and relationship to the study that may affect the investigation” (Merriam, 2009, p. 229) enhancing the trustworthiness of the study (Creswell, 2007; Maxwell, 2008; Merriam, 1998, 2009), as will be discussed in Chapter Four. By reflecting on my lived experiences, as a researcher, I also become aware of my own world view which is key to interpreting data in qualitative research (Maxwell, 2008). Finally, the lived experiences are the core of the research topic and research questions for as Merriam (2009) states “How do you select a topic for a qualitative research study? The first place to look is your daily life – your work, family, friends, community” (p. 55). Thus, in this section I provide a glimpse of how my understanding of my lived experiences as a school student and student-teacher and later as an EFL teacher, has informed my research interest, my research questions, and my interest in looking for a way to create a more just EFL education system in Chile. A more indepth reflection on my theoretical orientation will be presented in Chapter Four.

Being an EFL student: Did I learn English? In Chile, high school starts in Grade 9 and finishes in Grade 12 (1ero Medio – 4to Medio). I attended the first two years of high school in a public high school, where the English language levels of students was rather low. Then my parents, seeking a better education for me, registered me in a private school where students achieved higher proficiency in English, even though it was more expensive for them. Unfortunately, with so many years in public education, I was not able to perform very well in this school. However, even my classmates, who had been in that school for many more years, did not do much better.

During all my years of primary and secondary school education, I do not remember ever having been encouraged to use English in a communicative way; I only learned to memorize some dialogues and complete complex grammar exercises. One of the most difficult ones was the ‘reported speech’ form, which I learned during my last year of high school. I just was not able to figure out how the present form was connected with the past form, or how the future was connected with the conditional form. I think the teacher taught us those complex structures because we were in our last year and we were not only expected to master basic forms such as the verb to be, or simple present tense but also the combination of them in complex structures. While I knew a little bit of grammar at the end of my secondary school education, I certainly could not speak English; I did not know English well enough to communicate. For many years after that, I thought that it had been my teachers’ fault. I used to criticize them for not making the classes more communicative-oriented. However, after starting to reflect on my research topic, many more questions emerged: why was it that I did not learn English when I was a primary and secondary school student? Why did my primary school teachers spend years teaching the verb ‘to be’? Was it all their fault? Was there adequate teacher-training to prepare teachers to teach in primary education? What about my own motivation as a student? What about classroom management? I do not remember having been a poorly-behaved student, but maybe the class did not help much in creating an appropriate learning environment. What about the demands the teachers had to face? What if, due to the mandated curriculum at that time, my teachers did not have any other alternative but to teach grammar?

Preparing to become an EFL teacher myself: How will I be able to teach what I am learning? As I finished high school, I decided I wanted to teach EFL in my country. I found that English was relevant in our society and I needed to learn it. In addition, I liked teaching, so I

enrolled in an EFL teacher-training program to accomplish two goals: learning English; and becoming a teacher.

In my very first EFL class at the university, the students had to introduce themselves and at that point, I had totally forgotten even the basics of English, so I just paid attention to how others introduced themselves (many of them were as ignorant as I) and tried to imitate their utterances, but using my own information. As I listened to my classmates, I noticed that some of them said *“Hi, I am X and I am X years old”*. Others said *“Hi, I am X and I have X years old”*. I chose the second option because it made more sense to me when I translated it from Spanish. Therefore, the result was this *“Hi, my name is Marcela and I have 17 years old”*. Later and through lots of language struggles I was able to correct this but more importantly, I learned that even with that “error”, I was able to use English in a communicative way and with increasing accuracy.

However, the EFL teacher-training program was very demanding and harsh on student-teachers who made grammar errors; I had to master both grammar and fluency. Thus, during oral tests, we were only allowed to make a few grammar mistakes; otherwise, we would fail. I still remember my professors telling us that since we were expected to be models of the English language in our future classrooms we needed to develop a high level of language proficiency. This led me to study a lot of grammar in order to speak and write as accurately as possible.

Even though I was learning EFL, I found that teaching EFL was still a huge challenge – one that I was not prepared for. Although I took some teaching methodology classes, I still felt very unprepared to teach. Additionally, the program offered only one practicum – at the end of the program. I remember frequently wondering: How am I going to teach this? How am I going to teach my students to speak English? I may have been able to speak English, but I had no confidence that I could teach it!

My first years of being an EFL teacher: Teaching as I was taught. After I graduated, I started to teach EFL in a small private school that offered kindergarten to Grade 12 (4to Medio). My first years in school were a real nightmare because, although many classes were really small, especially in primary education, high school classes were larger and the students' attitudes more challenging. Apart from the classroom management problems, the biggest challenge was that I was the only EFL teacher in that school. Thus, I had to teach from Kindergarten to Grade 12 (4to Medio) and did not have anybody with whom to share or discuss any of my trials or triumphs. I was like a chameleon changing topics, strategies, and resources at least three times a day. The worst problem was that I had no training for teaching in primary education and as stated by Abrahams and Echague (2015), having EFL teachers to teach in primary education is one of the main errors of the educational system because Chilean universities do not have special English teacher-training programs for primary education. Thus, the situation was not only disadvantageous for me but also for my young students. Fortunately, that situation only lasted a couple of years because soon thereafter I started working at a school where my role was teaching from Grade 7 (7mo Básico) to Grade 12 (4to Medio).

During my first years as an EFL teacher, I tried to copy the model I had seen during my years of university – of combining grammar and speaking. I did not want my students to follow in my footsteps and leave high school without being able to communicate in English. In my teaching approach, I used to pay much attention to grammar and penalized students for every single mistake they made, the same way I had experienced at the university. The result of this was that my students were afraid of speaking. Thus, they tended to memorize what they had to say in order to avoid mistakes, just as I had done.

My problem at that time was that I was not able to understand that the main reason why I had been taught English so rigorously at the university was because I was being instructed with the purpose of becoming an EFL teacher. In other words, my professors were training us to become models of the target language. Thus, they had to be extremely demanding with us. However, in contrast, my students had different goals; they did not have to always be perfectly accurate in order to communicate and they did not need to be models of the English language either.

Breaking the mould of traditional approaches is difficult. After some time, I decided that if my goal was to encourage my students to speak, I had to diminish grammar instruction in order to give them time to reflect and experience the language as they put it into practice. I felt that I was not truly contributing to my learners' apprenticeship but that if I continued filling my students with content and jumping very fast from one unit to the next one I was only nurturing 'the rush in education' that Seidel (2006) speaks about. My next strategy then was to implement a more communicative approach using group work as a core during the lessons. I would still present the grammar content but restricted it to simple forms at the beginning of the lesson, along with providing extensive vocabulary that the students could use in full sentences. The group activities were guided and supported by a more advanced student in each group and monitored by me.

Unfortunately, as this was a personal initiative, I had to face several challenges to implement this more communicative-oriented approach. One of the challenges that this strategy brought was that at first some students complained that they wanted me, the teacher, to be teaching to the whole class rather than having a leader in each group. Although I used to monitor every group by providing the necessary support, they were not accustomed to either autonomous

learning or an interactive environment. As they became familiar with this type of work, they slowly started to gain confidence speaking in English, using simple grammar in clear and significant contexts such as describing daily life activities and past events like a vacation or future events such as plans for the upcoming Christmas. Although the process was slow, it was efficient in terms of language speaking skills development. Unfortunately, it was too slow for the administrative staff and parents who wanted the students to be filled with more information and more complex grammar forms as soon as possible. Other challenges were related to classroom management. Although the students in that school were from the socioeconomic middle class, there were several students with a lack of motivation who always provoked some problems of classroom management. Fortunately, most students were interested in learning and that kept me eager to pursue changes.

Unfortunately, the school had no interest in a bottom-up innovation or in providing me support in my teaching practice. Maybe if I had been given the space to explain the ideas to the authorities of the school and to parents who usually demand lots of written evidence, they could have understood and offered support. Or, maybe if I had been more willing to focus on accuracy, devoting time to written work and exercises, parents, administrative staff and students would have been more receptive. But, then to what extent would the students have been able to use those complex structures to communicate with others?

With autonomy I can make changes. In spite of the lack of support that I had received from schools during my first years as an EFL teacher, I did not abandon my idea of developing different strategies to encourage communicative skills among my students. Later, when I started to work in a different high school I discussed my teaching ideas with the administrative staff. I told them that English language communication was a key point in language learning and they

supported me. In that high school, I was able to build student confidence to use English in a communicative way, even among those students who thought that they would never be able to speak in English.

Although I was being supported to take risks and develop my classes more around communication rather than according to traditional grammar-focused approaches, I felt that it was very difficult for me. First of all, I still needed to cover certain content through the year and teaching communicative English was very time-consuming at times. Classroom management was also more complicated, especially when students who were weaker in the target language were so easily distracted. Some students were reluctant to participate at first, while others expressed their preference to learn through more grammar teaching. It was also much more tiring for me than conducting a traditional grammar-oriented class. Sometimes students complained: *“Why do we have to learn to speak English? We are in Chile and we won’t have the opportunity of going to a foreign country anyways”*. Others tried to overcome the negative atmosphere created by one group and demonstrated interest in learning to actually speak in English. However, dealing with a lack of motivation, a lack of resources, and my own lack of appropriate teaching skills, was a day-to-day battle.

The positive part of the ‘communicative journey’ in this high school was that I never felt alone because the school board supported me at all times. They not only agreed with my communicative approach but also hired an English native speaker as support. He came to my classes so that students had the opportunity to interact with him – to make questions and answer similar questions themselves. These kinds of activities were conducted in groups and since they were not graded, they gave the students freedom to relax and be spontaneous. My students and I were very satisfied with their language achievement and many of them felt proud of themselves.

At that time, I also had the opportunity of attending some PD courses through PIAP which strengthened both my EFL and teaching skills. I was also invited to be part of the EFL teachers' network. Unfortunately, I did not have the school administrators' support to attend those monthly meetings because they interfered with my teaching hours. The principal argued that in the past, when other EFL teachers attended those meetings, the school had experienced no advantage for the school and he considered it a waste of time.

Being under the magnifying glass. In the midst of these innovations, my turn to be evaluated through the teacher evaluation system arrived in 2009. I remember that I had to extensively prepare the portfolio, with a video recorded lesson and interviews. I prepared myself by studying more and paying more attention to minute pedagogical detail. I remember being very anxious, especially about the class being filmed by an external and unknown person who would come to my class on a pre-determined date. Although I knew when this person would come and could prepare myself, I was still nervous and afraid that maybe that day someone in class would do something that could ruin my lesson, or that maybe someone would interrupt and take a little bit of my time such that I would not be able to finish the lesson on time, and so on. My colleagues and I would share our distress as we did not actually see much support from the administration of the school. The administrative staff members were in general very supportive in many areas; however, for some reason, we felt rather alone in this process. Many times, I had to work on the portfolio at home in addition to the normal work that teachers usually take home. I remember asking my mother to keep my children quiet so that I could concentrate and work on the portfolio. At that time, I felt that I was stealing precious time from my children and just hoped that all the efforts would be rewarded.

After some months, my colleagues and I received the results of the evaluation. I had been one of the few teachers that had been evaluated as ‘outstanding’ in the city and the only one in my school. Many of my colleagues were ranked ‘competent’ and only one received a score of ‘basic’. I still remember my happiness when my colleagues and friends congratulated me and when a journalist from the local newspaper came to the school and interviewed me. The feeling was pleasant, but it faded away very soon when I realized that in the eyes of the administrative staff we had done what we had to do and nothing more; it had been our duty to succeed and our school life continued as before.

A top-down mandate. In 2010, the Chilean government for the first time mandated that all Chilean students in Grade 11 (3ero Medio) would take a standardized English test that was mainly based on grammar, reading and listening comprehension. I found myself navigating in two different waters: on the one hand, I was forced to teach grammar to prepare my students to succeed on the test and, on the other, I wanted to continue developing ways to encourage them to speak in the target language in order to continue developing communicative skills. With only three hours of classes a week for EFL lessons and with students who had a very low level of English proficiency, doing both things was extremely challenging. Thus, I had to decide whether to focus on grammar and special exercises based on the test or follow what I believed was best for my students – continue with the communicative approach. Unfortunately, as I was short of time, I felt forced to focus on the preparation for the test, which meant neglecting the communicative goals. Now I know that that struggle and discomfort are the result of top-down mandates and that they are shared by many EFL teachers. I also know now that some schools are so concerned about having good results in the EFL SIMCE test that they are buying practice textbooks which especially train the students to succeed in the standardized test (Abrahams, &

Echague, 2015). However, at that point in time, and still today, I am unable to see the connection between the goals of the Ministry of Education (to enhance communicative competence among Chilean students) and the grammar-based test they are implementing.

My struggles between a grammar focus and communicative approaches, made me wonder about my place and role as a teacher. I felt demotivated as I was being forced to teach in a way that was contrary to what I believe was most important in learning a language – communication. I felt that I needed to learn how to successfully combine grammar and speaking in the classroom. In addition, I also felt that I needed to improve my own English language skills. I needed a change.

Pursuing professional improvement. Being encouraged by the positive professional results of my final years as an EFL teacher, I applied and obtained a scholarship from the Chilean government to study a Master in Education degree (M.Ed.) at the University of Alberta in Canada. With this award in hand, my husband, two children and I came to Canada in May 2011. My children went to a Canadian school as I prepared to start my graduate program in English as a second language (ESL) education at the University of Alberta.

During my Master's program, I learned about TBLT, which is a communicative approach that combines grammar and communication in a rather flexible way. That made me realize that I needed to learn more both about this approach and also if it was being implemented in my country. I learned that TBLT is a recommended approach in Chile and that it is even supposed to be present in some EFL textbooks. However, for some reason, it is not widely known in Chile, and textbooks, which were supposed to be based on TBLT, did not resemble the approach in the way espoused in the literature, as I learned through my Master's research project (Herrera, 2013).

With this in mind, I started inquiring with some of my colleagues from Chile. They told me that some of them had heard about TBLT, but that they did not know how to implement it. Moreover, at universities, TBLT was being taught among other teaching approaches, but that usually it is not the approach chosen when teachers start teaching classes at school. As my interest in ELT continued and my desire grew to investigate more about how to collaborate in Chilean EFL education, I continued my studies, but now as a doctoral student at the same university. Even though several new ideas started to develop for possible research, I decided to continue exploring TBLT in Chile, but this time through the eyes of those who are in charge of motivating and encouraging others to take a risk and embrace new language learning experiences – the teachers.

My exploration of teachers' perceptions of TBLT in Chile takes place in the unique context of a mandated approach being added to the already existing mandates and burdens that EFL teachers have. In addition, researching it through the eyes of the teachers will bring their voice to the policy table. Also as a teacher myself, I have an emic perspective as I have also experienced the challenges and the satisfaction that the implementation of a communicative approach can bring. I have also experienced the support and at the same time the barriers that the educational system sets on teachers. I have seen the light in the eyes of my students when they have learned and used something that is meaningful for them. And I have also seen their disappointment when being forced to study content or conduct activities that do not imply language usage. With my own experiences in mind, the findings of a survey conducted by me in 2016 (which will be briefly presented later), and the participants' experiences with TBLT, I aim to contribute to EFL education following a social constructivist perspective.

The social constructivist perspective helped me, firstly, to be aware of the context and how it has impacted me as an EFL teacher myself, and secondly, to be aware of how context is

also impacting Chilean EFL teachers and their perceptions of TBLT. Chapter Four describes this perspective in more detail.

Developing the Research Question

After reviewing EFL education in the Chilean context and reflecting on how my lived experiences have influenced my intellectual queries, the main research question of this study is:

How can Chilean EFL teachers' perceptions of the implementation of TBLT at the secondary school level inform us about teaching English as a foreign language in Chile?

The more specific questions underpinning the main research question are:

- 1.- What are teachers' perceptions of TBLT and its successes and challenges?
- 2.- In what ways do EFL teachers feel prepared (or not) to implement TBLT?

Significance of the Rationale for the Study

In the literature review of Chapter Three, the reader will see that teachers' perceptions and beliefs highly influence their teaching. Thus, learning about teachers' perceptions of TBLT will inform the place that this approach actually has among EFL teachers in Chile and the teachers' willingness to incorporate it into their teaching practice considering that this is a top-down mandate.

The findings, provide evidence (from teachers' perspectives) of some of the reasons why students in Chile perform poorly in comparison with their counterparts in other South American countries such as Argentina.

The findings of this study can help professors at universities in teacher-training courses to pay closer attention to the methodologies they are teaching and 'how' they are teaching them. In addition, the study contributes to raising awareness among school administrators to not only

support the work of EFL teachers but more importantly, include teachers' expertise and experiences in decisions about curriculum changes. Finally, the findings also contribute to curriculum developers by offering concrete suggestions as to how to improve the mandate of the real goals of the government and at the same time provide teachers the necessary support.

Study Outline

This dissertation is organized into nine chapters: In Chapter One I introduce the topic of my Ed.D, describe the research context, locate myself and present the research questions. Due to the extensive literature review I have divided it into two chapters. In Chapter Two I address TBLT and its implementation around the world. Teachers' perceptions of TBLT in FL contexts is detailed in Chapter Three. In Chapter Four I present the research methodology. In Chapter Five I provide an overview of each teacher-participant. In Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight I respond to the research questions: What are teachers' perceptions of TBLT and its successes and challenges? in Chapter Six; in what ways do EFL teachers feel prepared (or not) to implement TBLT? in Chapter Seven; and how can Chilean EFL teachers' perceptions of the implementation of TBLT at the secondary school level inform us about teaching English as a foreign language in Chile? in Chapter Eight. Finally, in Chapter Nine I present concluding comments and recommendations.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

TBLT and its Implementation in the World

Before analyzing the use of TBLT around the world, it is important to present this approach to language teaching in more depth. Thus, in this chapter, I will review the principles of TBLT and its relevance as a communicative approach. In addition, I will briefly present a distinction between teaching an L2 and TBLT implementation in both SL and FL contexts along with TBLT implementation in SL and FL contexts. In the section of TBLT in FL contexts, I concentrate on the perspectives and results of the studies conducted. Moreover, I also provide a quick overview of how TBLT has been implemented in foreign countries concluding with TBLT in South American countries.

TBLT and its Relevance as a Communicative Approach

TBLT is a communicative language approach that balanced focus on form approaches, which are mainly based on grammar, and focus on meaning approaches, such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in which learners are expected to learn the target language by using it (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011; Boroujeni, 2012). Focus on grammar approaches and communicative approaches have both been criticized; the former for neglecting meaningful communication and the latter for neglecting grammar (Willis, 2004).

In 1991, Michael Long, considering the success that task-based instruction had had in Prabhu's reported teaching experience in Bangalore, India (Prabhu, 1987), presented the idea of *focus on form*. This new concept aimed to join grammar focus and focus on meaning arguing that "the best way to learn a language, inside or outside a classroom, is not by treating it as an object of study, but by experiencing it as a medium of communication" (p. 41). TBLT, which is

primarily a communicative approach, also embraces the concept of focus on form by incorporating a grammar focus during the lesson. The grammar focus and most important of all, the location of it in a lesson, constitute one of the main differences between TBLT and other communicative approaches such as CLT in which a grammar focus has been considered to be uncertain (Nunan, 2004).

Other second language acquisition (SLA) researchers and teachers who have contributed frameworks of TBLT in which grammar is included are Willis (1996), Ellis (2003) and Nunan (2004). All of their models agree on the premise that grammar should not be an end, but a means to achieving meaningful and spontaneous communication. They also agree that the main lesson should be based on the completion of tasks and not on the accurate use of grammar. A comparison of these three proposed TBLT frameworks is seen in Table 3 (Table adapted from Bilash & Herrera, 2018).

Table 3
A Comparison of Three TBLT Frameworks

	Willis (1996)	Ellis (2003)	Nunan (2004)
Stage 1	Pre-task Introduction to the topic. Instructions are given Listening to authentic recording tasks. Preparation.	Preparation for the main task with activities such as: Performing a similar task. Follow a given model. Non-task preparation activities. Strategic planning	1) Schema building introduction of contents and vocabulary. 2) Controlled practice Practice of model of conversations similar to those of the tasks using giving vocabulary. 3) Authentic listening practice. Listening to authentic recording conversations. 4) Focus on linguistic elements.
Stage 2	During task	Completion of the task. Focused tasks.	5) Provide freer practice.

	Completion of the task; free style. Unfocused tasks.	Practice of conversation without following a specific pattern.
	Preparation of the report (accuracy is needed).	
Stage 3	Post task – Language focus Report Explanation and practice of specific grammar points that arose during the task completion.	Repeat performance Reflecting on the task. Focusing on forms 6) Introduce the pedagogical task. Focused tasks.

The following subsections present the meaning and importance of ‘task’ in TBLT, the role that ‘grammar’ has in the ‘task cycle’, and finally a reference to the impact that learning theories and SLA theories and hypotheses have on TBLT principles.

What is a Task? TBLT is a task-based language instruction approach and since its beginnings, several definitions of tasks have been given. For example, one of the first definitions given by Prabhu (1987) states that a task is “an activity which required learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process” (p. 24). According to Long (1985, as cited in Ellis, 2003), task means “the hundred and one things that people do in everyday life, at work, at play, and in between” (p. 4). Nunan (1989, as cited in Ellis, 2003), defines task as “a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally on meaning rather than form” (p. 4). Willis (1996) defines tasks as “activities where the target language is used by the learner for a communicative purpose (goal) in order to achieve an outcome” (p. 23).

Nunan (2004) makes a distinction between *real world tasks or target tasks* and *pedagogical tasks*. The former tasks refer to the “uses of the language in the world beyond the

classroom” and the latter refer to the tasks “that occur in the classroom” (p. 1). He defines a pedagogical task as

a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target language while their attention is on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning, and in which the attention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form. The task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right with a beginning, a middle and an end (p. 4).

From these definitions, it is possible to infer that ‘tasks’ imply meaningful and real communication, using grammar forms, vocabulary, or expressions, within a context and in a natural way.

The role of grammar in TBLT. As mentioned earlier, although explicit grammar instruction is not an end goal of teaching a new language in TBLT, it still has an important role in language learning and acquisition.

According to Krashen (1981), there is a clear distinction between learning a language and acquiring it. He posits that learning a language is a conscious process that usually includes the mastery of grammar rules. On the other hand, acquiring a language is a subconscious process that requires time and that also implies using the target language without paying attention to the forms that are being used. Krashen (1982) states

Language acquisition does not require extensive use of conscious grammatical rules and does not require tedious drill. It does not occur overnight, however. Real language acquisition develops slowly, and speaking skills emerge significantly later than listening skills, even when conditions are perfect. The best methods are therefore those that supply

“comprehensible input” in low anxiety situations, containing messages that students really want to hear. These methods do not force early production in the second language, but allow students to produce when they are “ready”, recognizing that improvement comes from supplying communicative and comprehensible input, and not from forcing and correcting production. (p. 6-7)

This implies that learning a language does not necessarily mean that the language is used naturally for communicative purposes. However, Ellis (2008) argues that it is also possible to see that focus on form (on grammar) is necessary in order to develop implicit knowledge and thus acquire the L2. Such implicit knowledge is applied in a natural and unconscious way without paying attention to the forms that are being used. According to Ellis (2008), new studies in the area state that this implicit knowledge can be developed by practicing grammar forms but in a communicative and meaningful way. According to Willis (1996), TBLT meets the basic requirements of acquiring an L2 since its tasks provide learners with exposure to the target language, focus on meaning and opportunities to use the language as naturally as possible.

TBLT introduces meaning before grammar. Willis and Willis (2007) support this approach for two reasons. Firstly, in their research they observe that when teachers first introduce grammar, with the purpose of helping learners to become aware of the forms and achieve an accurate language usage, students tend to lose the focus on meaning. For this reason, they suggest that meaning should precede form/grammar. This approach will help learners become engaged in the task and try to genuinely communicate rather than being concerned about how to communicate.

Secondly, Willis and Willis note that one cannot conclude that when students show understanding of a specific grammar rule, they have necessarily acquired the new structures, nor

remembered the rule after several weeks have passed. As is also mentioned in Krashen (1982), acquiring and using a new grammar structure requires time and meaningful practice. This time and meaningful practice can be provided by a TBLT approach. Thus, TBLT aims to combine meaning and grammar, by focusing primarily on meaning (Krashen, 1982), and later, after the task completion, on grammar.

Theoretical foundations of TBLT. In order to highlight the relevance that TBLT has as a communicative approach, it becomes important to refer to the theories on which it is grounded. TBLT is a learner-centered communicative approach to learning a new language and it is firmly underpinned by SLA theories (Long, 2014). Here I shall briefly describe these SLA theories and hypotheses: comprehensible input, output hypothesis, interaction, noticing, meaning and grammar combination, motivation, and autonomous learning.

Comprehensible input (Krashen, 1985) refers to providing the learners “comprehensible samples of the L2 and opportunities to use it for communication” (Long, 2014, p. 18). This is present in the principles of TBLT as it posits that students should be exposed to authentic materials as much as possible and that these materials should be comprehensible (Willis, 1996). During the task cycle, comprehensible input can be provided during the pre-task stage when teachers prepare the students for task completion. The Output hypothesis refers to the benefits that production of the target language brings to learners. These may be the improvement of their fluency and increased awareness of some linguistic problems (Swain, 1995). Output is seen in TBLT as providing learners wide opportunities to produce the target language especially throughout the ‘during task’ stage. SLA professor Michael Long has argued that comprehensible input is not enough to acquire a language and that meaningful interaction is also necessary (Long, 1991). This also responds to Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory of human learning which

states that learning involves social interaction in which the learner better achieves high levels of cognition when guided by an adult or by a capable peer (Ortega, 2009). TBLT also aligns with this hypothesis since it requires tasks to be meaningful and interactive. In addition, because tasks are usually completed in pairs or groups, students are always giving and receiving feedback that scaffolds their learning process.

The Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990) is also present in TBLT. Schmidt posited that in order to acquire an L2, learners need to pay attention to the new features that are being incorporated into their speech. This becomes even more important when the target language is being taught in a FL context or when it is being learned by teenagers or adults who already passed the ‘critical period’; a period when learners reach puberty and no longer can acquire a new language as easily as when they are children (Ortega, 2009). Noticing may be present in a task-based lesson as soon as the learners produce language, when they begin to prepare the report of the task, or when the teacher focuses on form after the report of the task. In this way, the approach not only pushes learners to use the language spontaneously but also assumes responsibility for the accuracy that learners should attain by paying attention to the new features after the task so that learners can learn even from their own errors.

Motivation is also key to acquiring an L2. For this reason, tasks and topics have to be real life-oriented so that they can truly motivate learners. In addition, their intrinsic motivation increases as they are given the opportunity to use the content (language) and succeed (Ellis, 2008; Ortega 2009). Holec (1980) as cited in Murphy (2008) enhances the value of autonomous learning as a way learners can become more active learners and as a result, develop their own learning strategies. Thus, autonomous learning also contributes to language acquisition since it provides learners opportunities to reflect and build their own strategies for comprehension. In TBLT when students are to complete a task and then report it, learners have the opportunity to

manage time as they want, use the language they want, and use the strategies they want. This flexibility gives students' autonomy hence, they feel more responsible for their own achievements.

From my analysis, I have found that TBLT also aligns well with the learning theories that are based on interaction and lived experiences: cognitivism (Ertmer & Newby, 1993), constructivism (Long, 2014), social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978), experiential learning (Kolb, 1984). Cognitivism is present in TBLT as teachers use several strategies in order to transmit and reinforce grammar forms and content during the post task – language focus stage, which, as was explained above, includes exercises and practice with the purpose of learning specific forms. Constructivism is present because teachers are facilitators as they provide examples, guide and follow the students and provide a meaningful context (Long, 2014). Learners use the information they receive and combine it with previous knowledge to complete a task. Learners do not have to provide a specific response but are allowed to be creative to use all their resources to complete tasks. The content and tasks are not pre-established but are chosen depending on learners' needs. The social constructivist learning theory is highly present during the task completion stage. However, in TBLT learning through social interaction may occur at any point in the class since the target language is to be used at all times. The role of the teacher in TBLT also responds to what Vygotsky (1978) describes as *a capable peer* who helps the learner advance. This kind of interaction is present in TBLT when the teacher, in the role of the more knowledgeable other provides scaffolding so that learners can complete tasks that are beyond their capabilities.

The Experiential learning suggested by Kolb (1984) is also a relevant aspect present in TBLT 'during the task cycle', in which learners need to reflect and use their previous knowledge and experiences to complete the tasks in their own way.

Summarizing, TBLT meets the basic requirements of acquiring an L2 (Willis, 1996) because its tasks provide learners exposure to the target language, to tasks that are meaningful, to opportunities to use the language as naturally as possible, and to autonomy in the learning process.

To conclude, when considering the language acquisition theories, the hypotheses, and the learning theories that also align with TBLT, we see together they create a very strong language learning/teaching approach. See Figure 3.

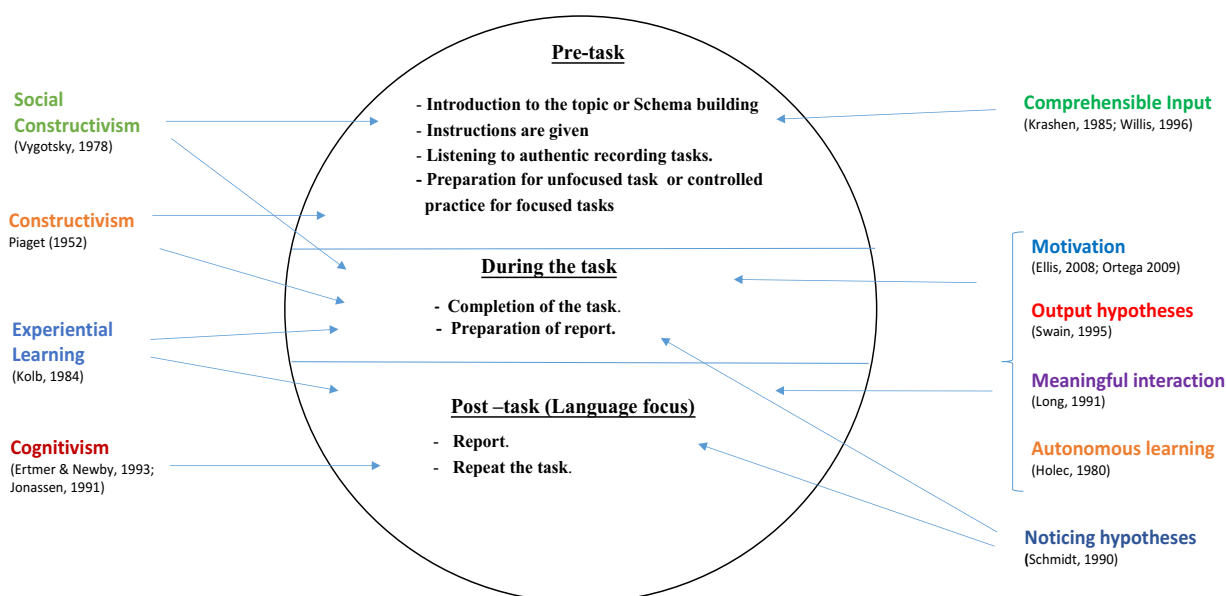


Figure 3. Contributions of learning theories and SLA theories to the TBLT cycle.

As the reader will see later, although TBLT has been widely implemented in several countries in the world, especially in teaching English as a SL and FL, its implementation has not

always been easy. The following section provides an overview of how TBLT has been implemented in SL and especially in FL contexts.

TBLT in SL and FL Contexts

To better comprehend my proposed research focus (studying Chilean FL teachers' perception of TBLT implementation in Chile), it is imperative to distinguish teaching an L2 in an FL vs SL context. Also, the experience of implementing communicative approaches such as TBLT in SL and in FL contexts may convey several differences.

Characteristics of teaching an L2 in SL and FL contexts. Teaching and learning English or any language in a SL context is different from learning it in a FL context. A SL context or environment is the place where the target language is spoken as the official or most common language, whereas a FL context is a place where the official language or the language spoken by the majority of the inhabitants is not the target language that is being studied (Shehadeh & Coombe, 2012).

Shehadeh and Coombe (2012) refer to the difference of teaching and learning an L2 in FL and SL context as follows:

In an FL context, and contrary to a SL context, students may lack opportunities and/or pressure to put what they learned in the classroom to proper use in the outside world. Secondly, FL teachers may find it much harder than SL teachers to introduce authentic material and texts in the classroom, to point out the usefulness of certain tasks, to motivate their learners to use the target language in the classroom, and to encourage them to put an effort in acquiring and studying it. Thirdly, teaching language as a subject (as is typically done in the case of FL teaching) may add to both learners' and teachers' view of

the target language as an object of study, rather than as a useful means of functional communication or as something with direct relevance to learners' needs. ... Fourthly, in most FL contexts, most or all the students share the same L1 (mother tongue) so that in the classroom the target language is not a lingua franca but an additional and often an unnecessary alternative medium. (p. xi)

The implementation of TBLT in SL and FL contexts. TBLT implementation has met with some differing results in SL versus FL contexts. Implementation in SL contexts has met with especially positive results (Andon & Eckerth, 2009; Calvert & Sheen, 2015). One of the main advantages that is present when TBLT is implemented in a SL context, and as was mentioned earlier, is that the target language is the main language that is spoken in the milieu, thus enhancing the students' motivation to take risks and use the target language inside and outside the classroom (Andon & Eckerth, 2009). In addition, all the resources that are usually required to teach a SL such as magazines, videos, bus schedules, tourist brochures, receipts, or prescriptions are authentic not only inside the classroom but are also widely available outside the classroom and can be found and used everywhere as part of daily life. The positive results in these studies were also enhanced because the students were motivated, teachers had an understanding of TBLT and classes were small.

However, TBLT implementation in SL contexts may not always be free of obstacles. For example, some may think that TBLT is better implemented in SL contexts because the language is taught by native speakers who are considered perfect models of the target language. Nevertheless, being taught by native speakers of the target language does not guarantee that TBLT will be implemented appropriately or that students will use the target language more. Plews and Zhao (2010) provide evidence that native speaking L2 teachers in SL contexts

sometimes do not understand TBLT principles and instead adapt it to the presentation – practice – production (PPP) approach.

TBLT implementation has been controversial in FL contexts as well. Some challenges are related to diverse contexts and cultural factors. It has been argued that highly communicative instruction and learner-centered classes are not well suited to a FL context especially in Asian countries where students tend to feel more comfortable in passive and receptive roles as learners and where teachers also feel more comfortable if they have their classes under total control (Jin & Cortazzi, 1998a). Ellis (2003) states,

Task-based teaching is an Anglo-American creation. Irrespective of whether it is psycholinguistically justified, it must be considered in terms of the social and cultural impact it has on consumers, especially in non-western contexts, and also in terms of whether the language practices it espouses are “transformative,” i.e. enable learners to achieve control over their lives. (p. 331)

Controversies related to the educational system are also relevant. In places where standardized language exams are required to enter the university or obtain better job positions, classes that focus on meaning rather than on grammar (forms) are less desired for both teachers and students because the latter prefer more traditional-oriented methods in order to pass the exams.

Despite the critiques, TBLT still has a place in FL contexts. For example, TBLT has been embraced by many Asian countries. In addition, TBLT has been considered to have made a key contribution to SLA (Ellis, 2009). With study results showing both success and challenges, researchers (e.g., Carless, 2012; Chacón, 2012; Chan, 2012; Genc, 2012; Jackson, 2012; Li, 1998) have considered studying and exploring the implementation of TBLT in FL contexts as key to fully comprehending the benefits and challenges that TBLT might have.

TBLT in SL Contexts

TBLT has been mandated for implementation in some SL contexts such as Canada and Belgium. In Canada, TBLT has mainly been introduced in the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada program (LINC). This is a government-funded program that aims to give equal English language training to adult refugees and new immigrants (Campbell, MacPherson, & Sawkins, 2014). A similar intention is seen in Flanders, Belgium where TBLT began as a novel teaching approach in the late 1990's. This approach arose in order to put an end to an unfair educational system in which the audio-lingual method to teach Dutch as a SL was not helpful since many children, youth and adult immigrants or sojourners, found themselves disadvantaged due to their lack of Dutch language skills (Van den Branden, 2006).

TBLT implementation studies have gained a relevant place in research (e.g., Douglas & Kin, 2014; Ogilvie & Dunn, 2010). For example, some of the main research areas in which TBLT has been studied include how tasks are performed and the impact they have on building communicative skills (Van den Branden, 2009).

TBLT in FL Contexts

Several governments, especially in Asian countries, have mandated TBLT as the language teaching approach to teaching L2s (e.g., Carless, 2003; Cheng & Moses, 2011; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Vilches, 2003). However, the results of its implementation and how it is perceived vary (Lai, 2015). The present section seeks to provide an overview of TBLT studies that have been conducted in FL contexts indicating: a) the context (school level education or adult level education, and main countries); b) the perspective of the studies (teachers' perspectives, students' perspectives, linguistic perspectives, and TBLT implementation); and c) the results in

general. Thus, the purpose of this section is not to analyze the themes that emerge from the studies, but to portray how TBLT is being studied and its relevance. Also, I show the importance of its exploration in countries where it has not been widely studied, such as Chile.

In choosing studies for this review of literature I preferred the TBLT empirical studies published in scholarly journals and books. I decided to exclude research articles in which TBLT was combined with online tools. This decision was made mainly because these strategies do not widely represent Chilean school classrooms. However, for the reader to have an idea of the kind of work that is being done with TBLT and online tools see Antokhin, Boussalhi, Chen, Combacau and Koppany (2004), Stevens (2004), Lys (2004), Sarre (2013), and Lai and Li (2011).

The literature search was conducted mainly electronically through Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) and Linguistic and Language Behavior Abstracts (LLBA) databases and Google scholar. I was able to identify 74 empirical studies which are summarized in Appendix C.

Main contexts, perspectives, and results of TBLT studies conducted in FL contexts.

TBLT has achieved much attention since it was first implemented by Prabhu in 1987, and been the focus of wide and extensive research in FL contexts.

In order to better understand the type of TBLT research conducted, this subsection presents an overview of the main contexts where TBLT has been studied, the perspectives that have been used to look at TBLT implementation, and also the results of the studies.

Contexts. From the extensive literature review, it is possible to observe that most of the studies have been conducted in Asian countries such as China, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Taiwan, Turkey, and Vietnam (e.g., Cheng & Moses, 2011;

Mustafa, 2010; Nahavandi & Mukundan, 2012; Ooyoung, 2013). There has been a smaller number of studies conducted in European countries such as France, Spain, and Turkey (Genc, 2012; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012; Malicka & Levkina, 2012; Xhaferi & Xhaferi, 2014), in Australasia in New Zealand and Australia (East, 2012; East, 2014; Rolin-Ianziti, 2010), in North America in The United States of America (Leaver & Kaplan, 2004; Macias, 2004; Mora, 2004; Herrera, 2012) and in South America in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Venezuela (Arias, Roberto, & Rivera, 2013; Chacón, 2012; Córdoba, 2016; Dunne, 2014; Quintanilla & Ferreira, 2010; Galvis, 2011; Herazo, Jerez, & Arellano, 2009; Lopez, 2004; Morales & Ferreira, 2008; Passos de Oliveira, 2004; Peña & Onatra, 2009).

In relation to the educational age of the learners (those in primary, secondary or post-secondary educational settings), many studies (35 out of 74) have been conducted in post-secondary education (e.g., Luo & Xing, 2015; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012; Moore, 2012; Nahavandi & Mukundan, 2012; Rashtchi & Keyvanfar, 2012; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011; Xhaferi & Xhaferi, 2014; Xiao-yan, 2011), whereas 10 in primary education (e.g., Butler & Zeng, 2015). 2015; Shintani, 2014; Tinker Sachs, 2009; Zhang, 2015), 20 in secondary education (e.g., Herrera, 2012; Lai, Zhao & Wang, 2011; Leaver & Kaplan, 2004; Mustafa, 2010; Park, 2012; Sasayama & Izumi, 2012), and 9 including both secondary and primary education (e.g., East, 2012; Hu, 2013; Lopez, 2004) (See Table 4). Also, most of the studies (66 out of 74) have mainly taken place in real classroom situations. This reveals a shift from the empirical evidence gathered by Carless (2004) who argued that most of the empirical studies had been conducted with special groups of students, and not in real classroom situations.

Table 4

Overview of TBLT Studies in FL Contexts

	Teachers' perspectives		Students' perspectives		Linguistic perspective		Task and TBLT implementation	
	<i>School level</i>	<i>Adult level</i>	<i>School level</i>	<i>Adult level</i>	<i>School level</i>	<i>Adult level</i>	<i>School level</i>	<i>Adult level</i>
Positive results	Cheng & Moses (2011) East (2014)	Hadi (2013) Tabatabaei & Hadi (2011) McAllister, Combes & Perret (2012) Xhaferi & Xhaferi (2014)		Chuang (2010) Meng & Cheng (2010) Ooyoung (2013)		Farsani, Tavakoli & Moinzadeh (2012)	Herrera (2012) Lai, Zhao, & Wang (2011) Leaver & Kaplan (2004) Lopez (2004) Park (2012) Pei (2008) Peña & Onatra (2009) Shintani (2011) Shintani (2014) Tinker Sachs (2009) Nguyen, Newton & Crabbe (2015)	Alwi (2015) Angela (2013) Arias, Roberto, & Rivero (2013) Chacón (2012) Córdoba (2016) Darasawang (2015) Dunne (2014) Quintanilla & Ferreira (2010) Freiermuth & Huang (2015) Herazo, Jerez, & Arellano (2009) Macias (2004) Mora (2004) Morales & Ferreira (2008) Pasos de Oliveira (2004) Rohani (2011) Weaver (2012) Vilches (2003) Xiangyang & Shu-Chiu (2013)
Mixed results	Carless (2007) Carless (2009) Chan (2014) Lin & Wu (2012) East (2012) Hu (2013) McDonough & Chaikitmongkol (2007) Luo & Xing (2015) Jeon & Hahn (2006) İlin, İnözü & Yunru (2007)	Xiao-yan (2011) Luo & Xing (2015)	Park (2015)				Blutler (2015) Carless (2003) Carless (2004) Sasayama & Izumi (2012) Zhang (2015)	Panahi (2012) Rolin-Ianziti (2010) Malicka & Levkina (2012) Genc (2012) Widodo (2015)
Negative results	Adamson & Tong (2008) Chan (2012) Deng & Carless (2009, 2010) Galvis (2011) Li (1998) Mustafa (2010) Zheng & Borg (2014)	Nahavandi & Mukundan (2012)			Hayati & Mohammadi (2009)	Rashtchi & Keyvanfar (2012) Moore (2012)	Zhang (2007)	

Perspectives. Researchers have been looking at TBLT from teachers' perspectives (e.g., Adamson & Tong, 2008; Luo & Xing, 2015; Zheng & Borg, 2014), from linguistic perspectives

(e.g., Farsani, Tavakoli & Moinzadeh, 2012), from students' perspectives (e.g., Chuang, 2010; Hadi, 2013; Meng & Cheng, 2010), and from the perspective of the implementation of TBLT or tasks (e.g., Chacón, 2012; Rolin-Ianziti, 2010; Shintani, 2014) (See Table 4 for details).

Results. In reviewing the studies, I categorized their results as *positive*, *mixed* and *negative*. Positive results mean that TBLT is shown to improve students' English language level or that TBLT is perceived by participants as a beneficial language teaching approach. Mixed results mean that there is evidence of some positive aspects (positive perception, positive implementation) but there is no further change in students' language level or in the teachers' willingness to further implement TBLT. Finally, negative results mean that students did not improve linguistically or that TBLT is perceived as a complicated or not beneficial approach. In general, the overview displayed in Appendix C and Table 4 reveals that most of the results of the studies are positive. However, most of these studies took place at adult or elementary school level education. Table 4 aims to put TBLT research studies in FL contexts in perspective by identifying present trends of the studies.

From Table 4 it is possible to see that most of the studies (40 out of 74) are focused on TBLT implementation and that the majority of the results are positive (e.g., Alwi, 2015; Chacón, 2012; Dunne, 2014; Mora, 2004; Quintanilla & Ferreira 2010; Rohani, 2011; Shintani, 2014; Tinker Sachs, 2009; Vilches, 2003; Weaver, 2012). It is interesting to note that in these studies, the implementation of TBLT was conducted by researchers who also had a deep understanding of the approach. These factors and the understanding of the approach, create a setting that may lead to success.

Another interesting point is that most of the positive results (26 out of 39) are at the adult education level (e.g., Angela, 2013; Chuang, 2010; Darasawang, 2015; Farsani, Tavakoli & Moinzadeh, 2012; Hadi, 2013; Meng & Cheng, 2010; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012;

Ooyoung, 2013; Xhaferi & Xhaferi, 2014) . A reason for this phenomenon may be that teaching adults tends to be less challenging than teaching children or teenagers. The attitudes that usually accompany adult learners (responsibility, motivation, autonomy) may facilitate the implementation of the communicative approach.

The difference of results on teachers' and students' perceptions is also particular. In Table 4 it is observable that the area of teachers' perceptions has been more explored than the area of students' perceptions. Interestingly, most studies on students' perspectives take place in adult education.

From teachers' perspectives, the results are varied but most of them tend to be mixed and negative. At a glance, it is possible to infer that it may be, as mentioned above, that teachers have to face challenges that hinder the positive attitude that they may have towards TBLT implementation. However, some of the studies do not specify if the research teacher-participants actually had ever tried to implement TBLT (Galvis, 2011). In addition, a lack of teachers' understanding of TBLT (Nahavandi & Mukundan, 2012; Zheng & Borg, 2014) also impacts teachers' perceptions. It would be very valuable if studies that are based on teachers' perceptions, include teachers who have an understanding and who have used the approach in order to provide an opinion based on their lived experiences.

Summarizing, when looking at the countries where the studies above took place, it is possible to see that TBLT has been increasing in relevance in the world, and especially in Asian countries. There are several countries in which TBLT has been integrated since its beginnings, for example, in the US (Leaver & Kaplan, 2004), Hong Kong, and China (Carless, 2007). Also, as is seen later, although Asian countries have been exposed to TBLT for some time, implementation is still a struggle. In countries such as New Zealand (East, 2014) and France (McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012), where TBLT has recently gained more relevance, the

results of the studies are mainly positive. The implementation of TBLT in South American countries is still in progress and very little is known about its implementation, although the approach has already been mandated in countries such as Chile (Ministerio de Education, 2012), Colombia (Galvis, 2011) and Venezuela (Chacón, 2012).

In order to focus and give the Latin American context more prevalence, the following section presents an overview of studies on TBLT in Latin American countries.

TBLT in South American countries and in Chile. TBLT has also been studied in South American countries such as Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia and Chile. However, little research has been conducted in those countries regarding this topic. Considering that South American countries may have some similarities, in this section, a summary of the work that has been done in TBLT in those contexts will be presented. In doing so, it will be possible to see differences and similarities among TBLT implementation between the Asian or European context and the South American milieu.

TBLT in South American countries. In terms of research, TBLT has not yet had a significant presence in South American countries. Most studies on TBLT have been conducted in Colombia (Arias, Roberto, & Rivera, 2013; Córdoba, 2016; Galvis, 2011; Herazo, Jerez, & Arellano, 2009; Peña & Onatra, 2009), with Brazil (Lopez, 2004; Passos de Oliveira, 2004), Venezuela (Chacón, 2012) and Chile (Dunne, 2014; Quintanilla & Ferreira, 2010; Morales & Ferreira, 2008) following suit.

Except for Galvis' (2011) study that focused on pre-service teachers' perceptions of TBLT, almost all of the studies concentrate on task implementation to improve English language communicative skills among the students.

The studies in the South American context illustrate a very positive evaluation of TBLT

implementation at the adult and primary and secondary school level education. Nevertheless, in Galvis (2011) the research participants (pre-service teachers) acknowledged the benefits of TBLT, while noting challenges in its implementation in Colombia due to the students' socio-cultural background.

Among studies conducted at the school level (Lopez, 2004; Herazo, Jerez, & Arellano, 2009; Galvis, 2011; Peña & Onatra, 2009), three of them focus on task-implementation (Lopez, 2004; Herazo, Jerez, & Arellano, 2009; Peña & Onatra, 2009) and one on teachers' perceptions of TBLT implementation (Galvis, 2011). In all cases task implementation encountered challenges but teachers were also consistently able to succeed. For example, the study conducted in Brazil by Lopez (2004), although challenging because the TBLT approach was new and the learners were young, was successful for three reasons: teachers were well trained; students were highly motivated in this private and expensive English-medium school; and the needs of the learners demanded the institution to apply a weak version of TBLT, which gives more space to grammar focus and more planned lessons (Ellis, 2003).

In Peña and Onatra (2009), in Colombia, the context is similar because it is a secondary school, but different because it is a public school. However, the researchers only mention challenges related to language production. If there were classroom management problems, they were not stated. Finally, the action research conducted by Herazo, Jerez, and Arellano (2009) in Colombia emphasizes a lack of support as the main challenge that teachers may encounter; in this case, lack of support from other EFL teachers in the same school. However, the researchers, who were experts in TBLT, were able to implement the approach overcoming the challenges that the public secondary school setting offered, and the barriers that other teachers or administrative staff had created.

Galvis (2011) focused his study on pre-service teachers' perceptions of TBLT

implementation. His study portrays a very different and critical perspective of the implementation of the CEFR and TBLT as a language teaching approach. He focuses on challenges such as low grammar-focus in the task cycle and low use of technology to support task-based lessons. He also reports the challenges identified by the pre-service teacher participants including crowded classrooms, low expectations of the students to travel abroad to use the English language, and lack of administrative staff support. The most highlighted challenge, however, is the cultural differences of providing oral corrective feedback, especially during the reporting stage of the task cycle. He argues that differences such as directedness versus politeness in oral speech may cause a culture clash. Galvis (2011) argues that Colombian society prefers to use a rather polite language or even avoid correction at certain points, whereas in European and North American cultures opinions are expressed more directly:

one can see the clash of the directedness approach vs. the politeness approach in that students oftentimes prefer to ignore their weaknesses in learning due to social pressure in the classroom, lack of assertiveness and, most of all, because of their local cultural notions of silence locally conceived as a way of respect and a factor that helps to maintain harmony among speakers (in this case between teachers and classmates).
(p. 201)

Considering these four cases, it is interesting to note that in cases where the researchers themselves implemented TBLT they obtained positive results (Lopez, 2004; Herazo, Jerez, & Arellano, 2009; Peña & Onatra, 2009), but in the case where the researcher investigates teachers' perceptions, the results are negative. It is not clear in Galvis (2011) if the teachers actually had tried implementing TBLT.

The studies conducted in adult education mainly refer to task implementation in EFL

institutes or university classes (Arias, Roberto, & Rivera, 2016; Córdoba, 2016; Dunne, 2014; Quintanilla & Ferreira, 2010; Passos de Oliveira, 2004), with a small number in EFL teacher-training programs participating (Chacón, 2012; Morales & Ferreira, 2008). The results of the task-implementation studies provide positive results. In Chile, a few studies also combine TBLT with technological support such as internet tools (Dunne, 2014), and Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) in order to strengthen oral and written language skills (Quintanilla & Ferreira, 2010). Another novel way of approaching TBLT is seen in Passos de Oliveira (2004) in an EFL institute in Brazil, where he concentrates his study on the implementation of task-based assessment (TBA). He finds that if TBLT is implemented, students should also be assessed through TBLT. The main modification to the assessment practices was in terms of providing higher value to the criterion related to communication. Passos de Oliveira acknowledges that a better TBA should follow the TBLT cycle. However, this integrated method of assessment aims to incorporate the principles of TBLT incrementally in order to diminish anxiety about the new approach among students. The author concludes that overall TBA is well perceived by many members of the institute and by the students.

The studies based on teacher-training programs (Chacón, 2012; Morales & Ferreira, 2008) also show positive results toward the implementation of TBLT in combination with technological alternatives. In Chile, there is a study focused on TBLT and CALL. This combination was introduced in order to provide more access to the teacher-students to continue developing their language skills through distance learning. The study concludes that students who used these two approaches had a significant improvement in their language skills (Morales & Ferreira, 2008). The study that was conducted in Venezuela by Chacón (2012) was based on the implementation of TBLT to enhance students' communicative skills through film-oriented tasks. The participants were 50 third year teacher-training students and their language level was

high intermediate. The action research study lasted ten weeks during which time the students developed projects based on films, and also developed collaborative learning. The students evaluated their experience and also evaluated their peers' improvements. The evaluation according to their perception was positive. They highlighted that they had learned more vocabulary, improved their listening comprehension, and became aware of a variety of accents. Finally, they also appreciated that that they were introduced to TBLT, not only in theory but also in practice, because they considered it a key for their future teaching practice.

Finally, since most of the results of the studies presented here were positive overall, is it appropriate to say that TBLT can be easily implemented in South American countries? No, it is not. There is a need for more studies based on teacher-training programs, how TBLT is taught at the school level, how TBLT was implemented, and the perceptions of teachers and students who have actually implemented TBLT in such contexts.

Since the main goal of this study is to learn how TBLT is perceived and understood by teachers in Chile, a separate subsection will explain the work done in that context in more detail.

TBLT in Chile. As stated in Chapter One, in recent years TBLT has been suggested as 'the' approach to be used in Chilean classrooms. It has been incorporated by some Universities and is being taught as an approach to pre-service teacher education. Nevertheless, according to Candy Veas, EFL and methodology professor at the University of Playa Ancha in Chile, when the new teachers start teaching in schools, many of them prefer to use traditional approaches rather than using TBLT (C. Veas, personal communication, November 20, 2014).

In ELT research, there are some unpublished pre-service Master's theses based on TBLT in adult level education (Casey, 2011) and others in primary and secondary school level education (Orellana, Sainte-Marie, Villouta & Wulff, 2012).

In adult education, Casey (2011) had positive results but did not follow the task-based

cycle. Positive results were also reported in a study by Orellana, Sainte-Marie, Villouta and Wulff (2012), where the research was conducted among students of a private school where many had already been widely exposed to the English language.

Since my literature search uncovered very few studies based on TBLT, and none that explored teachers' perceptions of TBLT implementation, I decided to conduct a couple of surveys of Chilean EFL teachers. After receiving ethics approval from the University of Alberta, I recruited 65 Chilean EFL teachers to respond to an online survey about their perceptions of the level of communication they included in their classes (Herrera, 2016a). Then, I recruited 358 EFL teachers who participated in another online ethics-approved survey about EFL teachers' perceptions of TBLT implementation in Chile (Herrera, 2016b). The overall results indicate that in general teachers have a positive attitude towards implementing communicative approaches.

Although the findings of these studies have not been published yet, they have been presented at academic conferences. The findings in Herrera (2016b) have especially informed my research question, particularly the questions of the interview protocol and the selection of the teacher participants. This study revealed that, overall, Chilean EFL teachers tend to have a positive perception of TBLT implementation. It also shows that many teachers understand the principles of TBLT but that they may misunderstand the concept of 'task' when it is embedded in some concrete examples. Teacher participants also value the benefits that TBLT provides for language teaching, but recognize some challenges.

Considering the challenges that teachers encounter when implementing TBLT in FL contexts and the tendency of Chilean education to pay more attention to traditional language approaches, I wonder what teachers think about this new approach. Do they need to have an accurate and indepth understanding of TBLT in order to implement it successfully? Are they willing to risk and explore new teaching methodologies? Are schools prepared for changes? Is

the country prepared to shift from grammar-oriented national tests to more productive, practical, and communicative assessments? What implications does SIMCE have in the implementation of TBLT?

The review of literature in South American countries (Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela and Chile) has not evidenced as many challenges as studies in other FL contexts such as in Asia. Some reasons for a rather positive perception of TBLT implementation may be that the studies conducted in South American countries to date, have not been extensive enough, and the settings have usually been propitious; for example, university or institute settings, school students from private schools, and institutions that provide teachers the necessary support to implement changes in their teaching practice. The only study that reports a more challenging setting (school level education, lack of support from other EFL teachers) and still had positive results, is seen in Herazo, Jerez and Arellano (2009) where the main researchers had a solid understanding of TBLT. This indicates the important role that teachers' understanding of TBLT plays in its successful implementation, especially in challenging situations.

Finally, as TBLT has not been widely studied in South American countries, and as the contexts in which it has been implemented have usually been amicable, and that teachers play a key role in the implementation of any initiative, as the reader shall see in the next chapter, it is key to know about school teachers' understanding of TBLT along with their perceptions of it in order to know whether or not TBLT has a place in Chilean education.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter provides an overview of the basics of TBLT and its relevance as an approach that mainly concentrates on promoting meaningful spontaneous communication without neglecting the role of grammar. Also, it provides an overview of the learning theories

and SLA theories aligned with TBLT. This chapter also portrays how SLA theories underpin the principles of TBLT giving it a strong learning foundation that, if accurately implemented, may produce excellent language learning results among students.

The chapter also briefly explores TBLT implementation in SL and more broadly in FL contexts. The analysis of how TBLT has been implemented in a variety of countries indicates its growth in popularity in Asian countries, some presence on almost every continent, and a minimal amount of research having been conducted in South American countries. The analysis also provides evidence that most of the studies in both FL and SL contexts have been conducted in adult level education. In addition, teachers in SL contexts also face challenges when they do not know the approach well or do not receive appropriate and sufficient support for implementation.

This doctoral study is especially relevant as it is based on a world-wide language teaching approach mandated by an EFL country (Chile) in which there is no empirical evidence of its implementation let alone teachers' perceptions of its viability to be used as an ELT approach. The present study focuses on secondary school level education and investigates teachers' perceptions of implementing a communicative language teaching methodology known as TBLT.

Chapter Three narrows the focus by presenting a review of relevant research on teachers' perceptions of TBLT in FL contexts in both school and adult levels of education.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

Teachers' Perceptions of TBLT In FL Contexts

The Relevance of Teachers' Perceptions in Educational Research

Scholars use different concepts that define the relationship between what teachers think about some pedagogical factors and the way they act upon them. For example, Pajares (1992) talks about teachers' beliefs stating that these may be defined as "attitudes, values, judgments, axioms, opinions, ideology, perceptions, conceptions, conceptual systems, preconceptions, dispositions, implicit theories, explicit theories, personal theories, internal mental processes, action strategies, rules of practice, practical principles, perspectives, repertories of understanding, and social strategy, to name but a few that can be found in the literature" (p. 307). Borg (2003) adds that the relationship between what teachers think, know, or believe and their pedagogical actions is what he calls teachers' cognition which can be defined by "beliefs, knowledge, theories, images, assumptions, metaphors, conceptions, perspectives" (p. 82).

Despite the variety of concepts, Pajares (1992) narrows these concepts and their relationships indicating that teachers' beliefs impact their perceptions which in turn impact their pedagogical actions. Despite the subtle differences in detail, one factor that is clear is that these concepts aim to provide a definition for 'teachers' voices', which, for the purpose of this study, will be described as teachers' perceptions.

Teachers' perceptions are critical in educational research (Borg, 2003; Markee, 1997; Pajares, 1992) for a number of reasons. Firstly, research based on teachers' perceptions responds to the social constructivist epistemology, one of the paradigms that is used in this study. It posits that knowledge is constructed as people interact with each other (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In this case, the dialogue that arises from the interviews provides knowledge that helps us understand

better how teachers perceive TBLT along with understanding the factors that have shaped the teachers' perceptions of the approach under study.

Secondly, this kind of research aligns with critical literacy theory (which is one of the interpretive tools in this study). As Pajares (1992) states, educational research based on teachers' beliefs touches "the heart of teaching" (p. 329). Thus, researching a topic through teachers' perceptions empowers them to express themselves, helps us all better understand an educational context and contributes to increased awareness and thus possible change in education.

Third, many teachers think that, in general, studies conducted by researchers are not valid because researchers "know little - and understand less – about the day-to-day business of life in the language classroom" (Burns, 1999, p. 14). Thus, studies that consider teachers' voices increase research credibility for teachers in the field. Further, these theoretical kinds of studies use a sophisticated technical vocabulary that is not easy for teachers to understand. Thus, academic research is not as easily accepted as classroom practice research (Carson, 1986; Markee, 1997).

Fourth, researchers agree that teachers' perceptions influence their way of teaching and as a result influence the way students are taught (East, 2012; Hadi, 2013; Pajares, 1992). Teachers' perceptions can be as varied as the way they interpret and implement new teaching approaches such as TBLT. Beliefs include those about learners, teaching styles, subject content area, beliefs about learning to teach, and teachers' roles. Once teachers have acquired a way of teaching, which in many cases resembles the way they were taught, or have developed certain beliefs, they tend to show a high resistance to modifying their practice (Van den Branden, 2009), especially if they are being required to introduce a new way of teaching.

Fifth, research has also demonstrated that teachers' practices vary in different situations. As Joseph Schwab (1983) outlined in his four commonplaces, the teaching context is influenced

by teachers, students, subject and milieu, including the prescription of pre-established content within a set period of time. Thus, teaching in different classrooms not only means in different places, but also with different people, who have different needs, and face different challenges. East (2012) highlights studies in which teachers' perspectives have been considered. These studies reveal that teachers' practices are highly influenced by their own prior learning experiences, the way they were taught and/or the experiences they had as students when learning content or subjects (Borg, 2006).

Although it is clear that teachers' beliefs, perceptions, and/or understanding impact their instructional styles, Van den Branden (2006) also points out that in several cases teachers' beliefs do not reflect what they do in the classroom. This might be because of contextual constraints such as "time limits, lack of appropriate teaching aids, external 'pressure' of the curriculum, official policy and the presence of too many students in the same class" (pp. 220-221). Conflicting beliefs (having opposing beliefs) and having a conflict between beliefs and skills are also reasons why teachers are not consistent with their beliefs and between their beliefs and practices (p. 221). Thus, knowing about the factors that influence teachers to maintain a particular teaching style, or knowing about how their perceptions impact their students, brings teaching awareness. Thus, this qualitative study invites teachers to reflect on their practice and as such may induce change.

Borg (2003) completed an extensive analysis of the work that has been done to date regarding teachers' cognition of L2 teaching. However, since Borg's work in 2003 additional research has not been conducted in this area. Thus, my attempt in this section is to collect a wide number of studies on teachers' perceptions, specifically concerning TBLT implementation. In the following sub-section I will present an extensive overview of research on teachers' perceptions of TBLT in FL contexts.

TBLT in FL Contexts: From Teachers' Perspectives

This section aims to provide a wide perspective, focusing on published studies about teachers' perceptions of TBLT implementation. Although there might be additional research such in unpublished theses, I have limited this review to published academic and professional articles and book chapters in the selection of general studies on TBLT, these published articles were retrieved from the library of the University of Alberta, Google scholar, and through ERIC and LLBA databases. The search was based on key words such as 'TBLT', 'teachers' perceptions' or 'attitudes' or 'points of view'. The search also yielded book chapters such as East (2012), Shehadeh and Coombe (2012), and Leaver and Willis (2004). In the case of Shehadeh and Coombe (2012), the chosen studies were the ones related to the purpose of this section – teachers' perception of TBLT in FL contexts. The same criteria were used to select the book chapters in Leaver and Willis (2004). The reference list of some theses and those of the reviewed articles was also used to capture as many studies as possible.

The table in Appendix D summarizes literature of recent research studies, focusing on the settings (primary, secondary, and adult education), the context (the countries and continents), and the results of TBLT implementation around the world according to teachers' perceptions. The main foci of the studies are: a) level of understanding of TBLT (e.g., Carless, 2009; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012; İlin, İnözü & Yumru, 2007); b) perceptions of TBLT (e.g., Hadi, 2013; Lin & Wu, 2012; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011); c) challenges of TBLT (e.g., Adamson & Tong, 2008; East, 2012; Nahabandi & Mukundan, 2012); d) benefits of TBLT (e.g., Deng & Carless, 2010; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012); and finally e) improvements proposed by EFL teachers (e.g., Carless, 2003, 2004, 2007, 2009; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012; Mustafa, 2010). The summary of the literature shows that Asia has been the primary FL context in which TBLT has been studied (53 out of 74). Studies

from Europe are also relevant though fewer in number. There is more presence of primary and secondary school level education studies than adult-education research – six, ten, and seven respectively and four that combine primary and secondary education. Many of the results of the studies show a conflicting perception of TBLT since they acknowledge that although TBLT is beneficial, it is difficult to implement (e.g., McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012; Lin & Wu, 2012; Xiao-yan, 2011). An elaboration on these themes follows.

Teachers’ understanding of TBLT. Carless (2003) explains that “Understandings are defined as the ability to articulate the principles of task-based teaching and an awareness of the implications for classroom practice” (p. 498). Thus, having a high understanding of the subject area is key. For example, Li (1998) refers to the lack of teachers’ understanding of CLT as one of the main reasons why they avoid using that communicative approach.

Teachers’ understanding of TBLT is a recurrent topic and focus of study (East, 2014; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Lin & Wu, 2012; Nahavandi & Mukundan, 2012; Xhaferi & Xhaferi, 2014; Zheng & Borg, 2014). Study results are conflicting: some studies show that teachers lack an understanding of TBLT (Carless, 2004; East, 2012; Nahavandi & Mukundan, 2012; Lin & Wu, 2012; Xiao-yan, 2011; and Zheng & Borg, 2014), while others suggest otherwise (Carless, 2003; Carless, 2007; Cheng & Moses, 2011; Hadi, 2013; Jeon, 2006; Îlin, Înözü & Yunru, 2007; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011; Xhaferi & Xhaferi, 2014).

Some variation in teachers’ understanding can also be seen according to the educational age of the learner (primary, secondary and adult level education). For example, there is a small number of studies that report positive results about teachers’ understanding of TBLT (Carless, 2003; Îlin, Înözü & Yunru, 2007), but mainly at the primary and adult levels (Hadi, 2013; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011; Xhaferi & Xhaferi, 2014; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012). At the

secondary level, research states that teachers' perceptions show a mainly low level of understanding of TBLT, if not many misunderstandings of it (Carless, 2004; East, 2012; Zheng & Borg, 2014).

In adult-education, studies reveal that some teachers have a strong understanding of TBLT (Hadi, 2013; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011; Xhaferi & Xhaferi, 2014; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012), while others show a weak understanding (Nahavandi & Mukundan, 2012; Xiaoyan, 2011).

Teachers' high understanding of TBLT. The studies that show results of teachers' high understanding of TBLT are associated with training in both theory and practice as in the cases of the teacher educators in Tabatabaei and Hadi (2011), Carless (2009), Jane in Deng and Carless (2010), Priscilla in Carless (2003), and Eve in Adamson and Tong (2008). The studies show that when teachers have learned TBLT in theory and practice, they are more able to overcome challenges such as the doubts of the reluctant colleagues (Adamson & Tong, 2008) and even make changes in the school if they are given support (Deng & Carless, 2010). A teacher participant in Deng and Carless (2010) stated the following:

The target of my lessons is for students to understand English in a meaningful context, use English in an appropriate way and exchange thoughts using the target language. . . I am glad that our school provides us opportunities to learn new ways of teaching and I am willing to try them out (p. 297).

Another reason for having a high understanding could be the consequence of the shift that several Asian countries have had towards communicative approaches such as TBLT as is the case in Hadi (2013) where most of the 51 experienced Iranian EFL teachers at an English institute expressed a strong understanding of TBLT.

Although proper training on TBLT influences teachers' understanding and

implementation of TBLT, there are cases in which teachers with a high level of training and knowledge still encounter difficulties in implementing TBLT (Carless, 2003; Carless, 2007; Chan, 2014; İlin, İnözü, & Yunru, 2007; Jeon & Hahn, 2006). In fact, the study, based on a questionnaire with 228 EFL teachers in Korea, reports that only 52 percent of the participants declared that they use this approach in their classes (Jeon & Hahn, 2006). Studies indicate that teachers with a wide understanding of TBLT may still be reluctant to implement it because of the students' low language level, time constraints for lesson and material preparation and implementation (Carless, 2003), or because they consider its implementation to be too complicated (Carless, 2007). In other cases, teachers still rely more on grammar-oriented lessons arguing that tasks are better for learning vocabulary and new grammar structures (Chan, 2014; İlin, İnözü, & Yunru, 2007).

This review suggests that despite high level training and knowledge, there are still other factors that hinder teachers' ability to implement TBLT.

Teachers' misunderstandings of TBLT. In cases where there are misunderstandings, these are related to a myriad of reasons. For example, teachers tend to conflate TBLT with CLT (Lin & Wu, 2012). One of the reasons for this misunderstanding is because the primary approach being taught at teacher-training programs has mainly been CLT (Lin & Wu, 2012). In other cases, studies indicate that teacher-training programs at the university do not set clear guidelines of what approach to use. This adds to teachers restraining themselves to traditional grammar-oriented approaches (Nahavandi & Mukundan, 2012) or by making such modifications to the task cycle that turn TBLT into PPP (Carless, 2009).

Benefits. In a number of studies teachers highlight the benefits and successes that they have experienced and observed when using TBLT (e.g., Deng & Carless, 2010; Jeon & Hahn,

2006; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012). In particular, they identify the strengths of TBLT design and implementation. Teachers tend to see more benefits at the adult education level (Hadi, 2013; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012; McDonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011; Xhaferi & Xhaferi, 2014), when learners are more mature and self-motivated.

Regarding the impact of TBLT on L2 classes, some teachers perceive that TBLT promotes enjoyment and active classes (Carless, 2003; Hu, 2013). TBLT is also regarded as suitable for small group work (Cheng & Moses, 2011; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012) in which students can develop their communicative skills more easily. It is also noted that TBLT promotes a collaborative learning environment (Cheng & Moses, 2011; Hadi, 2013; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011) as in many cases tasks need to be completed in groups. The authors also mentioned that the approach promotes a more individualized form of teaching (McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012) because teachers may devote specific amounts of time to students who are working in small groups, rather than focusing only on the whole class at one time.

TBLT offers varied benefits for the learner. Researchers frequently state that it enhances students' intrinsic motivation (Cheng & Moses, 2011; Hadi, 2013; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Lin & Wu, 2012; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011; Tinker Sachs, 2009) and students' use of interactive strategies along with the four language skills (Cheng & Moses, 2011; Hadi, 2013; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Lin & Wu, 2012; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012; Hu, 2013; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011; Tinker Sachs, 2009). One of the teachers thinks that TBLT may even be beneficial for examinations in the future (Deng & Carless, 2010):

I think my students can do well in exams because they have opportunities to use English in lessons. Besides, mechanical learning won't be very helpful in our internal examinations because if our students don't learn well, even if they can memorize things, they will still have problems using the language in the right situation (p. 298).

TBLT also promotes students' academic progress (Cheng & Moses, 2011), enhances autonomous learning (McDonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012), and helps students develop critical thinking and awareness of grammatical forms (McDonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011). Using meaningful tasks conducts and promotes language acquisition (Hadi, 2013; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012) and presents content that can be used in real world events (McDonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007). TBLT also enhances the development of learning strategies (McDonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007). In the study conducted by McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007) students developed more learning strategies, which can be used in other subjects to improve academic progress (Xhaferi & Xhaferi, 2014).

Table 5 summarizes the benefits perceived by teachers. These are categorized according to the impact that TBLT implementation may have on the L2 class and on the students.

Table 5

Summary of Teachers' Perceptions of Benefits Implementing TBLT in FL Contexts (Carless, 2003; Cheng & Moses, 2011; Deng & Carless, 2010; Hadi, 2013; Hu, 2013; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Lin & Wu, 2012; McDonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011; Tinker Sachs, 2009; Xhaferi & Xhaferi, 2014).

TBLT	Impacts on the L2 class	<p>promotes enjoyment and active classes</p> <p>it is ideal for small group work</p> <p>promotes a collaborative learning environment</p> <p>promotes a more individualized form of teaching</p>
	Impacts on learners	<p>it enhances students' intrinsic motivation</p> <p>it enhances students' interactive strategies</p> <p>it helps students develop the four language skills</p> <p>it may even be beneficial for examinations in the future</p> <p>it promotes students' academic progress</p> <p>it enhances autonomous learning</p> <p>it helps students develop critical thinking</p> <p>it helps students to be more aware of grammatical forms</p> <p>it conducts and promotes language acquisition</p> <p>it presents content that can be used in real world events</p> <p>it enhances the development of learning strategies.</p>

Challenges. In addition to identifying benefits, teachers also highlight the challenges that they have experienced and observed when implementing TBLT. Although TBLT is already widely implemented in FL contexts, and especially in Asian countries, most of the results of the research indicate that TBLT is difficult to implement. In a number of studies, authors have focused on the challenges that TBLT presents when it is implemented in FL contexts. It has been interesting to note that challenges are mainly related to secondary education (Adamson & Tong, 2008; Carless, 2007; Cheng & Moses, 2011; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Li, 1998; Lin & Wu, 2012; Mustafa, 2010; Zheng & Borg, 2014), and include lack of support from school administrators, teachers' lack of confidence, classroom management problems, resistance to using TBLT because teachers privilege grammar or because of the need to focus on more traditional approaches to prepare students to pass standardized tests, and students' resistance to using the target language during class. Teachers in primary education also highlight some challenges such as the need to use traditional approaches and large size classes (Carless, 2003; Carless, 2004; Deng & Carless, 2010; Hu, 2013; İlin, İnözü & Yunru, 2007; and East, 2012). Challenges using TBLT in adult level education are the fewest in number (Hadi, 2013; Nahabandi & Mukundan, 2012; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011; and McAllister & Combes, 2012) and include factors such as teachers' low language proficiency, teachers' lack of expertise using TBLT, and large size classes.

Challenges emerge for different reasons. For example, Shehadeh and Coombe (2012) state that many of the challenges that are present when implementing TBLT in FL contexts do not emerge from the approach itself but from external factors that make the implementation of TBLT more difficult.

Considering the source of the challenges I will categorize the challenges according to

their source, namely, challenges that arise from educational actors (teachers, school administrators, and students), from the educational system (standardized examinations, material support) or from the TBLT approach itself. Understanding the source of the problem may help teachers and school administrators better resolve the difficulties and find the necessary and appropriate support for a successful implementation of TBLT.

Challenges that emerge from educational actors. The challenges related to educational actors are those that emerge from teachers, school administrators, and students.

From teachers. In several studies, teachers' reported barriers that impact the success or failure of TBLT implementation. One of the most common and also a main focus of the studies is the connection between teachers' lack of expertise and understanding of the approach and the teachers' subsequent development of a lack of confidence toward using it (Carless, 2007; East, 2012; Hadi, 2013; Mustafa, 2010; Lin & Wu, 2012; Nahavandi & Mukundan, 2012; Xiao-Yan, 2011; and Zheng & Borg, 2014). Teachers' low level of language proficiency is another problem that surfaces (Carless, 2004; Li, 1998; Littlewood, 2007; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011). Having spent many years studying under traditional methods in which they were not required to have a protagonist participation in the learning process, teachers are well equipped and confident teaching and having students practice grammar through written exercises. The new communicative demands pose challenges evaluating students' task-based performance (Cheng & Moses, 2011; Jeon & Hahn, 2006).

Additional barriers reported by teachers include a lack of motivation even to consider implementing a new approach (Mustafa, 2010), and resistance to change because of their high comfort using traditional-oriented approaches (East, 2012, 2014; Hu, 2013; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Nahavandi & Mukundan, 2012). However, Nahavandi and Mukundan (2012) reflect that "Although lots of problems might hinder using communicative approaches at universities, it is

simplistic to assume that due to the problems, old methods of teaching, which have given their way to innovative and new methods, should be used” (p. 120).

Other teachers argue that TBLT is too complex an approach for their students to understand (Adamson & Tong, 2008; Carless 2009). Another constant challenge is classroom management. Some teachers are reluctant to conduct communicative activities because of the noise of an active classroom (Carless, 2003; Carless, 2004; Carless, 2007; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Li, 1998), and in some cases, multi-level classes increase the class challenges (Mustafa, 2010).

From school administrators. In Zhang (2007) and Adamson and Tong (2008), teachers identify challenges raised by the administrative staff of educational institutions. The lack of support from school administrators makes their work more complex and in some cases, although they may have an understanding and expertise in TBLT, they are not allowed to make changes. In other cases, there is a lack of guidance as is the case in Nahabandi and Mukundan (2012) where university teachers felt uncertain about what approach to use and as a result, chose more traditional approaches. Also, teachers’ workload is often already heavy; thus, they cannot devote extra time to preparing material to implement a communicative approach such as TBLT (Hadi, 2013; Lin & Wu, 2012; McAllister, Coombe & Perret, 2012). In other cases, even if teachers are able to implement TBLT, their work is not assessed. Thus, they do not receive feedback that could lead them to improve (Mustafa, 2010). Galvis (2011) also points out that school administrators in public schools limit the students’ possibilities of interacting with other cultures.

From students. In many cases students expect teachers to teach through traditional methods because they think that TBLT pays little attention to grammar (Leaver & Kaplan, 2004). This resistance is enhanced when students must pass standardized examinations (McDonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007), likely because traditional teacher-directed instruction is what is familiar to them and considered time-efficient preparation for high stakes examinations. In addition,

teachers perceive that students do not use the target language during the tasks and group work, but rather prefer to use their mother tongue (Carless, 2004; Carless, 2007; Mustafa, 2010).

Challenges that emerge from the educational system.

From the examination system. In many countries, the English language is a mandatory course in school, which places a burden on teachers as they feel they must cover all of the content of the given curriculum. To this has been added an extra burden - the standardized examination. This renders FL (English) a high stakes course, thus diminishing teachers' motivation to risk and implement novel language approaches. For example, especially in Asian countries (Carless, 2007; Deng & Carless, 2010; East, 2012; Hu, 2013; Zheng & Borg, 2014) teachers tend to use grammar-oriented approaches in order to provide the learners with as much content and rules as possible. In this way, teachers make sure that their students will pass the exams and that their jobs will not be in jeopardy.

From material support. The material support also constitutes a challenge to TBLT implementation. Several studies have argued that in some cases, textbooks are not appropriate for using TBLT (Nahavandi & Mustafa, 2012; Xhaferi & Xhaferi, 2014). This means that the goals and the lessons are not task-based oriented but follow traditional approaches. In addition, there is a lack of topics appropriate to all of the students in a classroom.

From class characteristics. Implementing TBLT in large classes is a major challenge (e.g., Carless, 2007; Cheng & Moses, 2011; Deng & Carless, 2009; Lin & Wu, 2012; Mustafa, 2010), especially in Asian countries. Studies highlight that monitoring all students in large size classes is especially challenging (Hadi, 2013; McAllister & Combes, 2012; Mustafa, 2010; Nahabandi & Mukundan, 2012; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011). This challenge also impacts the evaluation process because with large classes it is difficult for teachers to know who knows what or who did what (McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012).

Challenges that emerge from TBLT as an approach. The challenges presented above do not arise from TBLT itself, but from external factors (Shehadeh & Coombe, 2012). However, there are some challenges that teachers have to face which emerge from this approach. For example, some teachers think that tasks and preparation of classes may be very/too time consuming and seem to add a complex workload (Carless, 2007; Hadi, 2013; McAllister & Combes, 2012; Leaver & Kaplan, 2004; Lin & Wu, 2012; Xhaferi & Xhaferi, 2014).

Regarding assessment in TBLT, some teachers believe that TBA tends to be more complex than traditional assessments (Cheng & Moses, 2011; Jeon & Hahn, 2006). Moreover, teachers experience difficulties evaluating learners' task-based performance (Hadi, 2013; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011; McAllister & Combes, 2012).

Also, teachers fear that TBLT may slow down those students who have better language skills (Jeon & Hahn, 2006). In some cases, in beginner classes, or due to a rather receptive cultural nature there is low use of the target language (Carless, 2004; Mustafa, 2010).

Table 6 summarizes the main challenges according to their source:

Table 6

Summary of Teachers' Perceptions of Challenges Implementing TBLT in FL Contexts.

Challenges according to teachers' perceptions		
Educational actors	Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of teachers' expertise and understanding of the approach. - Low level of language proficiency. - Lack of motivation. - Resistance to change - Inability to reconstruct their previous beliefs - Comfort in using traditional approaches - Lack of confidence - Consider TBLT too complex. - Classroom management problems.
	School administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of support to teachers. - Lack of guidance regarding teaching approaches. - Impose heavy workload on teachers. - Do not assess or provide feedback on the implementation of TBLT.
	Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prefer more grammar-oriented classes, as related to high stakes exams. - Resistance to use the target language.
	Standardized examinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers use grammar-oriented teaching approaches to help students pass the examinations.

	Material support	- Textbooks are not based on TBLT. - Topics are not always suitable for the students.
	Class characteristics	- Large size classes generate: -Impossibility of providing a personalized attention to students. - Multi-level classes increase the class challenges.
TBLT approach		- Task preparation may be time consuming. - Task preparation adds extra work load. - Task-based assessment is more complex than traditional assessments. - It may slow down the students with better communicative skills. - It may go against local cultural styles and values of people due to its communicative characteristics.

Perception towards TBLT and its implementation. Teachers' perceptions towards TBLT may be positive, negative or conflicting and several studies have addressed this topic (Carless, 2003; Carless, 2004; Carless, 2007; Carless, 2009; Cheng & Moses, 2011; East, 2014, Hu, 2013; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Lin & Wu, 2012; Nahavandi & Mukundan, 2012; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011; Xhaferi & Xhaferi, 2014; Zheng & Borg, 2014). Perceptions may be influenced by the level of school at which teachers teach, their understanding of the approach, and the teaching opportunities and attitudes towards benefits and challenges that emerge from TBLT implementation. From the literature, it is possible to conclude that overall, the perceptions are mainly conflicting, meaning that in most studies, teacher participants perceive TBLT as helpful, but complex or difficult to implement.

Teachers' perceptions vary depending on school levels. These tend to be positive in primary education despite some challenges (Carless, 2004; Leaver & Kaplan, 2004) and very positive in adult level education (Hadi, 2013; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011; Xhaferi & Xhaferi, 2014).

Studies in secondary education suggest a rather negative perception meaning that either teachers resist shifting from grammar-oriented beliefs or they find TBLT implementation too complex due to the challenges they face (Adamson & Tong, 2008; Deng & Carless, 2010; Mustafa, 2010; Zheng & Borg, 2014). Conflicting perceptions are also more prominent among

secondary schools. This means that in several studies, teachers acknowledge TBLT's contribution but at the same time experience challenges implementing it (Carless, 2007; Carless, 2009; Cheng & Moses, 2011; Hu, 2013; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012; Leaver & Kaplan, 2004; and Lin & Wu, 2012).

Although perceptions may vary among the different levels of education, the factors that impact on teachers overlap among educational levels. Teachers' positive perceptions towards TBLT may be due to the implementation support teachers receive. For example, the case presented in McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007) exemplifies how support and guidance help teachers develop a positive attitude. In Adamson and Tong (2008), it is evident that both peers and school administrators help to develop a positive attitude. They refer to one of the schools' cases and conclude the following:

... the lack of strategic guidance forced teachers to define their own roles in TBL, which meant they might have been working on different assumptions from different perspectives. As a result, they eventually found it harder to collaborate or compromise. Effective change requires leadership from senior colleagues in creating a collaborative, supportive environment that demonstrates openness to grapple with change; without these factors, innovations will fail. (p. 188)

A positive perception is also developed when teachers are able to overcome the challenges and implement TBLT successfully in their classes (Hadi, 2013; Hu, 2013). In Zheng and Borg's (2014) case study, the three teacher-participants were supposed to follow the same curriculum and use the same TBLT-based textbook. However, only one of the three teachers had a positive perception and in spite of the challenges, was able to implement TBLT. The other two teachers felt that barriers, such as the high stakes examination system and large class size, made them feel more comfortable teaching through traditional approaches.

Another key point for having a positive perception toward TBLT is having a strong understanding of the approach in theory and practice as was presented earlier. For example, the findings of the questionnaire responses in Tabatabaei and Hadi (2011) reveal that teachers had received training in theory and practice and as a result, they had a thorough understanding of TBLT principles and recognized several benefits of TBLT. McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007) report the case study in which teachers who were learning about TBLT, initially focused more on the challenges and perceived TBLT as problematic. However, once they were involved in a case study and started to learn more about the approach by using it, their perceptions changed significantly in a positive way (McDonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007). The researchers in this case conclude:

They believed that it encouraged learners to become more independent and that it targeted their real-world academic needs. Although they initially reacted negatively to the course content because it did not include explicit grammar instruction, they came to appreciate the emphasis on learning strategies and task performance. (p. 123)

A positive perception is also enhanced when teachers understand TBLT principles and believe in them (Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011).

There are a smaller number of studies in which the overall perceptions of TBLT are negative. A reason for the negative perception may be based on the teachers' grammar-oriented beliefs (Deng & Carless, 2010). Deng and Carless (2010) cite one of the participants who states:

Mechanical repetition and imitation is a foundation of learning. It is naive to think that students can develop their abilities by using their limited English among themselves unless they have first accumulated a certain amount of vocabulary and sentences through memorization. (p. 294)

It is also noteworthy that in the studies where teachers had negative perceptions of TBLT, they

also had not received appropriate guidance and support to implement this approach.

There are also studies in which TBLT is perceived in a rather conflicting way as teachers acknowledge TBLT benefits and contributions to language learning but at the same time find challenges to implementing it (Carless, 2007; Carless, 2009; Cheng & Moses, 2011; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Nahavandi & Mukundan 2012; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012; Lin & Wu, 2012; Xiao-yan, 2011; and Zheng & Borg, 2014).

Although having a positive perception towards TBLT is a crucial step in its implementation, it is not sufficient. For example, in Xiao-yan (2011), teachers have a positive perception but, in general, have a limited understanding of TBLT which, in turn, prevents them from implementing it in their classes.

Table 7 summarizes the main factors that impact on teachers' perceptions towards TBLT implementation.

Table 7

Factors that Inform on Teachers' Perceptions of TBLT and its Implementation

Positive perceptions	Negative perceptions	Conflicting perceptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -When teachers receive support to implement TBLT. - When teachers are able to overcome the challenges and implement TBLT in their classes. - When teachers understand TBLT in theory and in practice. -When teachers understand the principles of TBLT and believe in them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When teachers have grammar-oriented beliefs. -When teachers do not receive appropriate guidance to implement TBLT. -When teachers do not receive support to implement TBLT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When teachers acknowledge the benefits of TBLT but find many challenges to implement it.

Critical proposed changes. Studies also contribute to the evolution of TBLT in practice by making suggestions for changes in classrooms around the world. Moreover, in a few cases, researchers underpin their suggestions in the following categories: a) institutionally related

changes; b) TBLT related changes; and c) teacher related changes.

Institutional-related changes. A periodical assessment of the implementation is suggested so that teachers receive support and timely correction in case the implementation of TBLT is not successful (Jeon & Hahn, 2006). Also, several studies highlight the importance of giving teachers the opportunity to learn how to plan, implement and assess TBLT along with giving them more time to attend to the learners' needs. In other words, they suggest more specialized teacher-training (Chan, 2014; Cheng & Moses, 2011; Lin & Wu, 2012; Jeon, 2006; Hadi, 2013; McDonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007; Zheng & Borg, 2014). Researchers also suggest that instructors show both the strengths and weaknesses of TBLT (Jeon, 2006). Also, considering that some teachers show resistance towards change, especially towards the introduction of a new challenging teaching approach such as TBLT, they need training in both TBLT theory and practice (Ilin, İnözü, & Yumru, 2007; Van den Branden, 2009). One of the reasons why teachers need more training is because, although in some cases they understand the approach, their personal beliefs and lack of experience impede them from fully implementing it in their classes (Chan, 2014).

Successful implementation of TBLT also requires that teachers have more support from school administrators (Adamson & Tong, 2008; Tinker Sachs, 2009). Deng and Carless (2010) add that if Ministries of Education wish to implement communicative approaches such as TBLT or CLT, it is necessary to have a shift from standardized examinations to a more communicative or task-based approach to assessment and evaluation. In these contexts, considering that in the studies one of the challenges is related to assessment, it has been suggested that teachers should be specially trained in this area along with developing inter- and intra- group work evaluation strategies (Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Tabataei & Hadi, 2011; Hadi, 2013).

Adamson and Tong (2008) suggest that ideally, TBLT implementation should emerge

from the bottom up because teachers are more motivated when they propose the changes, rather than just follow what has been prescribed. However, if the case is the opposite (top-down prescription), McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007) argue that both teachers and students should have time to adjust to TBLT. East (2014) supports this idea arguing that teachers should be given the opportunity to process and reflect on TBLT critically. If teachers are properly trained, they may change their pre-conceived beliefs and be more willing to implement TBLT.

TBLT implementation related changes. The literature often highlights design issues in the implementation of TBLT. For example, a weak version of TBLT allows the presence of a more planned lesson, also giving rather explicit grammar instruction (Ellis, 2003) during the post-task stage (Carless, 2004; Carless, 2007; Ilin, Inözü & Yumru, 2007; Littlewood, 2007). It has been suggested that TBLT be adapted to local contexts so as to diminish cultural differences such as conflict with *Confucian-heritage culture* (Carless, 2007, p. 596) or high dependence on the writing system (Carless, 2007). More clarification about the role of grammar in TBLT (Carless, 2007), a link between tasks and examinations (Carless, 2007), balance between oral tasks and other types of tasks based on reading and writing (Carless, 2007) are also proposed. This last suggestion attempts to acknowledge cultural differences by adapting TBLT to different contexts. Zheng and Borg (2014) conclude that “it is important that teachers extend their understandings of TBLT beyond a focus on speaking in pairs or groups; teachers would also benefit from an understanding of the non-linguistic outcomes of tasks and of the different roles that grammar can play in TBLT” (p. 219).

Concerning communicative approaches, Li (1998) is very acute in criticizing the imposition of language teaching approaches that are not aligned with the learners’ cultures. Thus, he suggests that FL countries should develop their own approach to teaching FL stating:

In as much as many teaching methodologies developed in the West are often difficult to

introduce into EFL situations with different educational theories and realities, in the long run EFL countries may be better off developing methods in their own contexts. Rather than relying on expertise, methodology, and materials controlled and dispensed by Western ESL countries, EFL countries should strive to establish their own research contingents and encourage methods specialists and classroom teachers to develop language teaching methods that take into account the political, economic, social, and cultural factors and, most important of all, the EFL situations in their countries. (p. 698)

Teacher-related changes. The literature suggests that in order to implement TBLT successfully, teachers should encourage students to participate and take risks by making them feel comfortable during task completion (Jeon & Hahn, 2006). It is also suggested that teachers should use group activities continuously (Hadi, 2013; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Nahavandi & Mukundan, 2012). It has also been noted that for a successful implementation all the actors in the education system should support each other so that meaningful changes can occur (Leaver & Kaplan, 2004; Tinker Sachs, 2009). It has also been indicated that since teachers often recognize the benefits of TBLT, they should show more interest in its implementation seeking different strategies in which students can use L2 in a meaningful way (Cheng & Moses, 2011; Hadi, 2013; Nahavandi & Mukundan, 2012). Xhafery and Xhaferi (2014) emphasize that teachers should have a more positive attitude because “the teachers’ attitudes towards certain instructional approaches influence the way they teach, having positive attitudes towards TBLT is very important because it will be implemented more successfully” (p. 55).

In addition, it is also suggested that if TBLT is used to teach lessons, then evaluations should be task-based as well (Tabataei & Hadi, 2011).

From the proposed changes presented above, it is possible to notice that most of them are institution- related. When the implementation of new teaching strategies is top – down, teachers

do not usually receive the necessary tools, nor the support or the specialized training to succeed. As a result, in many cases, they prefer to ‘play safe’ and continue using traditional approaches (Adamson & Tong, 2008).

Finally, in general, the suggestions made will also require space for dialogue and collaboration among teachers, school administrators, and students. Jeon and Hahn (2006) expand this idea as follows:

Yet many problems that teachers face in implementing TBLT can be successfully reduced when teachers make an effort to understand its pedagogical benefits and increase positive attitudes toward TBLT as an instructional method. In light of this, it is, first of all, necessary for teachers to have the opportunity to learn both the strengths and weaknesses of a task-based methodology and understand its basic principles, as well as its various techniques. (p. 202)

Table 8 summarizes the changes proposed by the teachers .

Table 8

Critical Proposed Changes

Institution-related changes	TBLT related changes	Teacher related changes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Periodical assessment of the implementation. -More specialized teacher-training -Instructors should show both the strengths and weakness of TBLT. -Training in both TBLT theory and practice - More support from school administrators. -There should be a shift from standardized examinations to a more communicative or task-based approach to assessment and evaluation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A weak version of TBLT. -Adaptation of TBLT to local contexts. - More clarification about the role of grammar in TBLT. - A link between tasks and examinations. - Balance between oral tasks and other types of tasks based on reading and writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Teachers should encourage students to participate and take risks by making them feel comfortable during task completion. -They should use of group activities continuously. - All the actors in the education system should support each other. - If teachers recognize the benefits of TBLT, they should show more interest in its implementation. - If teachers use TBLT, then evaluations should be task-based as well.

-
- Teachers should be specially trained in the evaluation area along with developing inter- and intra-group work evaluation strategies.
 - Both teachers and students should be given time to adjust to TBLT.
-

Synthesis

The literature review in this chapter points to seven themes. These themes are: a) How can TBLT be successfully implemented?; b) TBLT's reception in different educational settings; c) the complexity of TBLT; d) cultural barriers and TBLT; e) challenges of TBLT; f) the impact that top – down curriculum implementation may have on education; and g) the need for further research in FL contexts.

How can TBLT be successfully implemented? From the review of the literature related to teachers' perceptions of TBLT in FL contexts, it is possible to see that factors such as understanding TBLT, adequate target language proficiency, positive perception of TBLT, and support for the implementation of TBLT, need to occur simultaneously in order to have success in its implementation.

Studies show that when teachers have a broad understanding of TBLT, they tend to appreciate its benefits (Carless, 2009; Carless, 2007). However, understanding does not preclude implementation as it is at the implementation stage that the challenges arise. The review of research studies shows that for teachers to overcome the challenges, they must have received adequate training in both TBLT theory and practice (Ilin, Inözü, & Yumru, 2007; Van den Branden, 2009). In this way, they learn to appreciate the approach and also to overcome the

challenges and implement it as can be seen in Hadi (2013), Hu (2013), Tabatabaei and Hadi (2011), Tinker Sachs (2009), and Xhaferi and Xhaferi (2014).

To broaden understanding and positive perceptions, Adamson and Tong (2008) and Tinker Sachs (2009) also identify the need for appropriate support from teachers, school administrators, students, and parents or guardians as key for successful implementation.

Considering this, this doctoral study pays close attention to the factors that teachers perceive to have an impact on the successful implementation of TBLT.

Reception that TBLT has in the different educational settings. The studies reveal that the reception that TBLT has in the educational system depends on the setting (primary, secondary, or adult level education) in which it is implemented. The literature shows that adult level education is the setting that most easily welcomes TBLT in both SL and FL contexts. As has already been noted, more challenges are presented at the secondary level of education. For this reason, and also because my own teaching experiences are mainly in secondary settings, this doctoral study explores challenges faced by teachers implementing TBLT in secondary education in Chile.

Complexity of TBLT. Although various studies reveal that teachers see TBLT as too complex to be implemented in FL contexts (e.g., Carless, 2007; Cheng & Moses, 2011), TBLT can still have a place in those contexts. For example, Ellis (2009) considers that TBLT provides exposure to the target language stating that through this approach teachers can easily correct students' grammatical mistakes avoiding, in this way, fossilization which often occurs when the language is learned in a SL context. Finally, studies such as the ones conducted by Ahlquist (2013), Lopez (2004), and Shintani (2011) provide evidence of the success that TBLT has had in

FL contexts. On the other hand, the complexity of TBLT is not restricted to FL contexts, since it can also be present in SL contexts as is portrayed in Plews and Zhao (2010). These researchers point out that both native and non-native speaking English language teachers show difficulties when implementing TBLT. They also state that a lack of teachers' language proficiency or lack of exposure to English are not barriers since in their study the target language is taught in a SL context, and TBLT implementation still did not succeed. The main problem, in this case, is the teachers' lack of mastery of English and possibly also their understanding of the approach. As a result, they cannot fully engage students in using the target language. Thus, my research is interested in exploring how Chilean EFL teachers perceive the implementation of TBLT in Chilean classrooms and why.

Cultural barriers and TBLT. Cultural barriers, although highly relevant, are only mentioned in one study (Carless, 2007). However, especially in Asian countries, there may be minimal oral participation of students, due to their culture and educational values and traditions (Jin & Cortazzi, 1998b; Littlewood, 2007; Ellis, 2009). Communicative approaches may go against Confucian doctrine, which emphasizes respect for authorities. For this reason, many students are not used to speaking in class since for many years, they have been encouraged to listen to the teacher and never interrupt. This silence becomes a real problem because as Willis (1996) states "The task component...helps students to develop fluency in the target language and strategies for communication" (p. 54). Thus, with oral communication being one of the main TBLT components, how can this be successful in a school culture where listening is more appreciated than speaking? In the present study, however, due to the personality that characterizes Chilean people, cultural problems such as the ones mentioned here may not be encountered. On the other hand, I remained mindful of this in interviewing and interpreting the

data because facility to speak and interact, if used at inappropriate times during the class, may also become problematic.

Challenges and TBLT. Standardized evaluations and large size classes are some of the biggest challenges that teachers report when implementing TBLT. Despite the fact that the model of TBLT developed by Willis (1996) takes into consideration grammar in the last phase of the TBLT process, it seems not to be sufficient to help students pass standardized examinations. In many cases, students who are interested in taking international tests need more grammar lessons since those tests are mainly grammar-based. Li (1998) and Littlewood (2007) consider that there is a mismatch between the demands of the curriculum and the forms of public evaluations. On the one hand, the curriculum promotes the use of communicative approaches and on the other the standardized tests that are compulsory for those students who want to enter the university are grammar-based. In Li (1998), all the participants pointed out that standardized grammar-based examinations impact their teaching practice. He cites one of the participants:

This exam [the National University Entrance Examination] has had tremendous influence on the English teaching in South Korea. As soon as students start middle school, they have a clear goal in mind - to pass the National University Entrance Examination.

Teachers also have a clear goal in mind - to help students succeed in the Examination.

Because it only tests students' grammar knowledge and reading ability, both students and teachers are interested in grammar and reading in English classes. (p. 692)

Accordingly, language teaching becomes high stakes as teachers fear taking risks in teaching using communication as the primary goal and prefer to continue using traditional approaches that they believe will guarantee students, in one way or another, the mastery of grammar patterns (Carless, 2007; Deng & Carless, 2009; Deng & Carless, 2010; East, 2012; Hu, 2013; Lin & Wu,

2012; Mustafa, 2010; Zheng & Borg, 2014). For example, Carless (2007) reflects on the conflict that teachers face as they must cover the curriculum in preparation for the high stakes examinations and use TBLT at the same time.

Since success in the examinations guarantees students a spot to study at Universities, teachers, on the one hand, are pushed to help students succeed in the standardized examinations, while on the other they are required to implement TBLT in their classes according to government mandates. Carless (2007) concludes that “a key issue impacting on the prospects for the implementation of task-based approaches is the extent of synergy or mismatch between examinations and the kind of activities carried out in TBLT” (p. 597). Deng and Carless (2010) state: “There is a danger that students become good at performing in examinations but less effective in the kinds of communication, interpersonal, and future learning skills demanded by society” (p. 301). They also quote the following from a teacher participant:

I worry that in our internal examinations our principal might compare us among colleagues. More importantly, I won't forget that my students are going to take part in the public examinations next year. I would like to train them earlier rather than later. (p. 293)

A very similar environment has been identified in the Chilean context. For this reason, this study aims to explore teachers' perceptions of TBLT and understand how they inform a mandated approach such as TBLT to teach EFL in Chile.

Top – down curriculum implementation. The literature reviewed in this section includes critiques of top-down curriculum reforms (Adamson & Tong, 2008; Thomas, 2015).

Although in the area of TBLT implementation little is highlighted about the impact that top-down mandates have in education, other studies in different areas of education (Berger,

2000; Cummins & Davison, 2007; Hamp-Lyons, 2007; Lee, 2011), have paid attention to this issue and found it critical to successful implementation of the initiative in the classroom.

Some studies have stressed the problem that emanates from top-down mandates at the school level. For example, even when a top-down mandate may be very well intentioned and conceived as an improvement in education, in many cases schools and/or administrators are more concerned with local problems than spending time and energy in the implementation of changes (Lee, 2011). In some cases, considering the challenges that may be embedded in the new project, officials appear “naive about the problems that schools will face in implementing its design” (Lee, 2011, p. 43). Teachers also feel reluctant to have authorities making teaching decisions for them. In addition, teachers also may feel that their judgment is not being respected and that the mandates do not take into consideration their local needs (Lee, 2011). Lee (2011) also mentions that lack of financial resources to support teacher development programs may also be a challenge. A lack of or poor teacher-training is also mentioned: “Historically, educators have lacked the ability to state clear outcomes, to properly measure progress toward the outcomes, and to hold themselves accountable for them” (Berger, 2000, p. 60). In addition, they may have difficulties when the mandated changes aim to modify long lasting teaching and evaluation practices (Berger, 2000; Hamp-Lyons, 2007).

In a more ethical ambit, in some cases, top-down mandates neglect local differences but more importantly, they neglect individual differences that arise in groups where there are students with learning disabilities, or students who may be very capable but are socially and economically disadvantaged as second language learners (Berger, 2000; Hamp-Lyons, 2007). This complication is enhanced when the mandate aims to measure all students under a standardized test, as has been the case in Chilean education. Students and teachers are measured

based on outcomes that neglect the learning process in favour of grades since educational institutions can market them (Berger, 2000; Cummins & Davison, 2007).

Some of the improvements made in order to reconcile top-down mandates and changes in implementation involve giving teachers a space not only to learn how to implement changes but more importantly, to be part of the changes being built (Berger, 2000; Hamp-Lyons, 2007).

About the implementation of a standard curriculum called Common Core in the United States, Lee (2011) states:

It is the decisions that are made moment by moment in the classroom that will determine whether the Common Core work is successful. For this reason, the flow of ideas from experienced, skillful teachers outward to other educators and up to the project's leadership must happen from the beginning. It's the only way that conservative school cultures can become motivated to participate in large scale change and, in the process, gradually transform themselves into thriving professional learning communities. (p. 44)

By following a more intentionally integrated approach to building a mandate, Lee (2011) argues that cooperative work may be enhanced among teachers in the same school and with strong leadership, with other schools. Also, teachers develop a more positive attitude towards change as they have been part of the innovation process and working to succeed in the classroom.

In cases such as Chilean education, TBLT implementation and a standardized EFL test, as was presented above, have also been prescribed. Thus, in this study I paid attention to the teachers' perceptions of TBLT and its relation to the top-down compulsory implementation of the EFL standardized test (SIMCE).

Need for further research in FL contexts. From the review of the literature and echoing Carless (2012), there is a need for further research on teachers' perceptions of TBLT implementation at the school level. Also, since most of the research cited has been conducted in Asia, more research needs to be done on other continents where the results of TBLT implementation may vary due to cultural differences. Further, there is a need for TBLT exploration at the school level where TBLT may encounter the majority of barriers and challenges that young learners and school systems present in L2 education and in education in general. Considering that the findings of this literature review demonstrated that TBLT has still not been widely studied in South America and that studies based on teachers' perceptions of this area do not exist, this study aims to fill that gap by contributing not only to research on Chilean EFL education but, given observations about cultural adaptation, also more broadly to the whole South American context. Thus, it is important to know about teachers' perceptions of TBLT in Chile, my home country.

Why do Teachers' Perceptions Matter?

It is important to remember that the purpose of this study is inquiring about the perceptions of EFL teachers on the implementation of TBLT in Chile. Researching teachers' perceptions is key in education as teachers are those who enact new mandates and/or curriculum implementation. Thus, by learning about teachers' perceptions, the reader will be able to see the successes, challenges and opportunities for TBLT implementation in Chile.

Summary

In this chapter I focused my attention on teachers' perceptions of TBLT implementation in FL contexts. In order for TBLT implementation to be successful the teachers' comments on the challenges and benefits of TBLT suggest that a number of points must align. Teachers should have a strong understanding of TBLT, positive perceptions of the benefits of TBLT, awareness of the challenges of TBLT implementation, and adequate target language proficiency. Also, teachers at the secondary level of education tend to encounter more challenges in implementation than teachers in elementary or adult level education and may thus need more support. Finally, although complex and top-down mandated, TBLT implementation is still possible in an FL context such as Chile.

Chapter Four: Methodology

In this chapter I present the methodological factors related to investigating my research question: *How can Chilean EFL teachers' perceptions of the implementation of TBLT at the school level inform us about teaching English as a foreign language in Chile?*

Research Design

In this research project, I studied secondary EFL teachers' perceptions of the mandated implementation of TBLT in Chilean classrooms and identified their praises and concerns. These perceptions were interpreted through social constructivist principles. Following social constructivism, as Merriam (2009) suggests, I looked at the data in terms of how teachers have constructed their perceptions of TBLT, including their experiences learning the approach and implementing it. Considering that TBLT is an approach that has been mandated by the Chilean Ministry of Education, I looked at the data focusing on factors that may enhance or hinder TBLT implementation in Chile, such as the approach itself, the educational actors (teachers, students, school administrators), the structure of the educational system (standardized examination system, material support, teacher-training, teacher evaluation, abolition of procedure for entrance into school), the social context (benefits, problems). Finally, based on the data from teacher-participants' and the literature review I also include suggestions for changes and redesign as EL education moves forward in Chile.

In this way, this study contributes to filling the gap of missing literature about TBLT in Chile and it adds to the few existing studies on TBLT in South America.

As presented in the first chapter, the overarching research question is: *How can Chilean EFL teachers' perceptions of the implementation of TBLT at the school level inform us about teaching English as a foreign language in Chile?*

The more specific questions underpinning the main research question are:

- 1.- *What are teachers' perceptions of TBLT and its successes and challenges?*
- 2.- *In what ways do EFL teachers feel prepared (or not) to implement TBLT?*

In order to answer these questions, I used a qualitative interpretive research approach that was based on semi-structured interviews with a group of nine secondary English teachers as the main source of data collection. The data was analyzed and interpreted through social constructivist lenses in order to understand how teachers have constructed their perceptions, and through critical lenses so as to identify possible sources of power that may impact teachers' perceptions of TBLT and EFL education in Chile.

In this chapter I provide an overview of the methodology starting with some comments as to why I chose qualitative research, along with providing some basics about it. Then I continue with a brief discussion of the ontological and epistemological framework; the theoretical lenses; the study design; the etic/emic perspectives of the researcher; the ethical considerations; the validity, trustworthiness, and transferability of study findings; the data analysis; and finally, the delimitations of the study.

Qualitative Methodology: A Rationale

Several definitions of qualitative research are present in the literature and, while difficult to provide a simplified version (Creswell, 2007), some points in the definition given by Denzin and Lincoln (2011) contribute to explaining why it is an appropriate approach for this study.

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the *observer in the world*. It consists of a set of interpretative, material practices that make the world visible. *These practices transform the world*. They turn the world into a *series of representations*, including field notes, *interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self*. At this

level, qualitative research involves an *interpretive*, naturalistic *approach* to the world.

This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to *make sense of, or interpret* phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them.

(Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 3) (emphases added).

This definition reflects very well my interest in choosing a qualitative methodological approach for my doctoral research. For example, I see myself as an *observer in the world* since I first started thinking about this study some years ago. As a researcher and teacher participant I have been observing the EL education in Chile, questioning myself, and reflecting on my own experiences so as to situate myself in the world. Thus, my experience has informed me that the observation in the world does not begin when the researcher starts collecting data but when the researcher starts thinking about the research topic and how to respond to the research questions.

Denzin and Lincoln (2011) also state that *qualitative practice transforms the world*. This is also very meaningful in this study in two ways. Firstly, by conducting the *interviews*, the *participants* reflected and made connections with their lived experiences and they understood some situations that they did not understand before. For example, Perla states: “*Look, now that we are talking, I’m starting to remember...*” or Corelli, who in general faces several challenges to implement TBLT, reflected after the question if she felt prepared to implement TBLT at the end of the interviews: “*M: Do you think you’re prepared to implement TBLT in your classes? Corelli: Look, after this interview, and after all this reflexection that I’ve been having while preparing for a PD course next year, I think I am*”.

This reflection was enhanced as participants experienced member checking of the data and in some cases a second interview to bring even deeper reflections. For example, Osvaldo reports that after our first conversation he continued thinking about a topic we had discussed. He commented: “*I was reading about what we discussed, and I tried to do some research on it*”.

The analysis also aims to transform those it impacts, such as individuals in charge of curriculum and policy making. I, as a researcher, also experienced some transformation as I reflected on each step of the process of completing the study. Another characteristic of qualitative research is that the researcher aims to *make sense or interpret*, or as Merriam (1998, 2009) points out, *make meaning of social phenomena*. The goal in this study was not only to learn about teachers' perceptions of TBLT and its implementation, but also to *understand* (Creswell, 1994) why the situation is as it is. Thus, this study evidences that the teacher participants have in general a conflicting perception of TBLT implementation because all teachers value the benefits that TBLT brings to language learning, but struggle as characteristics of the educational contexts hinder a proper implementation of the approach.

A qualitative approach is further justified as it complements the quantitative study that I conducted in Chile on Chilean teachers' perceptions of TBLT. At the completion of that work I had several more questions that could only be answered through indepth conversations (Creswell, 2007) with teachers about their perspectives.

Secondly, there is a strong need for empowering teachers (Creswell, 2007), especially in Chile, because many changes in education are occurring without their input, as is evident by the primary and secondary teachers' strike that lasted for months in 2015. Teachers expected to have their voices heard and be a part of the educational reform that was taking place at that moment, as they considered that some of the proposed changes were unfair. Unfortunately, the voices of the teachers were not heard and the reform was approved (Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional, 2016).

Finally, since I already had some meaningful quantitative data that provided an overview of teachers' perceptions of TBLT, and given that the aim of the present study is to understand teachers' perceptions of TBLT implementation, a qualitative research design becomes ideal

because through this I was able to examine how participants construct their experiences of teaching TBLT, how the context and their experiences have impacted them and the meaning those experiences have for them.

Interpretive qualitative study. To be an interpretive inquirer is inherent to people's nature as "we interpret events, people, and objects in order to participate, interact, or behave in ways that make sense" (Ellis, 1998). Interpretive research considers individuals as key to understanding the world (Norum, 2008). However, for better understanding the researcher needs to focus not only on the individual but also on the context. This is to focus in 'the part' and also in 'the whole' (Smith, 1991; 2002) because if the researcher only pays attention to certain aspects neglecting others, the interpretation may not be complete.

In interpretive studies, there is no right or wrong, and no absolute truth (Gadamer, 1989). Thus, all participants' lived experiences are considered valid because they are true for them and they contribute to their understanding of the world. In interpretive research, there is also an intention for a transformation of the individual (Ellis, J, 2006; Norum, 2008; Zacharias, 2012) in an emancipatory and critical way (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012). This was meaningful for this study since one of the goals is raising critical awareness in the participants and after distributing the results, among policy and curriculum makers.

All interpretive inquiry requires the researcher to use what Gadamer (1989) described as *horizon*, which is the researcher's own "standpoint, perspective, fore structures or prejudices" (Ellis, 2006). And as one's horizon is shaped by the context, the culture, the language, and the history, it is inevitable to leave it behind or take it for granted. Thus, as a researcher, I must bring my horizon into view as it will contribute to my first understanding of the phenomena that is under study. Further, in order to make the interpretation more genuine, I need to be open to see

all the contributors to the individual experiences. In doing so, I will be ready to see and understand the participants' perceptions of the world in a *fusion of horizons* (Gadamer, 1989). I attempted to do this by 'locating myself' in the first chapter.

As an interpretive study, it does not aim to make generalizations but instead to uncover teachers' perceptions of TBLT implementation so that the researcher, the participants and the readers understand (Willis, 2008) how teachers have been impacted by different related agents. In this study this refers to the Chilean educational system and the educational actors.

In interpretive research, it is also key to indicate the "whats, hows, and whys" that provide a rich description of the context of the study. Thus, following the principles of interpretive research, I have added in Chapter One a rich description of the context where the study will take place (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012). I also used the interview data to add a description of the participants and the educational settings where they teach. In addition, as presented in Chapter One, as a Chilean EFL teacher myself, I have made explicit my own lived experiences and how they have shaped my understanding of the context of this study and my own horizon of the meaning of implementing TBLT or other big changes in the Chilean EFL curriculum. Thus, my perspective and understanding will play a key role in the study, since knowing the context in detail helps the researcher not misinterpret the realities (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012).

Theoretical Lenses

This study follows social constructivism as a lens through which I interpret the qualitative data. Thus, this section provides an overview of this paradigm.

Social constructivism. Social constructivism and constructivism both underly

interpretivist research (Creswell, 2014). Constructivism rises as an alternative to positivism because its ontology is that knowledge is constructed, not found (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) as is posited in positivist research. Patton (2002) defines constructivism as “the multiple realities constructed by people and the implications of those constructions for their lives and interactions with others” (p. 96). However, the ‘constructed knowledge’ is relative as it exists only in the minds of the people who have been involved in a particular experience (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). Also as people experience different situations in different ways, there is no absolute truth. The epistemological perspective indicates that in constructivist research

the relationship between the knower and the knowable (to-be-known) is highly person – and context-specific. The “realities” taken to exist depend on a transaction between the knower and the “to-be-known” in the particular context in which the encounter between them takes place. That transaction is necessarily highly subjective, mediated by the knower’s prior experience and knowledge, by political and social status, by gender, by race, class, sexual orientation, nationality, by personal and cultural values, and by the knower’s interpretation (construction) of the contextual surround. Knowledge is not “discovered” but rather *created*; it exists only in the time/space framework in which it is generated. (Lincoln & Guba, 2013, p. 40)

As Guba and Lincoln (1994) argue, in constructivist epistemology the researcher and the object of research (the teachers, in this study) interact so as to create knowledge. This aligns with Creswell (2007) and the way he connects constructivist and social constructivist perspectives in qualitative research. He states that “meanings are negotiated socially and historically. In other words, they are not simply imprinted on individuals but are formed through interaction with others (hence social constructivism) and through historical and cultural norms that operate in the individuals’ lives”. (pp 20 – 21)

Thus, in a social constructivist research study both realities are important - the researcher's and that of the participants. This means that the researchers' biases and assumptions also contribute to reach one of the goals in qualitative research – understanding the lived experiences (Schwandt, 2000).

In the case of this study, and considering my own assumptions, the realities that may have shaped the teachers' perceptions of TBLT implementation in Chile are the educational system, students, school administrators, and society. Thus, I approached the interviews attempting to uncover these realities in order to understand the meaning of the experiences that EFL teachers have had with TBLT and their teaching practice.

Ontological and Epistemological Framework

It is important that researchers be aware of their ontological and epistemological beliefs as they influence the researcher and as a result frame the study. An ontological assumption refers to what we understand constitutes reality (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In this case, this study was shaped by a social constructivist perspective and as a result my ontological assumption is that teachers' perceptions are shaped by the educational system and their own lived experiences.

In relation to epistemology, it is a lens which is basically the way a researcher views the world or how s/he understands knowledge formation. For example, Saldaña (2011) summarizes epistemology “as a theory of knowledge construction based on the researcher's worldview — how his or her lens on the world and ways of knowing it focus and filter the perception and interpretation of it” (p. 22). All research studies have a theoretical perspective that may be also called a theoretical lens, although in some cases researchers do not make it explicit (Merriam, 1998).

Researchers use a certain epistemology through which they look at the study and interpret

the findings. According to Saldaña (2011), the researcher's epistemology is usually "based on your own values, attitudes, and beliefs about the topic at hand" (p. 82). Thus, this makes the positioning of myself in the study highly relevant since it is there where I tell about the lived experiences and personal growth that moved me to conduct the study in this particular way, as I have done in Chapter One.

Epistemology guides the researcher as a framework to conduct the study (Hesse-Biber, Nagy, & Leavy, 2011), and more than that, it helps the researcher develop questions and strategies to explore the world (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2011). For example, in this study, the socio constructivist epistemology plays a key part in this research. I believe that, as Merriam (2009) and Creswell (2007) state, knowledge is constructed as we interact in the milieu and as we interact with other people. Thus, in this research I used, as a starting point, the belief that the participants for this study (EFL Chilean secondary teachers) have constructed their knowledge of TBLT implementation, by learning about TBLT, implementing it, dealing with the pedagogical opportunities and/or challenges it offers, exploring different possibilities, reading and implementing the curriculum, interacting with the students, and so on. In other words, through their experiences. Second, the selection of the main data collection tool for this study - personal interviews - was grounded in the belief that knowledge is constructed as the researcher interacts and values the participants' demographic and political contexts, social and historical factors, and experiences (Creswell, 2007). In brief, I believe that by interviewing EFL teachers (interaction), I connected the participants' experiences with my own experiences in order to construct new knowledge (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) of a certain reality.

Study Design

In this section I present the study design starting with a description of teacher participants

and their teaching contexts and continuing with the data collection process.

Participants. Nine EFL secondary school teachers took part in the study. Participants were chosen through a *purposeful sampling* process. Purposeful sampling is a strategy for choosing participants for a research study and refers to selecting “particular settings, persons, or activities ... deliberately in order to provide information that can't be gotten as well from other choices” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 88). Thus, qualitative studies should ideally use purposeful sampling because the researcher chooses the participants according to the research questions (Merriam, 1998; Zacharias, 2012) and those who will hopefully provide important insights about the phenomenon of study (Patton, 2002). In this study, as I needed to know about teachers’ perceptions of TBLT implementation in Chile, I identified teachers who had certain knowledge of TBLT and who had implemented the approach.

More precisely, teacher participants were carefully chosen according to the following criteria. Firstly, teachers were selected from the 106 teachers out of 358, who gave online consent to participate both in the ethics-approved survey based on teachers’ perceptions of TBLT (Herrera, 2016b) and in an additional interview for this study. Further, they were chosen according to the perceptions they revealed about the approach in the survey. Thus, in order to explore a variety of perspectives, I contacted teachers that overall perceived TBLT implementation in one of three ways, positively, in a conflicting way, and not so positively.

Secondly, as mentioned previously, I chose teachers from secondary education for several reasons. First, since TBLT has been officially mandated at the public-school level and is being monitored through government mandated examinations (Ministerio de Educacion, 2012), results can be of special value. Second, according to the review of the literature in this study, teachers at secondary school level of education seem to face bigger challenges when

implementing TBLT than those in primary or post-secondary educational institutions. Third, secondary teachers also face the challenge of preparing students for the standardized EFL SIMCE tests in Grade 11 (3ero Medio) every other year apart from their own national teacher evaluations. Finally, as a former secondary teacher in Chile it is a context I deeply understand.

Thirdly, I choose teachers who collectively had experience teaching or having taught in subsidized, and public education schools, in rural and urban areas. Fourthly, I chose teachers who had experience implementing TBLT.

After the selection, the participants received an invitation letter (See Appendix E). Once the participants were located, invited and agreed to participate, the interviews were scheduled according to their availability. Because of geographical limitations I conducted all interviews through video conference.

All interviews were audio recorded and conducted in Spanish in order to give the participants wide opportunity to expand and not to miss any nuances that certainly enriched the data. Welch and Piekkari (2006) echo Tsang (1998) stating that conducting research in the participants' L1 allow participants "fully express themselves", to have "a good rapport", and allows the researcher to interpret with "cultural understanding". (p. 422)

In Chapter Five I present each participant and their commonalities in a more detailed way.

Data collection.

The context. As presented in Chapter One, the general context of this study is EFL education in Chile, and this study is specifically focused on secondary school EL education. Later in Chapter Five, I also present details of the context of each participants' school setting in order to give the reader a sense of the diversity in Chile and the opportunity to compare

(Creswell, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012).

Saturation. My initial intentions were to have six participants and invite them to engage in several indepth interviews. However, in order to reach saturation, I added three more participants, thus having a total of nine. They provided me with rich data which I thematized throughout the process. When no new topics emerged, I ascertained that I had reached saturation.

Data collection tools. Although the main sources of data were pre-interview activities (PIAs), and semi-structured interviews with some open-ended questions and the literature review, I also drew upon my own experiences to inform my interpretations about TBLT implementation and changes in the curriculum in Chile.

Pre-interviews activities. I started with pre-interview activities (PIAs) which are open-ended or less structured questions. These are intended to elicit some personal aspects of the participant and also some factors related to the phenomenon under research. The PIAs firstly create space for the interviewee to reflect on the research topic before the interview and the data that emerges from them help the researcher better interpret the collected data (Ellis, 2006). In the PIAs the research participant chooses among several alternative activities (drawing, making time lines, making diagrams, listing words, and so on.) and then explains the completed activities to the researcher during the interview sessions. Appendix F contains the PIA options used for this study and Appendix G includes some of the examples of the participants responses to the PIAs.

Interviews. I used interviews as a qualitative data collection tool because they are an “instrument that is sensitive to underlying meaning when gathering and interpreting data” (Merriam, 1998, p. 1).

Interviews are usually face-to-face conversations. However, they sometimes are conducted by phone or over the Internet (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Patton (2002)

distinguishes interviews along a continuum from less structured (informal conversational interviews), more structured (general interview guide approach), to very structured (standardized open-ended interviews). Patton (2002) also distinguishes the closed fixed-response interview in which the interviewee has to choose from the alternatives given to give the response.

Focusing on research topic questions is very important in order to maintain the focus of the conversation. However, having the opportunity to deepen personal aspects of the participant are key to aid the researcher with more context knowledge to better understand the participant's experiences and perceptions (the participant's horizon). For this reason, the interview protocol also includes some *getting to know you* questions (Ellis, 2006)

The questions in the interview were as open-ended as possible (Creswell, 2007) because these kinds of questions give the participants more possibilities to expand and explore their experiences along with giving the researcher more opportunities to obtain indepth data. The questions also attempted to follow the suggestions by Strauss, Schatzman, Bucher, Ehrlich, and Sabshin (1981) as echoed by Merriam (1998) when she suggests using *hypothetical*, *devil's advocate*, *ideal position*, and *interpretive* questions in order to induce participants to provide meaningful and insightful responses. I drew upon the literature review and the findings of the survey I conducted (Herrera, 2016b) to inform my interview protocol.

Thus, I started the interviews listening and inquiring about the participants' PIAs. Then, I continued with a few 'getting to know you' open-ended questions which along with the PIAs provided me with experiences and some context to better understand the teachers' perceptions of TBLT implementation in Chilean classes. Then I continued with the semi-structured open-ended questions about the research topic. Appendix H presents the complete interview protocol.

In order to transcribe the interviews, to revisit the interview during the data analysis, and to keep a record of the nuances that cannot be easily transcribed such as voice tone for example,

I audio recorded the data.

Summarizing, I conducted a first round of interviews, transcribed them and took note of details that helped me understand the data. This gave me more insights as to the questions I wanted to ask in the second round of interviews. Then I conducted a second round of interviews with the participants who were available to continue participating and continued the conversation via messages or audio recorded messages when video conference was not possible. The following table summarizes the number of interview sessions and the length of time spent with each participant.

Table 9

Summary of the number and length of time of interviews

Name of EFL teacher-participant	No of interview sessions	total length of interview time (in hours)
Aniel	1	1: 24
Corelli	2	2: 53
Josue	2	3: 15
Julio	1	0: 53
Lina	1	1: 38
Liza	2	1: 44
Osvaldo	1	2: 06
Perla	1	1: 20
Pola	1	1: 22
TOTAL	12	16: 30

Literature review. In this study, the second part of the literature review is based on empirical studies of teachers' perceptions of TBLT in different countries in the world. Thus, the results were also a source of data that provided varied perspectives to this study.

Locating myself. The section of 'locating myself' in this study is also a source of data as it is based on my own experiences as an EFL teacher in Chile, when I had to face important changes in the curriculum while trying to implement a communicative approach. As that data is 'my horizon', it also facilitated the understanding of teachers' perceptions of TBLT.

Etic/Emic Perspectives

Positionality as researcher. My emic perspective, which is the perspective of an insider, is constructed by my lived experiences as a secondary school teacher with ten years of EFL teaching experience in Chile. This provided me with multiple ideas of how to approach the participants and the kinds of questions to ask. My emic perspective in this study is very useful to fully understanding the teachers' experiences and to interpreting the data. However, I had to be cautious so as not to influence the participants with my own perspectives during the interviews. I achieved that by limiting my reactions to short utterances or nodding.

My etic perspective, which is my perspective as an outsider, is my perspective as a researcher and it is influenced by my experience as a graduate student and by my understanding of research methods, as well as the completion of my literature review. Keeping my etic perspective at all times is key to ensuring confirmability or more objectivity of the data analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

As an etic researcher, I had several roles. My first role as a researcher was to be present during the whole process of the research because I was the 'primary source of data collection and analysis' (Merriam, 1998). In qualitative studies, the researchers should try to be present at every stage of the process because they start obtaining and analyzing data at the moment of their first contact with the research contexts and with the participants (Merriam, 2009).

As this research is an interpretive qualitative study, my role as bricoleur (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013) used several perspectives to interpret and validate the data. By comparing data, I was calling for social justice (Merriam, 2009) and sought to expose injustices "for the public good" (Canella & Perez, 2009, p. 172).

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) call the researcher a 'bricoleur'. The term 'bricoleur' means "Jack of all trades or a kind of professional do-it-yourself person" (Lévi-Strauss, 1966 as cited in

Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p. 2). A ‘bricoleur’ produces a ‘bricolage’ which is several different practices and strategies to solve certain problems (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). In qualitative social constructivist research, the researcher usually seeks and tries different methods, tools, and techniques to bring a response to the research question. The ‘bricoleur’ tries to learn and be informed in order to better understand. The ‘bricoleur’ reflects, reads, interviews, interprets, observes, analyzes, questions, and so on. In seeking a way to respond to the research question, the ‘bricoleur’ triangulates in order to bring trustworthiness to the whole process of research. The ‘Bricoleur’ may combine different strategies. As a ‘bricoleur’ myself, I used different strategies to understand the teachers’ perceptions, as well as the qualitative paradigms of social constructivism and in particular the critical literacy paradigm to interpret the findings. In this way, this study aimed not only to bring understanding but also to identify critical factors such as power or limited access to opportunities.

Ethical Considerations

Principles for physical and social sciences are set in order to give researchers guides (Merriam, 1998) “that alert researchers to the ethical dimensions of their work” (Punch, 1986, p. 37 as cited in Merriam, 1998, p 212). In social science research, the ethical guidelines aim to ensure the “protection of subjects from harm, the right to privacy, the notion of informed consent, and the issue of deception” (Merriam, 1998, p. 213). In the case of qualitative research, since it implies being involved with participants in interviews and spending several hours in conversation, ethical issues must be considered during the data collection and data analysis process (Creswell, 2007). For this reason, Merriam (1998) suggests that for interviews as data collection tools (as is the case in this study), the researcher should be very careful and respectful at all times because, in some cases, participants use the interview process as therapy and may

reveal certain delicate matters. Since researchers are the main instrument for data collection, during data analysis, they will be deciding what is relevant or not. Thus, they need to be careful when there is data that seems to be contradictory to the researcher's views. In regard to privacy of the participants, anonymity should also be guaranteed (Merriam, 1998).

Considering all of the above, to make sure that I understand the ethical considerations that need to be observed when engaging with human participants, I submitted and obtained ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board (REB). In addition, when I contacted the participants by email, I attached a consent letter in which I specified that their participation was voluntary and that their names and identities would remain confidential and anonymous (See Appendix I).

Considering the above, I created a safe and comfortable environment for the participants during the recruitment process and during the interviews. Also, the member checking process gave them the security that the information provided was being processed accurately and with diligence.

Finally, as the interviews were conducted in Spanish, I translated the selected teachers' quotes after the member check and had them reviewed by a Chilean Canadian bilingual critical speaker in order to confirm the interpretation of the teachers' message. The critical speaker was able to assist in selecting English equivalent expressions or idioms to help the teachers' comments make sense in English.

Trustworthiness

The terms used in literature regarding trustworthiness offer the reader an assurance that the findings of a study are "worth paying attention to". "(H)ow can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences (including self) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth

taking account of”? (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). Saldaña (2011) argues that the common terms *validity* and *reliability* are usually used in quantitative studies, whereas *credibility* and *trustworthiness* are used for qualitative studies. However, Creswell (2007) in his qualitative research textbook still uses the term *validity* to refer to this matter. In this section I use the terms credibility and trustworthiness as used by Lincoln and Guba (1985), and expanded upon by Saldaña (2011) for qualitative studies.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that to ensure trustworthiness, a study should have four characteristics: credibility, transferability, dependability and, confirmability. They also pose several strategies to address credibility: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, referential adequacy, and member checking. To address transferability, they propose providing a thick description of the context and participants. To address dependability and confirmability they propose having an inquiry audit or member check. For the purpose of this study I will focus on credibility, transferability, and dependability.

Credibility. Credibility should be present throughout the whole study, not only during the data collection and analysis process; the credibility of the study means that it was conducted properly and that the product is accurate. As presented above, Lincoln and Guba (1985) pose different strategies to address credibility: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, referential adequacy, and member checking. Saldaña (2011) suggests providing a list of key authors that have conducted similar work in the literature review, providing a detailed description of the data analysis method (e.g., description of the coding process, detailed description of the process of trustworthiness which is presented below), and including quotations from the participants’ opinions, enhance credibility

in a study. A detailed description of the participants and the context is also key to ensuring credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In other words, credibility is enhanced by an accurate and detailed description of all of the steps and decisions in a study.

Considering the above and the nature of this study, the strategies that I used to address credibility are: triangulation, member checking, listing authors that have conducted similar studies, providing a detailed description of the data analysis method, and quotations from the participants.

Triangulation. Triangulation is the “use of at least three different viewpoints” to validate data (Saldaña, 2011, p. 76). This may be done using “multiple observers, theories, methods, and data sources” (Denzin, 1989, p. 307; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Triangulation implies comparing and corroborating the findings so as to have a deeper understanding of the object under study (Creswell, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2013). Lincoln and Guba (1985) add that triangulation specifically refers to data.

It is believed that the main idea of triangulation is the confirmation of results using different data sources or methods (Patton, 2002). However, Patton (2002) explains that although that might be the goal, there is always the opportunity to obtain different results because the data is being studied from a different perspective. In these cases, Patton (2002) clarifies that some inconsistencies may contribute to making the study even more interesting.

For the purpose of this qualitative study I triangulated the following data: thematic findings of qualitative studies reported in the literature review, my own lived experiences, and the interview data.

Member Checking. Member checking mainly refers to data, analytic interpretations, and conclusions tested by research participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Creswell (2007) provides a simpler purpose suggesting that member checking consists of sending the participants the

transcript of the interview so that they can verify that the information is accurate (Creswell, 2007). Thus, once I finished each interview, which was conducted in Spanish, I transcribed it (in Spanish) so that the participant could read it, verify its accuracy and add/delete/change the transcript, if desired and considered pertinent. Only two of the participants returned the transcripts with small changes.

Interviews were conducted in Spanish and one interview was completely translated into English at the beginning of the interview process, so that my research supervisor could read it and provide feedback to help me improve my interview skills.

List of similar studies that have been conducted in the world. In Chapter Two and especially in Chapter Three, I present an extensive overview of studies related to TBLT implementation and teachers' perceptions of TBLT from around the world. This overview contributed to understanding how TBLT research has been developed on a global scale. Furthermore, the results of these studies provided a comparative base for the present study.

Detailed description of the data analysis method. In the last section in this chapter I provide a description of the process of data collection and intended analysis and interpretation.

Quotations from the participants. In the data analysis, I support the findings and conclusions with quotations from the participants so as to portray the whole experience as accurately as possible. These quotes were firstly chosen and analysed in Spanish and then translated into English for the purpose of this thesis.

Transferability. Transferability refers to the extent findings can be transferred to other contexts and other participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Thus, to assist the reader in making this assessment, it is key, as mentioned above, to provide a detailed description of the participants, context and culture.

Rich description of the participants and setting under study. The detailed description of the participants and their setting offer the opportunity to make more accurate and indepth comparisons. In addition, this ensures credibility as suggested in Lincoln and Guba (1985). Chapter One already presented a general description of the educational context and in Chapter Five, I describe the participants and key elements of their own teaching contexts.

Dependability. A qualitative study has dependability when it ensures that the same study can be replicated and obtain similar results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). However, qualitative researchers do not aim for other researchers to replicate obtaining the same results. Instead, their goal is that others may trust that the “results are consistent with the data collected” (Merriam, 1998, p. 206). One technique to enhance dependability of a study is using an *inquiry audit* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) or *audit trail* (Merriam, 1998).

Inquiry audit or audit trail. An audit is external to the research and involves authenticating the findings. Thus, as recommended, I provide a thick description of all the steps that I have followed in the research process. In this study, my supervisor has the role of the inquiry auditor while I provide a description of my research method. Later I give a description of the data gathering and data analysis process for the auditing of the reader.

Table 10 summarizes the strategies used to address trustworthiness in this study.

Table 10

The Trustworthiness Process

Credibility	Triangulation	a) Thematic findings of the studies seen in the literature review. b) The researchers’ own lived experiences. c) The interview data.
	Member checking	a) By teacher participants.

	List of similar research studies	a) Found in the literature review.
	Detailed description of the data analysis method	a) Interviews transcription b) Data coding c) Themes that respond to the research questions d) Quotes added to themes e) Translation of the selected quotes to English
	Quotations from the participants.	a) These are included in the description of the participants, and in the analysis of the findings.
Transferability	Rich description of the participants and setting under study.	a) Years of experience. b) Type of schools. c) Teacher-training experience. d) TBLT implementation experience. e) Educational contexts.
Dependability	Inquiry audit	a) Researcher's supervisor; b) Presentation of wide description of the research process.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Conducting the data analysis may be one of the most difficult parts of a research study (Patton, 2002; Thorne, 2000) because it involves “consolidating, reducing and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read - it is the process of making meaning” (Merriam, 2009, pp. 175 - 176).

As explained earlier, this study used interviews as the primary source of data but other sources such as my lived experiences and the themes of the literature review are also part of the data. Thus, as I conducted the first interview, these sources of data started to amalgamate and provided more insights for as Thorne (2000) argues, inevitably, the researcher starts trying to make sense of the data from the moment it is being gathered. Thus, in this study, the data analysis started as soon as the first interview was conducted in order to explore the possibility that more indepth questions could be asked in the second round of interviews (Merriam, 2009;

Patton, 2002; Thorne, 2000). In this way, as the literature review and my horizon (locating myself) were present during the data collection and data analysis, I was able to make preliminary interpretations as I gathered the data.

Thematic coding. Thematic coding is the first step of data analysis (Patton, 2002) and the strategy that allows the researcher to organize and categorize the data into themes (Maxwell, 2005; Merriam, 2009). Coding may be done electronically or manually and requires several readings of the data until the final themes emerge (Patton, 2002). In this study, I used the NVivo 11 software which is a popular Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) that aids the researcher in the data analysis and to organize the data. Although these kind of data analysis tools have advantages such as helping the researcher keeping data and codes organized, they have also been criticized for keeping the researcher detached from the analysis, quantifying codes, promoting a standardized data analysis style, and dehumanizing data analysis (Jackson, Paulus, & Woolf, 2018). Being aware of the criticism, I used the NVivo 11 software only to organize the data and to easily locate and relocate the codes as I was analyzing them. In other word, as a researcher, I remained in control of the analysis at all times and did not use any tool that could identify codes for me. Appendix J presents some screen shots as examples of how data was organized in the NVivo 11 software.

Maxwell (2005) argues that finding the themes is not easy. Thus, it is always convenient to have some ideas about the themes that might emerge from the data beforehand. Considering this and also considering that the main themes that emerged from the review of literature on teachers' perceptions of TBLT were *understanding, benefits, challenges, perceptions, and proposed changes*, I used the benefits and challenges themes as starting points to respond to the

first research question: *What are teachers' perceptions of TBLT and its successes and challenges?* In fact, part of the interview protocol was also organized around these themes.

After transcribing the first interview and sending it to my supervisor for review and commentary before proceeding with a second interview and with the rest of the interviews, I was able to improve my interview skills as well.

In order to provide a deep interpretation of the data I firstly transcribed all interviews, and after the member checking was completed, I read each completely so as to understand the data as a whole. Secondly, I read the data and looked for the most recurrent patterns through thematic coding (Merriam, 1998; Zacharias, 2012) in order to organize and analyze the data according to themes. The first list of codes was about all the different topics that arose from the interviews (See Figures 10 and 11 in Appendix J). A second list of codes was developed in order to answer the research questions (Merriam, 2009; Newby, 2014) (See Figure 12 in Appendix J.)

In order to find the most representative themes, I drew on the data from the interviews, and my own lived experiences. I complemented the themes from the literature review in Chapter Three, namely the benefits and challenges of TBLT implementation, with quotes from the participants so that the teachers' voices could be heard. Then, the data was analyzed in light of the literature review so as to note changes or additions to the field.

After I revised the data that explained the experiences of teachers with TBLT in a particular way, I interpreted the findings in terms of the two underpinning questions using Jank's 'Interdependent model of critical literacy' as an interpretive tool in order to respond to the main research question in this study: *How can Chilean EFL teachers' perceptions of the implementation of TBLT at the school level inform us about teaching English as a foreign language in Chile?*

Hilary Janks' (2000) 'interdependent framework for critical literacy' includes four main

concepts that affect power relationships: *domination/power, diversity, access, and design/redesign* (Janks, 2000, 2013). In critical literacy, power refers to the social power that speaking English may have over other languages. Diversity is related to the recognition and value that other languages have and that are as valid and important as English. Access refers to the right that students in the world have to learn English and reach the opportunities that this may bring to them in society. Finally, design/redesign refers to the educational changes (modifications) that may occur when ‘power, diversity, and access’ come together, as they give space to and value the students’ first languages, and /or minority language along with learning English.

Janks (2004) highlights that all of these concepts are interdependent and that having only one of them in the educational system does not guarantee a just system. For example, Janks explains that

if you provide more people with access to the dominant variety of the dominant language, you perpetuate a situation of increasing returns and you maintain its dominance. If, on the other hand, you deny students access, you perpetuate their marginalization in a society that continues to recognize this language as a mark of distinction. (p, 41)

In other words, if access is granted, the dominant group increases its power, but if access is denied, minority groups continue being marginalized. For this reason, Janks argues that power should not exist without access and access should not exist without power.

Following the example above, access without power occurs when students learn English but their own culture, traditions and/or phonetic sounds are ignored or rejected. Power without access, on the other hand, refers to keeping the English language only for an elite group and denying its access to minorities.

Table 11 summarizes how the concepts fail when they are not linked to one another.

Table 11

The Interdependent Model for Critical Literacy

Power without access	This maintains the exclusionary force of powerful discourses
Power without diversity	Without difference and diversity, powerful forms lose the ruptures that produce challenge and creative transformations
Power without design	The deconstruction of power, without reconstruction or design, removes human agency.
Access without power	Access without a theory of power leads to the naturalization of powerful discourses without an understanding of how these powerful forms came to be powerful.
Access without diversity	This fails to recognize that difference fundamentally affects pathways to access and involves issues of history, identity and value
Access without design	This maintains and reifies powerful forms without considering how they can be transformed.
Diversity without a theory of power	This leads to a celebration of diversity without any recognition that difference is structured in dominance and that not all discourses/genres/ languages/literacies are equally powerful.
Diversity without access	Diversity without access to powerful forms of language ghettoizes students.
Diversity without design	Diversity provides the means, the ideas, the alternative perspectives for reconstruction and transformation. Without design, the potential that diversity offers is not realized.
Design without power	Design, without an understanding of how powerful discourses/practices perpetuate themselves, runs the risk of an unconscious reproduction of these forms.
Design without access	Runs the risk of whatever is designed remaining on the margins.
Design without diversity	This privileges powerful forms and fails to use the design resources provided by difference.

Source: (Janks, 2006, p. 2)

Although Jank's critical framework is intended to analyze critical literacy, it can also be used to analyze critical educational matters such as the ones present in Chile. For example, as was seen in Chapter One, and as the reader will see from the findings of this study, power in the Chilean educational system rests with the Ministry of Education which prescribes mandates that must be followed by the school administrators and teachers. At the same time, the local power is held by school administrators since they decide how the mandates will be implemented. Regarding *access*, it may be limited when it comes to teachers' opportunities for specialization, or for public school teachers regarding pedagogical resources and low numbers of hours of instruction. *Diversity* is also in jeopardy as the students are segregated according to their socio-

economic status. Also, students in public schools do not experience as wide a spectrum of opportunities as students in private schools. Finally, the general educational *design* is one of the most oppressive among the OECD group. However, the Ministry of Education is making great efforts to change the EFL education design.

Janks' critical framework provides a more in-depth analysis of the findings as it easily allows the portrayal of the meaning of teachers' perceptions regarding the Chilean educational reality.

Finally, the last step was the translation of the selected participants' quotes which were verified by a Spanish-English critical speaker.

Delimitations

Considering that delimitations are choices that are within the researcher's control, I need to explain that one of the main delimitations was how the interviews were conducted. Focus group interviews could have been a possibility but unfortunately, since most of the participants were located in different cities and the distance between cities is great in Chile, I ruled out that option. Furthermore, although it could have been possible to have a group conversation through Skype I feared that the internet connection might have been too slow to conduct a fluid conversation.

Another delimitation was the online video conference interview method. This method, although quite effective in allowing me to see the participants' facial expressions, also limited me, especially when we had internet connection or audio problems. However, the teacher-participants were always willing to restart the conversation immediately and to spend over an hour on each interview.

Also, considering that the study is limited to primarily the voices of teachers, I did not

conduct interview with principals, government officials or PD developers. Thus, I have no data that could explain the reasons behind the actions and decisions of these educational actors and that has directly impacted on the teachers' participants perceptions of TBLT implementation. Also, because my interest was in teachers' voices, I did not attempt to gather observation data which could have given me a more accurate information regarding the teachers' understanding of TBLT. Thus, the interpretation of the findings in this study rely on the findings of the survey that I conducted (Herrera, 2016b) and which indicated that all teachers understand and know the principles of TBLT.

In relation to the findings, they cannot be generalized as a commonality because of the limited number of participants (9). Nevertheless, the findings do provide further explanation of the reasons behind the chosen survey teachers' participants general perception on TBLT implementation in Chile.

Chapter Five: Teacher Participants

This qualitative study drew upon nine EFL Chilean teacher-participants with a varying number of years of experience. All of them had different experiences in different teaching contexts as well. To ensure the participants' anonymity, the following pseudonyms were used: Aniel [M], Corelli [F], Josue [M], Julio [M], Lina [F], Liza [F], Osvaldo [M], Perla [F], Pola [F].

The teacher-participants had experience teaching for a different number of years (see Table 12) and worked or had worked in different types of schools – public, public-rural, subsidized, private, and delegated schools (see Table 13). Also, although most of them were very experienced in secondary education, many of them also had experience teaching at primary and adult education levels (see Table 12). Regarding TBLT implementation, all teacher participants had learned about TBLT and implemented it at least a few times in their classes.

The demographics of the teachers are very varied as they were from different parts of the country and from rural and urban areas. Most of the participants were female which aligns with the overall ratio of male/female teachers in Chile (Centro de Estudios Mineduc, 2016). Regarding their education, all teachers had a Bachelor in Education, and one of them had a Master in Literature. A number of them have participated in several PD sessions in the country and a few of them have conducted some kind of professional development program overseas. (See Table 12).

The following tables summarize the participants' years of experience, education, and the types of schools in which they have taught.

Table 12

Educational and Professional Experience of the Participants

Participants	Educational experience				Teaching Experience			Years of experience			
	Bach. of Ed.	National PDs	Internat. PDs	Master degree	Elem.	Sec.	Adult	0 - 4	5 - 8	9 - 12	13 +
Aniel	X				X	X		X			
Corelli	X	X	X	X		X	X				X
Josue	X	X	X			X	X		X		
Julio	X	X				X	X				X
Lina	X	X			X	X	X	X			
Liza	X				X	X			X		
Osvaldo	X	X	X			X	X	X			
Perla	X	X				X				X	
Pola	X				X	X		X			

Table 13

Overview of School Settings

Participants	Types of schools				No of students per class	No of hours for EFL instruction per class per week
	Public	Public rural	Subsidized	Delegated admin.		
Aniel	X				Up to 40	Up to 3
Corelli	X				Up to 35	Up to 4
Josue			X		Up to 40	Up to 5
Julio			X		Up to 32	Up to 5
Lina				X	Up to 45	Up to 3
Liza		X			Up to 20	Up to 3
Osvaldo		X			Up to 15	Up to 4
Perla	X				Up to 42	Up to 4
Pola				X	Up to 30	Up to 3

Considering that in qualitative interpretive inquiry providing a thick description of the context enhances the trustworthiness of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), I introduced an extensive description of the Chilean educational context in Chapter One. However, to enhance trustworthiness and expand and give the readers the opportunity to better understand my interpretations, I provide a thick description of each teacher participant.

Participants

Aniel (M). Aniel is a single EFL teacher with no children. During his four years of experience he has worked at private, subsidized and public schools.

Aniel's motivation for pedagogy was mainly related to the social and humanitarian aspect that is embedded in pedagogy. Actually, his main goal as a teacher, before teaching English, was being able to help his students in one way or another as he is aware of the needs, especially psychological needs, that many of them have. In his PIAs in Figure 6 of Appendix G, he represents his sentiments of being a teacher. He comments: *“Even though there were days that were bad or when I was frustrated; there were days when I was very happy because, just ... to see the children smile, see the children happy, that they liked the class”*. He adds: *“Or when a child did not have breakfast I would say: I’m going to buy you an apple – and they were so happy because of such small things, that, at the end of the day, what makes you happy being a teacher is neither the principal, nor the district, nor the salary, but simply the fact of seeing the children happy”*.

Aniel's pre-service teacher-training was very intense as he was doing his practicums during the day (an intensive 20 hours a week practicum for five months), in his hometown, and studying in another city. He remembers that he learned the theory related to TBLT among several other approaches at the university. He comments *“using this type of methodology was not a priority for them [for the professors]. In fact, it was one among thousands. It was never a priority. So, they were never specifically focused on that”*. In addition, he was not able to use or observe TBLT during his practicum as he had to follow a strict protocol. However, once Aniel started working as an EFL teacher, he tried to use TBLT as much as he could. He comments: *“In fact, I tried to use it [TBLT] regularly”* because *“of the benefit that it [TBLT] brings to the*

students... when they do tasks about daily life, or something that will be useful for them...this will be a much more meaningful learning”.

Regarding PDs, Aniel has not taken part in the PD courses offered by the PIAP. He argues that he used to work almost 50 hours a week and that he felt exhausted because, like most teachers, he has to continue teaching and task preparation at home. Nonetheless, he adds that he has colleagues that worked as much as he did and would still devote time to attend the courses. But he feels that there has to be a balance in his life: *“There were ‘fanatical’ teachers who stayed at the school the whole day. They would arrive at 7:30 and they would stay up until late, they would go to all the courses ... But, it’s them. Not everyone can be just as fanatical. So, according to how they pay you, according to how they treat you, according to how the system is, you say ‘Ok. No more. I will not give more from me’”.*

Teaching, in his most current job at a public high school, has been challenging for him. Some of the reason is because he is teaching teenagers (Appendix G, Figure 7 represents Aniel’s generalized sentiment of his current teaching experience). Aniel states: *“Hey, this methodology is very good (referring to TBLT)... but it is only applicable within certain contexts. Because there are contexts in which it is very difficult to be implemented. But with children it is easier to implement than with [older students]. The big ones, uh!! They are difficult”.* In addition, the school had very large sized classes, and the students also carried heavy psychological and psych-social problems. He argues: *“I believe that the more students there are, the more difficult it is (to implement TBLT). And the more problems there are – the more psychological problems children have ... because there is evidence that there are children who have psychological problems”.*

Corelli (F). Corelli is one of the most experienced EFL teacher participants. She has almost 20 years of experience and in addition to her Bachelor in Education, she has a Master in

Literature degree. During her teaching career, she has taught in public schools, subsidized schools and at adult teaching institutes. However, most of her experience has been in the urban public school she is working at the moment. In a more personal field, Corelli recently got married and has no children.

Regarding her professional development, she has been one of the teachers-participants who took most advantage of many of the PDs offered by the Ministry of Education through the PIAP program and she has also completed PD courses abroad. It was in one of the last PD courses that she took that she learned about TBLT. She comments: *“In the course that I just did; ‘Teaching Grammar Communicatively’, which was through the USA embassy – there, they presented approaches of how to teach grammar, how to learn English as a second language; and there I learned about this approach [TBLT].”*

Regarding Corelli’s teaching practice, although she is a very well-trained teacher who has been evaluated as an ‘outstanding’ teacher in the teacher evaluation, she acknowledges that she had not been able to teach her students to speak in English. She laments: *“unfortunately, to my great regret, I had fallen into some things in teaching grammar rules, which were also isolated. I did not have good results because of that... and at the time of – ‘tell me what you did last summer’ – they [the students] could not use it [the English language]”.*

Corelli comments that her school is very prestigious for its professional technological approach as the aim of the school is to prepare technicians in the areas of administration, electricity, electronics, and computing. However, Corelli argues that the academic level of the school has decreased considerably since the selection process stopped three years ago, and now PIE students are part of the school too. This has contributed to the overall decrease of the students’ academic and English language level. She laments: *“That [no students’ selection] has*

lowered the level, even though that is like a widespread malaise at a national level. But yes, in good Chilean 'it is ³chacreado'. In the past, the students used to be super self-demanding”.

Corelli comments that since she learned TBLT, she has tried to include more communication in her classes because *“my tests were always just written tests – so, my students never had the chance to talk. So, this year, I have tried to complement this [oral activities] with rubrics. This has been a slower process – but I have gotten them to say, at least, a phrase [in English]”.*

Josue (M). Josue has six years of experience teaching EFL. He is currently working at an urban subsidized school which is in transition to become public. He has had experience teaching at private, public, subsidized schools and in post-secondary education. Josue is single and has no children.

Some of Josue’s reasons to become a teacher was because of the opportunities of helping others: *“that’s why I liked pedagogy at first – it is a matter of helping the other to solve problems... So, it’s that welfare-oriented part that pedagogy has...”*

Regarding his teacher-training experience, he states that the EFL teacher-training program did a good job preparing him with lots of content and English language skills, however and despite the four pre-practica and final practicum of each semester, he feels that he was not completely ready to actually teach. He makes several critical statements against the excessive theoretical orientation of the teacher-training programs: *“I mean, I can remember what the old Vygotsky said, the constructivism..., the puppy, and all that thing, but that would be it. They don’t teach you, for example, how to deal with that student that has difficulties to learn – you never see that stuff”.* He is grateful for one course he had in which he could really implement

³ Something is ‘chacreado’ (Chilean slang) when it has lost its original purpose.

the strategies he had learned. But it was “*The course*” as he emphasizes. It was not enough for him.

Although Josue briefly experienced TBLT in theory during his teacher-training program at the university, he learned and experienced the approach better in a month long ‘TESOL training certificate’ he took in Costa Rica. His first impressions were that ‘TBLT’ was: “*the ‘panacea’ to solve the classroom issues*”.

Josue feels that he learned TBLT very well during his course in Costa Rica and after some struggles trying to implement it, now he feels comfortable using it as “*one of the goals that the school has... is to develop the ‘entrepreneurial spirit’. So, practically, everyone has to work in groups. The teacher gives the activity, and the students are the ones who have to solve it. The teacher helps, accompanies, but the students are the ones who solve and who have to reach the results*”.

Although Josue feels comfortable in his school, he feels that the school system restrains teachers from doing a better job. He argues: “*The school gives all the opportunities to work with TBLT, but because of the number of children... one doesn’t do everything that perhaps one would like to do and get the most out of the approach*”.

Regarding TBLT, although Josue has a very positive attitude towards the approach in general and is willing to implement it in his school despite some challenges, he is aware that given the working conditions that most teachers have in Chile, such an approach may make teachers’ workload heavier. The following quote summarized Josue’s message: “*Then we have the issue of TBLT – I think there is one reason why many colleagues don’t use it. I mean, they learned it like, from books, and in the end, you realize that you’re worrying about so many things; because you juggle with the problems, you worry about managing the class, and you worry about the kid for this – to plan, the class book, upload stuff to SIGE (Integrated System of*

educational management), all the issues one has to do, that you forget the thing of being a teacher. You have to be informing marks, attendance – So, all that juggling that you are doing, at the end of the day, as a teacher in the university tells me “you stay in automatic mode”, and the simplest automatic mode is to have the kids sitting, reading a text and translating”.

Julio (M). Julio studied EFL pedagogy and translation in a private university in the south of the country. He had been teaching for 12 years at a subsidized technical-professional school for 10 years but is currently teaching English at a university where he teaches English in different programs.

His main interest in becoming an EFL teacher is that his students *“learn the language, that they can communicate in English”*.

Julio learned TBLT during his EFL teacher-training program, but *“it was only in theory – but I think the approach of one of the professors was very similar to TBLT”*. He laments that *“there was a lack of practice [of the approach]”*. However, in addition to his personal motivation to learn about the approach, he has also increased his knowledge of the approach during the several English Summer Camps and Winter retreats that he’s attended. He comments: *“I remember a person who came from Mexico and she gave a talk on TBLT”*.

Julio’s teaching experience has been positive, especially regarding pedagogical results. For example, Julio mentions that despite the low language level of his students, especially in grade 9, he has been able to teach his class 90% in English: *“I would do my classes 90% in English. After the third explanation in English, and with all the possible strategies, if they [the students] did not understand me, then I would use a little bit of Spanish. But I always tried to do my whole class in English”*. In addition, he indicates that in grade 12, many of his students could

communicate in English and *“the most rewarding thing was that several students – between 10 and 15 students - achieved certification [in the SIMCE test]”*.

Nevertheless, he reports that he has had some advantages that are not common in most subsidized or public schools. For example, the number of pedagogical hours that he teaches is higher than in most schools. He has also had a rather moderate class size of 32 students per class. In addition, he had extra non-pedagogical hours for restricted to planning and teaching material preparation along with more hours of specialists that support teachers to plan and help PIE students: *“Yes, I had designated hours ... I had three hours a week for material preparation. I also had more non-pedagogical hours that were these hours of collaboration with the PIE team, which also helped a lot. They would help a lot in integration projects”*. *“That was one of the advantages I had, that I had time to prepare my classes. So, I would try to make them quite playful and entertaining. I would look for the material”*. In addition, Julio’s perception of the appropriateness of the EFL textbooks from the Ministry of education is positive. He comments: *“the truth is that it [EFL textbook] is a very good resource”*.

Julio comments that during his teaching practice, he has been quite consistent using TBLT almost in every class although, he adds: *“I would try to go through all different approaches. I would try to do different things – a different strategy for each activity”*.

Lina (F). Lina studied at the same university as Josue and she has four years of experience. She is working at an urban delegated administration school. She is married with no children.

Lina decided to become an EFL teacher because her experience learning English at the primary and secondary school levels had not been positive. Although she had studied at a private prestigious school where EFL had great importance, she felt that her teachers had failed trying to

teach her: *“And it turns out that I said ‘Wow! I just don’t understand.’ And they would give me the stock answer ‘ok, ask a student, a classmate can teach you, because I’m not going to waste my time’”*. As she later discovered her own way to learn English, she decided that she would be an EFL teacher to prove that she could be able to teach her students to speak in English.

In relation to her teacher-training program, Lina has the sentiment that she did not actually learn how to teach during her EFL teacher-training program as she was expecting more explicit instruction: *“But, basically, more than ‘input’ there was ‘output’. So, they [the professors] would tell us ‘Ok. Use methodologies that you feel like it.’ But it was not much that they taught us”*. She also finds that the university program does not provide future teachers with enough tools to face challenging students: *“They teach us how to deal with the perfect student, with the student who won’t have difficulties, with the student who is interested in the class. And all the classes... aim to that type of student, but the reality is very different”*.

Lina argues that her knowledge of TBLT does not come from her courses in the teacher-training program but from the courses and teaching activities organized by the PIAP when she became an in-service teacher: *“And it turns out that when I started doing this [to work in the school where she is teaching now] in 2013, we started with the Summer Camps and that’s when I started to learn all the strategies that I did not learn in the university ... And I saw them in action right away. They gave us a folder with all the activities that the students have to do... So, there I learned a framework of what a methodology is, how to apply a methodology, and types of methodologies. And there was a lot of TBLT”* (See Appendix G, Figure 8, Drawing 1).

Currently she is teaching at a very prestigious technical-professional school that offers very good quality education and exceptionally still filters its students through a selection process.

The school environment sometimes may be challenging as the school has several at-risk and special needs students, the classes are big (40 – 45 students per class), all grades have only

three EFL pedagogical hours a week, and students in general have a rather low EFL level.

However, Lina feels that the learning and teaching environment is positive and motivating: *“In fact, it's like super familiar. The children support each other – There is support behind every person that works here. Yes, and teachers too; we all support each other in some way”. “This school has a very good working environment”.*

Regarding TBLT implementation, Lina states that she has been able to teach her lessons through TBLT due to several opportunities. Because her work place is a technical-professional school, the successful tasks have been small projects in which students use several skills such as computer skills, group work skills and many of those that are necessary in a work place. She comments: *“I have been able to implement it [TBLT] several times, but the most successful ones were with Grade 10 and Grade 11”.*

Liza (F). Liza is a single EFL teacher. She has 5 years of experience and has worked in public schools, private schools and is currently at a rural public school.

Becoming a teacher was not easy for Liza, mainly because of the strict educational system and the theory oriented educational style of the undergraduate program that offered students little practice: *“...the truth is that in theory, I almost didn't learn anything. But I did learn with [she mentions her mentor teacher at the school where she did her practicum]. She taught me how to handle a little Asperger boy and how to handle a child with Down syndrome, how to control a child who is inside the room with a penknife – many things”.*

Although Liza participates in the monthly meetings of the EFL teachers' network in her district, she has not been able to take any PD course yet. She comments: *“I couldn't. I had so much to do, but I didn't notice the deadline. But I wanted to go”.*

Liza remembers that her working environment conditions when she started her teaching career made her quit teaching for some years: *“the exploitation of the system was the same in both public schools and private schools. You work for 45 minutes [pedagogical hour] ... in the subsidized and in private system, you work the chronological time [60 minutes]. So, you have 15 minutes left and in those 15 minutes they [administrators in private schools] make you work during the recess time, or they add them [the minutes] up and you have to do an activity on a Saturday. In private schools, you work the same number of hours as a multi-store vendor. At least in the public schools they give you time to plan, or they pay you one or two hours a month because you have to make a parents-teachers meetings, or for the class council, I do not know”*. This created a very oppressive environment and after severe health/stress concerns she left her teaching career for a while to focus on technology and information.

However, after 5 years being away from the classroom she returned to teaching, but this time to a rural school. She states: *“I fell in love with rural schools. The environment is very different, children are different... you have more freedom in terms of curriculum, regarding the methods, regarding the boxed in-oriented system”*. Liza comments that although she noticed advantages working in a rural school, those schools bring other challenges such as limited internet connection, or a lack of access to English speaking volunteers. Nevertheless, these seem to be minor problems compared with the satisfaction she expressed in teaching at that school because although struggling sometimes, she manages to create interactive communicative-oriented classes to the best of her ability: *“I have friends from other countries and when I feel that the kids are well prepared, we make a video conference with native speakers from other countries. So, they ask them questions about their personal lives, they tell them about their pets. Things like that. They have about two or three questions per child. So, there you see the communicative skills of the children”*. When asked about the access the school has to English

volunteer native speakers, she jokes: “*Nothing...*” To describe the irregular and unreliable internet access, she states “*I could easily find a hen in the classroom*” to underscore that she is in a rural area

As to the implementation of TBLT in her classes, although she has a very positive attitude towards the approach, she acknowledges that it may be challenging not only in the rural public-school context where she works, but also in private or subsidized schools. One of the reasons she finds is because of the static nature of the educational system: “*[the students] are very used to a rigid method, to a method with a lot of grammar. I don’t know. It happens to me in schools that I still have trouble implementing new methods because the kids are used to grammatical formulas in the form of steps 1, 2, 3*”.

Osvaldo (M). Osvaldo has four years of experience. He works at a public rural school in the south of country. He is single and has one daughter.

Osvaldo entered the EFL teacher-training program not especially for the teaching aspect but for his interest and skills to speak in English as he became motivated by the language during his years as a secondary school student. He comments: “*I was involved in several EFL activities, and English debates before starting my teacher-training program. I had contact with the ‘fellows’ [English language volunteer speakers] that come from the United States and from Canada when I was in high school. So, I knew a little bit of English, but not much*”.

According to Osvaldo, his teacher-training program strengthened his English language skills greatly but it did not make him very strong in terms of pedagogy. He comments: “*I believe that the university, at least in my case, tried to make the person, who leaves the university program, be a very good speaker of English, or someone who has very good language skills, not necessarily very good teaching skills*”.

During his teacher-training program, Osvaldo learned about several approaches to teaching EFL, especially PPP, and TBLT was briefly introduced in theory. However, he gained more knowledge about TBLT during the teacher evaluation process as TBLT was part of the content to be learned: *“I must admit that I was only given a brushstroke of this (of TBLT). Very little in fact. I heard more about TBLT when I started working and I had to do a sort of validation. And I had to see it [TBLT] again for the teacher evaluation ... Because one of the topics that were asked in the teacher evaluation, in the test of disciplinary knowledge, was TBLT”*.

Regarding PDs, although Osvaldo claims that the English language is his strength, he took an ESL course in Canada at the beginning of his teaching career. In addition, he has been an active participant in the PIAP workshops.

Since Osvaldo graduated four years ago he has been working at the school where he is teaching EFL at the time of the interview – a school that teaches from grade 1 to grade 12 in a rural area in the south of the country.

As Osvaldo is part of administrative staff in his school and head of the EFL network in his district, he has some voice and space to implement some changes in EFL education. He has been able to extensively use the educational opportunities provided by the PIAP not only participating in workshops but also encouraging and making sure that his students participate as much as possible too. He mentions for example: *“... the interesting things that came out recently..., which is run by the University of Antofagasta, are some A1 courses of English and I can apply for and register certain students that I think can perfectly do the A1 level and get the certification, because these are classes online. These are courses given by PIAP. Then, they finish the 30 classes and take a final evaluation and they receive the certificate ... I registered several students I must have, like, seven or eight students more or less”*.

Regarding TBLT implementation, Osvaldo comments that some students do very well and others do not because the traditional educational paradigm makes the students *“to simply learn by heart, remember formulas and apply them in a test and then, you forget”*.

Perla (F). Perla is a single mother and EFL teacher with 12 years of teaching experience. She has worked at private, subsidized and public schools including a public rural school. Currently, she is working at an urban public technical-professional high school.

Regarding her EFL teacher-training experience, Perla points out the complexity of her undergraduate experience due to the emotionally oppressive reward-punishment style educational system. She comments: *“You know that the university educational system may be lapidary with you. So, your self-esteem instead of going up, it goes down”*. She not only focuses on the strict style of education but also on the mistreatment she suffered from one of her professors: *“...some people humiliate you”*.

However, she highlights some professors who gave her support and helped her overcome the academic and emotional difficulties she was having: *“I met very good people. Even very good professors. Professors who would help you and who would approach you very nicely. They would try to give you support, advices... So, that would help me to face situations”*.

During her years in the teacher-training program, she learned a little bit about TBLT but mainly in theory: *“The classes were very theoretical, and the professor taught it only a little bit among other approaches. Nothing practical. I learned more because I researched by myself and read more to learn”*.

Perla has been involved in some of the PIAP PDs, but she has not had the opportunity of being part of the EFL teachers network in her city because it has been in recess for a long time in her district. As she is aware of the benefits that PIAP activities bring to both teachers and

students, she makes efforts to have her students involved in different activities such as the ‘English debates’, and camps. Nevertheless, she does not always find support or the students’ motivation to improve her teaching practice. She remembers an activity that was cancelled because the administrators forgot to arrange some details: *“My students got frustrated, I was upset because sometimes you feel like your hands are tied... And moreover, the children’s motivation is not going to be so high the next time”*.

According to Perla, her current school is an *“at-risk school because there is too many drugs and kids are abandoned”*. However, despite the hostility of the environment, Perla tries to create instances of communicative and interactive classes as she attests that she cares about her students: *“Actually, I became a ‘magician’ to attract and capture the attention of these guys [the students]”*.

Regarding her experience implementing TBLT, she expresses that during her practicum, in a public school, she tried to put it into practice and found that her students could be more motivated although many of them would feel also reluctant to speak in English. Nevertheless, it was not always successful because her mentor teacher did not understand TBLT and did not provide her support to implement it and make changes to the traditional teach-centred class style.

When she was teaching at a rural school, she tried implementing TBLT and she remembers a funny experience which exemplifies the attitude some students may have towards speaking in English in certain areas in the country: *“Once, in a class [she names the town] (semi-rural place) where I was doing a class based on TBLT, at the time of doing the oral part, one of the students told me – ‘Do you think I’m going to talk in English to the potatoes?’”*

Pola (F). Pola has four years of experience as an EFL teacher. She has worked at public, subsidized and delegated schools. She is single with no children.

Pola remembers that she always had interest in pedagogy because *“it is the social area [of pedagogy], and to feel the need that the world can change”*. On the other hand, her interest in English arose from the positive impact that two of her school teachers had on her.

Pola feels that her teacher-training program was very strong in the area of the English language but rather weak in pedagogy. Although Pola studied TBLT in more detail during her EFL teacher-training program she thinks that she still needed more practice.

Pola comments that when she started learning about TBLT she really found it appealing and a good alternative to teach English in a meaningful way, although she felt that the approach could be complex to be implemented in low EFL level classes: *“The problem is that I felt that everything was thought for - ideal classrooms, with the perfect number [of students], where almost everyone was motivated and knew English. And that’s where my problem came in, and I said – ‘If I’m not in the [Name of an expensive private school] or I’m not in the [Name of another private school] – Impossible! Impossible!’”*

Pola has not taken any teacher PD courses yet, but she is planning to join the EFL teachers’ network lead by the Ministry of Education in order to be more current about courses and be able to exchange experiences with other EFL teachers. Pola mentions that one of the reasons why she has avoided taking courses is because she does not feel highly confident speaking in English, especially in front of other EFL teachers. She feels that EFL teachers tend to be very punitive even among themselves and when another teacher makes a mistake, they judge very easily and look down at the other teacher. She laments: *“It does not matter if she made a mistake if you can still understand - No, it’s like ‘Oh! She was wrong.’”*

Pola considers that the students’ social and attitudinal problems are extremely challenging in her school. The following quotes attempts to portray the social-economic context of Pola’s delegated administration school: *“There are children who eat what they give them at*

school, and then, they spend the day waiting for breakfast the next day at 9:30. There are kids who work all night loading trucks. Then, they arrive home, they change clothes, and go to school". Nevertheless, she feels that she has a mission, as the school puts the wellbeing of the students before their academic performance: "...the instructions that we have from the leadership of the school, is that the first priority is that the children are well, that they do not drop out of the school, that they are alive, that they go to school, that we protect them and from there we help them with other things".

Although the wellbeing of the students is priority, teachers have to be training them all the time to take the compulsory corporation standardized tests. These tests evaluate all the academic subjects and are given twice a year. For this reason, and because of the students' low language level, Pola feels that she cannot implement TBLT as often as she wanted, even though her experiences implementing TBLT have been positive overall. She comments: *"I feel that the most difficult part is that the kids understand and take away the idea of 'filling in the blanks', listening to audio recordings and 'multiple choice' – because in this school, they are trained to do that – for a standardized test – But, for example, last year I worked the 'job interviews' topic, and it was incredible because they prepared every single detail. They even wore a tie!"*

Summary

In this chapter I presented the nine teacher-participants and described aspects such as the type of schools in which they teach/have taught, their years of teaching experience, their experiences learning and implementing TBLT, and their current teaching contexts. The following is a summary that portrays the commonalities among them.

Firstly, most of them are currently teaching at the secondary level. Second, regarding their teaching preparation, all teacher participants said that their university teacher-training

programs offered them opportunities to develop competency in English but did not deeply prepare them to teach English. Although most of them completed five practicums or more, they still think that more teaching methodology courses were needed. Third, regarding TBLT instruction, most teachers learned about TBLT at the university during their teacher-training program, but mainly in theory. Also, most teachers have taken some further PD courses on TBLT. Considering the main topic of this project – teachers’ perceptions of TBLT implementation - teachers tend to see TBLT as a very positive language teaching approach but also identify complications in its complete implementation. This responds to conflicting perceptions.

Fourth, most teachers have also expressed concern for the sociological complexity of the contemporary society where the children and youth groups are struggling for compassion and care more than knowledge. For example, Lina comments that *“It’s like, parents dump the kids at school during high school”*.

Fifth, teacher evaluation and standardized tests such as the SIMCE are overall perceived in a negative way because they demand teachers to train for the test and do not consider individual or local particularities. Corelli comments that the area where she teaches is highly contaminated by several chemicals which has proven to cause disorder attention deficit hyperactivity (DADH) among children. Thus, she comments: “So, that’s why we get so bad results in the SIMCE tests; because we have all this additional background”.

Sixth, although most teachers declare their gratitude for the investments the Ministry of Education is making, they regret that they have seen very little fruit from this labour. They mention the need to overcome additional pedagogical and administrative structures to offer students greater success. Such a redesign should include attention to resources such as dictionaries or textbooks, increasing the number of instructional hours, reducing class sizes, etc.

Seventh, although teachers do not complain about their salaries, they consider that better working conditions where there is respect, and a friendly environment is key for their own pedagogical development.

Finally, it is interesting to note that teachers with international PDs (Corelli, Josue, and Osvaldo) were the participants that provided more insights regarding the research topic.

The following table summarizes the teachers' commonalities.

Table 14

Teachers' Commonalities

<i>ALL teachers</i>	<i>Most teachers</i>
have experienced teaching in secondary level education.	learned TBLT during their teacher-training program but mainly in theory.
argue that their teacher-training programs were strong in EFL but weak in pedagogy.	have studied TBLT at PD courses or workshops.
appreciate the benefits of TBLT but are aware of some challenges for its implementation. (Conflicting perception)	express concern for the sociological complexity of modern society.
have a negative perception of the teacher evaluation process.	feel the need of having better working conditions.
are aware and grateful of the ministerial endeavors to improve EFL education.	have a negative perception of SIMCE test.
	tend to have a negative perception of EFL textbooks appropriateness.

The following three chapters aim to respond to the research questions.

Chapter Six: What are Teachers' Perceptions of TBLT and its Successes and Challenges?

In Chapter One, I introduced my overarching research question: *How can Chilean EFL teachers' perceptions of the implementation of TBLT at the school level inform us about teaching English as a foreign language in Chile?* My primary interest is in understanding the issues of implementation of TBLT in Chile. Thus, I used two sub-questions to inform me both about TBLT implementation and teaching EFL in Chile:

- 1.- *What are teachers' perceptions of TBLT and its successes and challenges?*
- 2.- *In what ways do EFL teachers feel prepared (or not) to implement TBLT?*

The chapter will begin by exploring the former and concludes by describing how the challenges of TBLT implementation also reflect the challenges of teaching EFL in Chile.

This chapter will begin with a brief summary of research on teachers' perceptions of TBLT in FL contexts from Chapter Three to remind the reader of the general findings and the main themes that were used to analyze the data in this study – benefits and challenges of TBLT implementation. Then I introduce the findings from the interviews through the benefits of TBLT and the challenges of TBLT implementation.

Teachers' Perceptions of TBLT Implementation in FL Contexts

The literature review in Chapter Three informs us that TBLT has been widely studied in many FL contexts but little research has been conducted in South American countries, and fewer in Chile. Most of these studies show that teachers in FL contexts have a conflicting perception of TBLT implementation, meaning that teachers acknowledge the benefits that emerge from TBLT but also find its implementation complex (Carless, 2007; Carless, 2009; Cheng & Moses, 2011;

Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Nahavandi & Mukundan 2012; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012; Lin & Wu, 2012; Xiao-yan, 2011; and Zheng & Borg, 2014).

The review of the literature indicates that teachers in FL contexts consider that TBLT implementation may benefit both students and the L2 lesson in general. Studies have also noted that the challenges facing the successful implementation of TBLT may emerge from TBLT itself, from educational actors (teachers, school administrators, and students), and/or from the educational system (examination system, material support, and class characteristics).

In this chapter I will draw upon data from interviews to identify aspects in which teachers' perceptions align with or differ from teachers' perceptions in other FL contexts.

Benefits of TBLT According to Chilean EFL Teachers

The benefits of TBLT implementation identified by the teacher participants are similar to those identified in the literature review including: a) benefits that impact the L2 lessons; b) benefits that impact on the students; and c) benefits that impact the teacher. Additional findings in each category are also included.

Benefits for the L2 lessons. Teacher participants stated that TBLT makes the class more fun and enjoyable for both the students and the teacher. For example, Lina implies that implementing TBLT allows her to be more relaxed: *“I do not like writing on the whiteboard the whole time – explaining to the students, writing on the whiteboard – explaining to the students, but rather prefer doing things with them, to talk and to tell jokes in English”*. Josue finds that teaching through tasks helps students realize that teachers may also be fun. He remembers an anecdote when he prepared a task-based lesson along with another EFL teacher: *“Everything was very entertaining, because in the end they [the students] could see that... even though the*

two teachers looked very formal, they were disguised as fortune tellers and they could use the ‘I wish’ form to express their wishes and all. That was like an entertaining anecdote that happened to me as a teacher”.

Benefits for the students. According to the findings, TBLT may benefit the students by strengthening their soft skills, enhancing their motivation and improving their language skills.

Strengthening of soft skills. Participating EFL teachers state that TBLT may “*enhance soft skills*” (Josue), such as autonomous learning, leadership skills, group work skills, and critical thinking in their students.

Autonomous learning. In order to enhance a variety of student skills, especially ‘transversal objectives’ or ‘soft skills’, Josue’s school is dedicated to teaching through projects. Josue confirms that TBLT implementation provides opportunities in which those soft skills can be utilized and attained. For example, as presented in Holec (1980), and echoed by several FL teachers in the research conducted by McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007) and McAllister, Combes and Perret (2012), TBLT enhances autonomous learning as students need to be able to manage time and develop their own strategies to complete and report on the task. Josue states: “*I seek their [the students’] creative side. I don’t want them to depend on me, which is one of the goals I have, that children are not always dependent on the teacher, but learn to work autonomously*”. He adds that with TBLT “*students can use the language structures that they have in their minds to express their ideas instead of penalizing them for errors*”.

Leadership skills. Josue also points out how TBLT group work enhances the development of students’ leadership skills: “*As there is group work, leadership always comes out, even if one doesn’t ask for it, it always does. So, the task that I am always given, as a teacher, under this paradigm that works in school, is that ‘leadership’ always has to be present*”.

Group work skills. In Lina's school, enhancing group work skills is key because they are needed in the workplace and the students are expected to obtain a job position soon after finishing grade 12.

Critical thinking. Julio argues that even though encouraging the students to think critically is not a very common strategy in Chilean education, he considers it to be important and has found that TBLT facilitates its development. He states: *"I remember a topic that talked about family. And some students felt very touched by the topic because they were from families a little bit different, where the head of the household was the grandfather, or the uncle. So, that kind of thing made them think a little bit more and made them transpose their realities to the realities that I was trying to teach in that class"*.

Enhancing motivation. According to SLA researchers (e.g., Ellis, 2008; Ortega, 2009), and also as identified by many FL teachers in the literature review (Cheng & Moses, 2011; Hadi, 2013; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Lin & Wu, 2012; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011; Tinker Sachs, 2009), motivation is a key aspect of student learning. In this study, several teacher participants also pointed out the motivational quality of TBLT, especially for shy or lazy students.

Overcoming social barriers. Osvaldo observed that with TBLT some shy students overcame their social barriers and delivered a good performance *"Sometimes, I've had pleasant surprises. For example, to see students who sometimes... tend to be rather withdrawn socially, trying to stay a little distant but in certain situations [during a task] they can do something, and something good"*. Pola comments that some 'lazy' students can also become very motivated and responsible to participate in classes: *"How responsible they [the students] can become! Because there are some whom I have to follow during the whole year to give them a test, but when they have to do these things [task-based activities] they come to all the classes and volunteer to do things"*.

Sense of achievement. TBLT further enhances motivation by helping students develop a sense of achievement. In this study, Corelli remembers a project in which the final task of the students was to present their work on healthy food to the rest of the school. Although naturally nervous, students became aware of their knowledge of English phrases through these tasks and also saw that their efforts were appreciated by others. She states: “*So, there were different stands [like in a market] and people were passing by... other students too. And they [the students] have to greet them in English, introduce themselves to their classmates, report a little bit about what they are working on in English, and also do it in Spanish because the school administrators do not speak English ... So, I would walk around and just listen to them. And there are students who show courage and lose their self-consciousness in this context. As they see that the little boys are looking at them like idols, they dare to speak to them like with a ⁴‘pitigüi’ in English*”.

The students’ sense of achievement is also enhanced because they need to explore several options in order to complete and report about the task. As Liza elaborates: “*That is what I find wonderful about TBLT. The way you introduce the information, in a very organized way although the children have to discover what they are doing*”.

Celebrating differences. Some teachers also observed that using TBLT enhances student motivation because it celebrates the individual’s differences when completing a task. Josue reflects on how developing/using tasks appeals to diverse ways of learning and helps him see students’ uniqueness. In his PIA, he represented this idea as different sources of light: “*I put it as with different sources of illumination. So, at the end of the day, from the source of illumination coming from the candle, which is like the most traditional one, to these modern light bulbs like LED... They all represent different ways of thinking. And below, like with those*

⁴ Corelli used the word *pitigüi*, which is not a real word, referring to a *chamuyo* (slang) which means using several words that do not make much sense.

‘double checks’ – all are accepted, and all ideas are valid. It’s like, each type of child is a different source of light that illuminates and that the type of illumination that they give you, is still useful” (See Appendix G, Figure 9). Pola adds that all students have talents that can be used to complete a task: *“And those who do poorly on tests, for example, they draw very well. That surprises me - as I discover them, it is like I realize that I can reach them in a different way”*.

L2 improvement. Teacher participants also argued that TBLT lessons help the improvement of the L2 because they promote meaningful and real communication, promote language acquisition, and give space for uncontrolled language usage.

Meaningful and real communication. Teachers indicate that the use of TBLT enhances L2 skills because TBLT is based on meaningful and real communication, which is a principle of Vygotsky’s social constructivist learning theory, Long’s meaningful interaction L2 hypothesis, and the findings in McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007), to name a few. For example, Liza remembers a task in which the students had to talk with a native speaker [a friend of hers] through a video conference and one of the students began to talk about meaningful topics for him, in a natural and spontaneous way: *“We were in a video conference with a friend, and suddenly a kid started to talk to the girl, with a language that I had no idea he knew. And he started talking. He told her about the dog, the cat, the hen, the mother, the father, and I just stood there watching in awe”*.

Language acquisition. Several teacher participants also noticed that the students tend to use the language that they have learned in a certain lesson, in future lessons or in different situations. For example, although Aniel teaches in a school where the students have a very low language level, he has noticed that the students sometimes speak *Spanglish*: *“For example, if I make them role play about going to the doctor, they will remember in a certain way what they*

performed... and therefore, they know how to say 'doctor', they know how to say 'headache'... and suddenly, they will say –⁵ 'tengo un headache'”.

Pola describes this same phenomenon of code switching as students telling jokes using words or phrases they have learned in classes: *“Last year, was the first time I did the job interviews and they kept some phrases in their mind. So, sometimes they [the students] greet me and joke with me telling me phrases they had to say last year”.*

Free language usage. Teachers remark that students' L2 improvement is linked to the freedom of expression that students experience during the task, which also diminishes the stress they may feel when performing a task. For example, Josue argues: *“But during the task, it's like – 'do it, but I don't care if you're wrong. I mean, in the task, for example, if you had a grammatical error, or if you had a vocabulary error, I will not cut you a finger [give you any slack] for that. I mean, do it, complete the task, and that's it' – And then, when we talk, like, at the closing of the class – 'hey, look, careful with this, you got this wrong'. But do not say – 'You, Pedrito, you got this wrong, you didn't put the 's'". But instead you say – 'children, careful with the 's', careful with this'.*

Benefits for the teacher. This study revealed additional factors that have not previously been addressed in the literature review, namely, how TBLT enhances the teachers' speaking confidence and social skills. Aniel, points out that by using TBLT, he has had to act out to make the input comprehensible, or to represent the task that the students are required to complete. This has resulted in him gradually overcoming his own teacher shyness: *“... I was very, very timid as a boy. Extremely timid ... And I think ... for example, to do these kinds of classes, or to give this kind of teaching to children, one has to be extroverted in a certain way. So, at first, when I was*

⁵ *Tengo un headache* means 'I have a headache'.

teaching, I would say “No. I’m not going to make a fool of myself in front of anyone”. But, in the end I would sing, perform, do anything in front of the children and I did not feel any discomfort”.

Table 15 summarizes the list of TBLT implementation benefits identified by the teacher participants and discussed in this chapter. New findings, and thus contributions, to the research field are in bold.

Table 15

Benefits of TBLT According to Chilean EFL Teachers’ Perceptions

Benefits for the L2 lessons	Enjoyment and active classes	
Benefits for the students	Strengthens soft skills:	Autonomous learning Leadership skills Group work skills Critical thinking
	Enhances Motivation:	Overcoming social barriers Sense of achievement Students’ differences are celebrated
	Promotes L2 Improvement:	Meaningful and real communication Language acquisition Free language usage
Benefits for the teachers	Enhancement of their personality and social skills	

Challenges of TBLT Implementation According to Chilean EFL Teachers

As stated in Chapter Three, Shehadeh and Coombe (2012) posited that the challenges that teachers face when implementing TBLT do not always emerge from the approach itself but more often from the teaching contexts. The findings in this study align with the challenges identified in the review of the literature. Additionally, teachers in this project identify some new challenges that stem from the local educational context.

Similar to the themes of challenges presented in the literature review, this section presents the challenges that arise in the Chilean context from a) TBLT, b) educational actors, and c) the educational system. A new contribution to research on TBLT, and also described in this section, is d) the social context.

Challenges from the TBLT approach. Although all participating teachers appreciate the benefits that TBLT brings to L2 learning, they also highlight that implementing TBLT may be time consuming and lead to language fossilization, and/or may fail because of teachers' limited guidance and support during task completion,

Time consuming. Almost all participating teachers consider task preparation to be too time consuming to sustain implementation of TBLT. For example, Corelli comments that since she started using TBLT in her lessons, her work seems to progress more slowly. She reports: *"This year I have tried to complement my lessons with TBLT, using rubrics... but the work is slower"*.

Language fossilization. Osvaldo mentions that because students are given freedom to use the language, they may appropriate some erroneous grammar structures and such repeated errors could lead to fossilization: *"This also gives rise to the student's appropriation of the language ... So, you can also create your own rules"*. He acknowledges, however, that appropriate feedback may diminish the possibilities that fossilization is taking place.

Limited guidance. Teachers tend to think that the limited guidance provided to students during task completion may be insufficient for student success, especially when students have limited L2 proficiency, are not autonomous learners, and/or have attitudinal issues. Osvaldo argues that this lack of structure arises because *"You give them freedom, and they [the students] have no idea how to use it. They may have thousands of ideas, but in the end they cannot use any"*

because there is no specific guidance. That's why I was telling you that the students need a type of framework, because it's necessary". Corelli also finds that sometimes her TBLT implementation *"was like messy"*.

Pola reflects that although she appreciates and sometimes tries to use TBLT, she thinks that the approach is intended to be implemented in contexts in which the students already know how to work autonomously (Holec, 1980) and have a high L2 level: *"The problem is that I felt that everything was designed for almost ideal classrooms, with the perfect number of students, where almost everyone was motivated and knew English. And that's where my problem came in, and there I came into conflict because I said – 'If I'm not at the [name of a private school] or I'm not at the [name of another private school] – Impossible! Impossible'"*.

Challenges that emerge from educational actors. Teachers also identified challenges that emerged from themselves/ teachers, the school administrators, and the students.

From teachers. Among the challenges that the teacher participants identified were classroom management, low motivation, preference for grammar-oriented approaches, limited familiarity with TBLT, poor teaching practice, limited use of target language, and decreasing respect for students.

Classroom management. Teachers attribute classroom management problems to a variety of factors. Aniel refers to the complex social problems that students may have: *"As they [children] see the example in their parents, they don't want to obey. They don't want to obey and as they have so many emotional problems, they see so much violence – because Chile is a very violent country, a lot of shouting, insults, bad words, bad faces, little smile, little greeting"*.

Corelli states that many students lack empathy and motivation to learn. She remembers what she describes as her 'worst teaching experience' when she took a teaching position in a city

public high school where the characteristics of the school and students resemble the challenging descriptions identified by the other teachers in this study: *“And, you know what, Marcela? At 10 in the morning, I wanted to leave that school. At 10 o’clock in the morning I could not stand it anymore. Luckily, I resisted until 1:30 pm. I went to the bathroom to cry, because I couldn’t bear it anymore. I dignified myself. I finished at three in the afternoon. I breathed... And I went to talk to the principal and said, ‘You know what? I say this with great mortification, this is not for me. I’m so sorry. I admire the role and work of each of these teachers, but I am not used to this’. It was impossible to do classes there. It was impossible. Although I considered my current school difficult, compared to schools, or high schools in the big cities – it does not compare. The dynamics of the students are terrible, their manners, their behavior – this is one thing that one has to be fighting every day. I believe that the teacher runs out of resources”.*

The class schedules due to the JEC system may also constitute a challenge as students are less focused and more distracted during the afternoon classes. For example, Josue comments that *“in the morning they have classes like biology, chemistry, and mathematics. So, when you receive them [the students] for an hour and a half, and you have to work through some dense content – even if you are dressed as a clown you cannot manage to motivate the kids because they are very tired”.*

Osvaldo, on the other hand, who works at a rural public school where the class size is smaller, attributes his classroom management problems to his own lack of expertise and not to the characteristics of the students. He admits: *“Keeping the class in order, making a more or less structured class – Those kinds of things, I think, are still hard for me. It’s what I have to improve”.*

Teachers’ low motivation. Teachers’ low motivation may also lead to resistance to leave traditional L2 teaching approaches for TBLT. Perla comments that *“So, these kinds of things*

[little support and heavy workload] bring demotivation. In addition, the kids sometimes misbehave". On page 154 Corelli also describes how the students' attitudes demotivated her to continue working in her school. Josue adds that in several cases, teachers also lose motivation when they are near the end of their careers. He describes a very experienced colleague: *"she has that syndrome, like some people say - 'the syndrome of the teacher who is about to retire' ... It's like everything is the same for her. If they [the students] learn; fine. If they don't; it is fine too. It doesn't matter"*.

Grammar-oriented approaches. Another source of teacher resistance rests in their belief that learners need grammar and as a consequence they follow grammar-oriented approaches. For example, Corelli reports being very comfortable using traditional approaches and only recently began to use more communicative approaches as she realized that despite her efforts, her students couldn't speak in English. She reports: *"In the past, I used to work a lot on reading comprehension and listening comprehension. I specially worked on - that they [the students] could understand, maybe not 100% of the text, but the message, the idea, 'the idea coming through'. But, in all this process of analysis, I realized that at the end of the day ... one teaches and teaches, and children just cannot communicate"*. Thus, she concludes: *"teachers must change their traditional-oriented approaches"*.

Limited familiarity with TBLT. One teacher participant – Aniel – argued that *"It is very likely that if you call an English teacher and ask them what TBLT is, they don't know what it is. Probably, they [the professors] did not teach it, but it is very likely that they just don't remember it"*.

Teachers' poor teaching practice. Another challenge, as reported by Rojas, Zapata, and Herrada (2013) in Chapter One, is teachers' poor teaching practice. When teachers talk about this, in some cases they blame the system, and in other cases they are also self-critical. Josue and

Corelli argue that it is very easy to fall into a mediocre teaching practice due to the high volume of the extra administrative work many teachers are required to do. However, Corelli, Julio and Osvaldo also acknowledge that making a good quality lesson is always the teachers' responsibility.

Josue uses the metaphor of being “*in automatic mode*” when teachers are tired and overwhelmed. He also mentions that when teachers are about to retire they also fall back on basic strategies. Corelli, at the same time has become very critical of her pedagogical work since she started to learn about TBLT and some other teaching topics such as developing critical thinking skills. She realized that she was failing to teach her students to speak in English: “*So, that anguishes me because I think something is missing for them [the students] to connect those ideas and talk. So, I always question myself - something in my practice is not right ... I realized that maybe all those grammar and vocabulary handouts do have a function, it's true, but I can't get them to communicate. So, that's why I've tried to change my goal and that the general objective is for the student to communicate*”. Thus, she finds that if teachers are committed to students learning English, they will conduct their classes in English no matter what the challenges. Similarly, Julio indicates that in his school, although the language level of the students is very low, he has been able to improve his students' language level by teaching almost 90% of his class in English. In the same way, Osvaldo claims: “*But it's a problem that you have to try to overcome, because I believe that the problem will always be the teacher's. You have to seek for, I imagine, another methodology, another strategy, etc*”.

Limited use of the target language. Teacher participants commented that if they have some difficulties conducting their classes in English is mainly because of the students' resistance to the target language. For example, Liza comments that sometimes her students do not

understand when she speaks in English and complain: *“I don’t understand. Repeat please”*.

Thus, she becomes tired after using *“mimics or translation”*.

Respect for students. Josue and Lina find that in some cases teachers’ low respect for students may create a hostile and negative attitude towards learning among the students. Josue argues that teachers should be respectful when providing feedback. He suggests: *“I have to respect the way they [the students] use the language. Because one of the things that sometimes happens to English teachers, and I include myself in that group, is that one tends to become very purist with the kids. It’s like, they said ‘She do’, no, you almost, cut them a finger [some slack]!!”*. He continues his reflection: *“The very fact that, through a bad mark, you say to a student that he is not good enough, you are disrespecting that student. Because he is good, but it depends on how, one as a teacher adapts the curriculum so that he can achieve the goal that you are proposing”*. In a different context, Lina reports that some teachers, do not value the students. She laments a teacher’s comment when she was happy that the school had new computers for the students. She quotes her colleague: *“And you think that these types of students are going to use them without breaking them? We will not open this thing [the computer room] for them. This is just to show that we have a computer room, that’s all. And when someone comes to see, we’ll set up the computers”*.

From the school administrators. Teacher participants have had several experiences that have led them to consider that school administrators share a major responsibility regarding TBLT implementation as they control the support and the opportunities that significant changes may occur in schools. Thus, teachers in this study identified limited support, low relevance of English, heavy workload, time constraints, the traditional education paradigm, schedule design, little respect for class time, and large class size as challenges that emerge from the school administrators.

Limited support. Teachers tend to feel that when they want to shift their pedagogy from traditional approaches, they do not have the school administrators' support. For example, Julio received several critiques when he was implementing TBLT because of the noise in the classroom. He remembers: *"I was always criticized because my classes were quite ludic. And I liked doing theme-based things. I would bring the students music, videos, paraphernalia, I would decorate. So, I would do things in which the specific order of what is expected is broken a bit ... then, I had to opt for what was required; a bit more of a 'teacher at the front of the class'"*.

Aniel, reports that sometimes school administrators have good intentions but limited resources to back up their actions. He argues: *"I am aware that they did make efforts so that each teacher had as much support as possible, but there were not enough people, for example – It would have been very useful for me to work with an assistant"*.

Perla remembers a very frustrating situation when she was taking a group of her students to an 'English debate' organized by the PIAP in another city. The students were very motivated and ready to represent their school. Unfortunately, the administrative staff in charge of arranging the transportation did not do their job, and no one was able to attend the event. She reflects: *"Where is that support? Where is it?"*.

Relevance of English. Several teachers reported that they think that the English language has very little relevance within their school's academic goals. For example, Julio stated that in Grade 11 and Grade 12 he was not able to use TBLT because *"It's a technical-professional school. So, the idea was more focused on a more technical kind of English that can be useful for them for their working life"*. Pola faces a similar situation in which technical-professional subjects such as electricity, welding, carpentry, etc, grab all the attention and resources, thus leaving less time and fewer resources for the EFL class. She laments that students in *"the rest of the subjects [including EFL] make a very slow progress because the main goal is different"*.

Heavy workload. Teacher participants identified their heavy workload as a major challenge in implementing TBLT. They argue that in the past they had a heavy workload, but that the workload modification (70% - 30%) mandated by the new Law of Teaching Career, has further increased their workload, rather than diminishing it. For example, Josue and Corelli explained in detail that since the beginning of the 2017 school year, teachers in their schools have been asked to take care of administrative problems, social problems, and in some cases, legal problems when PIE students are involved. Josue complains because he must attend to issues that were unknown for teachers in the past: *“But if you compare my workload last year with this year’s, I bring home the same amount of work and maybe a little more because there are things that cannot be done at school. For example, the other day I received a court order and I had to issue a social report on a student, and they asked me only the day before. That is, the document came today and the hearing was scheduled for tomorrow. So, when do I have time to do it? And I had to comply because it is a court order”*. Corelli reported the challenges she has faced in trying to teach her lessons in English when at the same time she is expected to translate for the special needs assistant. She also described her struggles trying to calm down a student with ADHD who sometimes gets angry for no reason. She expressed: *“I look like a ‘Peruvian Ekeko’”* referring to a Peruvian doll that carries a heavy load. In this reflection, she also became upset: *“So, it’s a burden ... Without mentioning that she has an attention deficit disorder and if she is under pressure, it’s less likely she will do the tasks. So, if she doesn’t do well in the tests, the principal will call me and he will question me: ‘Why does the student have ⁶‘a red’?’ So, they’re ‘annoying’. This is to say: ‘hey, stop it!’”*.

⁶ In Chile, failing marks are registered with a red pen in the class book. Thus, when students fail a test, they say: “I got a red”.

Time constraints. One of the consequences of the heavy workload is the time constraints. Although the Ministry of Education has increased the non-pedagogical hours (70% - 30%), most teachers in this study still consider time constraints as a challenge to the implementation of TBLT. Pola observed that in 2017 all teachers in her school were required to program and conduct a workshop apart from their classes. She explains: *“It’s a trap. It’s not real. That 30% of free time is not real. That is, the fine print says that of that 30%, which now happens to represent a 100%, 60% of that is available to the employer. So, they can easily send you to teach a workshop; and it is in the contract. This means that, two out of three hours have to be a workshop”*.

Time constraints also directly influence decisions teachers make about their practice and in turn the quality of education provided to students. They can fall into *“automatic mode”* as described by Josue. Time constraints also have an impact on teachers’ personal lives as in many cases they are forced to sacrifice family or personal time in order to accomplish the requirements of their job. Josue comments: *“here in Chile, teachers in general are very unhappy because of the fact that we work a lot, that is, you see for example my colleagues - the vast majority of teachers are single, because you don’t have time to have a partner, you don’t see your children. So, life is complicated as a teacher here in Chile, because of the number of hours you work”*.

Unlike most teachers, Julio and Osvaldo are both grateful because their schools (subsidized and rural public schools) provide them with time and support to prepare their classes.

Traditional education paradigm. Several teachers in this project describe their schools’ traditional education paradigm as limiting their creativity and teaching practice in general. Liza’s rural school has a uni-teacher system which according to her, fosters a boxed-in attitude among the students. According to Liza, many students get used to the traditionally-oriented expectations of the school system – in which students listen to the teacher and regurgitate the content. Thus,

they find their student-centered classes more complex and unfamiliar. In Pola's school, and probably because of the at-risk status of several students, school administrators incite a strict teacher- and content- focused teaching style. Thus, Pola feels forced to keep a quiet teaching environment which is an impediment for TBLT implementation: *"One of the fears of implementing TBLT is classroom management..., which tends to be military like, falls apart and the class will look like a chaotic room, when, in fact, the students are enjoying it and they are learning"*.

Schedule design. Several teachers stated that the design of the schedule poses several problems. Firstly, it includes too few instructional hours and as a consequence leads teachers to have to rush to cover the contents. When the *Jornada Escolar Completa (JEC)* (See Appendix A) was first introduced, the aim was to have an integral education system with a balanced combination of academic subjects in the mornings and more ludic subjects or workshops in the afternoon. However, over the years and also because of the increased competitiveness in education, school administrators have been increasing the number of hours allotted to instruction in Language Arts and Mathematics (subjects that have been officially evaluated through the SIMCE test since 1988), thus filling most of the school's instructional hours with academic subjects. Consequently, in many schools, academic subjects are taught after lunch time or separated by a lunch break when students are more tired and less focussed.

Secondly, teachers report that having their English classes in the afternoon or divided by lunch time is distracting for students and further reduces their motivation to learn because they are so tired. For example, Corelli explains the difficulties she has when her class time is interrupted by lunch hour: *"I have my class time cut by the lunch break. So, that doesn't allow the work to be flexible ... the students arrive late, they are hungry, some are buying 'sopaipillas' from the lady across the street shouting through the gate, someone left the hat outside and they*

have to go get it, someone needs to go to get a dictionary – the 40 minutes are gone – lunch break. I come back – and I have to start almost everything again. This's really hard. The project, and what I will achieve there is very poor., It is poor, It is bad compared to the results I may have with other classes”.

Little respect for the class time. Teachers indicate that the class schedule is also altered frequently and ‘precious time’ is lost due to the many school assemblies. For example, Josue describes the weekly 30 minutes of civic assembly time: *“We have the civic assembly to sing the national anthem, and to shout ‘Viva Chile’ three times... I did a statistic a couple of years ago. I lose two months a year to comply with the famous civic assembly!”*. Thus, teachers complain because this kind of activity diminishes the already few instructional hours that they have, especially in public schools. In addition, teachers indicate that it is not uncommon that classes are interrupted because someone needs a student, or some information is needed.

Large class size. As reported in other studies (Carless, 2007; Cheng & Moses, 2011; Deng & Carless, 2009; Hadi, 2013; Lin & Wu, 2012; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012; Mustafa, 2010; Nahabandi & Mukundan, 2012; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011), teachers identified large class size as a challenge to implementing TBLT in Chile. For example, Josue points out that *“implementing TBLT in a class of 45 is complicated. In other words, monitoring them all, giving them feedback; it becomes very complex. So, I think there's a good thing there; the kids have the opportunity, the school gives all the support to work with TBLT, but because of the large number of children in each class... one doesn't do everything that perhaps one would like to do and get the most out of the technique”*. However, Lina, whose school still filters the students through an entrance exam, highlights that although large size classes make TBLT implementation more complex *“This is not impossible. That does not mean that you cannot implement it”*.

From the students. Teachers identified the students' low motivation, low EFL proficiency, the special needs of some students, students' shyness and fear of making mistakes, the students' attitudes, and students' preference for traditional teaching and learning approaches as important challenges that arise from students.

Students' low motivation. Students' low motivation is a critical challenge as this is key for students learning (Ellis, 2008; Ortega, 2009). Teachers tend to agree that many of their students do not see any advantage in learning English and are thus not motivated to invest, even if teachers teach in a communicative way. Aniel mentions that his students would say *"What is English useful for?! What is English for? I'm still going to pass the course anyways! I do not care if you give me a ⁷2.0. I am going to pass anyways!"*. Perla faces similar challenges: *"For example, it is not rare that a student interrupts the class saying 'Hey, we are in Chile, so, let's just talk in Spanish'"*, or a student in a rural school who tried to joke and said: *"Do you think I'm going to speak English to the potatoes?"*.

Nevertheless, in a delegated administration school where learners are still filtered (through an entrance exam), the students tend to be more appreciative of knowledge. For example, Lina reports that her students usually try to have a good attitude: *"You have to give them something so that they [the students] do the speaking part. But if there is a listening or if there is a writing component, if they have to write essays, the kids do it anyway, even if they aren't graded"*.

Low EFL proficiency. Teacher participants agree that their students have a rather low EFL language proficiency which creates a big challenge to teaching English through TBLT. Aniel remembers that when doing a listening comprehension activity in a Grade 11 class, his

⁷ The grade scale used in Chile goes from 1.0 to 7.0 in which a 2.0 is a failing grade. 4.0 is the passing grade.

students were very motivated because they had been able to understand and respond to a simple basic question such as *“What color is the car?”*. He comments: *“So, I really liked that. But, I felt bad because at that point, in Grade 11, they finally got excited about that, instead of having been excited in Grade 1”*. Students’ low EFL proficiency also influences teachers’ pedagogical practice. For example, Corelli admits: *“I think that sometimes I forget and I give the instructions almost automatically in Spanish. I always try to maintain that [giving instructions in English] level. But, there are students who – ‘I do not understand what you say’ (like annoyed), and I explain to him in English but no, ‘no way’. Then, you have to use Spanish. So, it is like automatic – to give the instructions in English and add the subtitles immediately underneath”*.

Special needs students. Because of the compulsory inclusion program in Chile, many special needs students now have access to regular education. Although a breakthrough in many ways, this new policy has brought teachers a new challenge in implementing TBLT. Liza describes her frustration in not being able to teach to an *Asperger* student who would not understand the grammatical rule she was trying to explain: *“So, the boy chased me around the room and he wanted to hit me because I was not being consistent”*.

Corelli adds that although she has an assistant in the classroom to help the students with special needs, the assistant does not speak English. In order for her to understand the instructions and content Corelli has to speak in Spanish, thus breaking the flow of English for other students. Corelli argues that this constitutes an extra responsibility for the teacher: *“For me it is a burden, because the lady, the psychologist who is with me, does not know English. Therefore, in the class I have to explain to her first, in Spanish, because she does not understand, so that she can explain to the child”*.

Students’ shyness and fear of making mistakes. Teachers also find that some students are shy and/or embarrassed to speak in English in front of their classmates. Aniel observes: *“They*

are really very shy. They are very embarrassed to make mistakes. They are very embarrassed - there are very few children who want to do everything. Most students do not want to talk, they do not want to read". In contrast, Lina feels proud that the students in her school respect each other and are willing to take risks in speaking English: *"I make them speak up in front of the class ... and the great thing about this school, is that they do not make fun of their classmates"*.

Students' attitudes. Teachers find that the students' attitudinal problems are a very critical challenge. For example, Perla reports that it has become very common to have the police at the school because of some problems the students are in: *"For example, the police had to go to the school today because the kids are consuming marijuana inside the bathrooms ... the police are already getting tired of it"*. This resembles Corelli's experience who remembers her unforgettable one day in a city public school because of the students' lack of respect towards the teacher, or Liza who used to work in a public school in the capital city and her only concern was to be aware so that they *"would not kill each other"*, or Pola who admits that *"classroom management... that's the difficult thing at [name of the school]"*. Teachers with experience in public rural schools do not complain about the students' attitudes as they find that those serious issues are isolated. Osvaldo, for example, describes his students as having *"a low level of apathy"*. Corelli, who teaches at an urban public high school thinks that her school, because it is in a small city close to several rural areas *"still keeps some characteristics of a rural school"* because of the characteristics and attitudes of some students.

Students' preference for traditional approaches. According to McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007), students' familiarity with and preference for traditional education paradigms such as grammar-oriented classes also pose a challenge to implementing communicative approaches such as TBLT. Aniel, remembers with frustration when after a series of task-based classes, the students failed an oral test because they lacked the explicit grammar

knowledge and had not been given such instruction. He comments: *“They did so bad on the test. They got confused when I changed the questions just a little bit”*. Liza has also found that some students’ traditional oriented mindset does not allow her to implement TBLT. She comments: *“There is one school where I just can’t. The kids are very boxed-minded. It is very hard for me”*.

Challenges that emerge from the educational system. As seen in Chapter One, the Ministry of Education has implemented several strategies in order to reform education in Chile. However, these strategies may also constitute a source of challenges for teachers. The teachers in this study identified some of these strategies - standardized examinations, learning resources, teacher-training, the teacher evaluation system and inclusive education - as sources of challenge as well.

Standardized examinations. Teachers in this study see how their teaching practice is influenced by the grammatical orientation of standardized evaluations and report that following a TBLT approach does not give them enough time to cover all of the prescribed points. Corelli points out: *“Then, there you felt like there was a mountain of content and there was no time, so, you had to work under pressure”*. In addition, Osvaldo adds: *“You have the fear that your job will be judged by the results of the SIMCE test”*. This sentiment has influenced even those teachers who are familiar with and interested in implementing TBLT to follow traditional goals and teaching approaches. Liza states: *“You have to train the children [to take exams]. You stop teaching to just train”*.

Learning resources. Most teacher participants in this study consider that the learning resources or materials created for support are not appropriate. Teachers find that they require more appropriate material support. Firstly, the textbooks and the curriculum require a high language level that many students cannot meet and unfortunately there are no differentiated

resources. Aniel claims: *“Sometimes, I used to say ‘this [the content in the EFL textbook] is too much for the kids’ because it was too much. I myself considered that it was too much. I wouldn’t say ‘No, these kids are very slow, they are very bad’. No, no, no. It was too much for the kids”*.

Secondly, the textbooks have topics that are not interesting or meaningful for the students (Lina, Corelli). Lina describes the textbooks as *“boring”* and Corelli, who has used the textbooks in the past and who has experience as a textbook template editor, is emphatic arguing: *“We get some books that are almost shameful. Some textbooks are so boring, - the [Name of the textbook] - Victorian schools - do you think that students, in 2017, are interested in knowing what Victorian schools were like back in the 18th century? They are not! Horrible! Horrible! And you go to all the PD courses – ‘You have to use the material’. Yes, it’s true, I used to use it, but, that’s enough! Super dull! The textbook for Grade 11- yucky, horrible”*. Furthermore, for years the Ministry of Education has distributed Spanish-English dictionaries to all Grade 9 students in public and subsidized schools. As a modification, beginning in 2016 the Ministry began to distribute English-English dictionaries. Pola refers to that as a *“joke”* and *“complete waste of money”* as the students in Grade 9 know too little or no English. She states: *“I have a box stored. Maybe a group [of students] smoked it, because they [the dictionaries] had like thin sheets of paper, ehm, and the rest must be lying around there”*.

Julio is the only teacher who expressed a positive perception of the textbooks. He argues: *“You can really get a lot out of them. You have to modify certain things, do a little more ‘reading’, put in a little more ‘wild’, make them [the students] think a little more in the ‘posts’*. But, the truth is that it is a good material”.

Teacher-training. Teachers argue that their programs focus more on preparing good EFL speakers rather than good EFL teachers, that pedagogy is taught in theory, that TBLT is taught in theory and that professors usually rush to cover the content.

Good EFL speakers rather than good EFL teachers. Most teachers in this study emphasized that their teacher-training preparation did not equip them well enough to teach English, let alone to face and overcome classroom challenges like the ones presented above. They agree that their programs were aimed at preparing them to be good English speakers with too little attention given to the teaching of English.

Teacher participants also commented that their teacher-training programs offer too much theory and insufficient practice. For example, Josue remembers that he was never taught how to assess the students: *“imagine that when I learned – something as important as evaluation ... it was the ‘coefficient’ of I don’t know what, the ‘statistic’ of I don’t know what else – things that in real life you do not implement. Instead, what I needed to know was how to make a reading test, how to make an oral test, how to assess, how scores were assigned so that the test was balanced. I never saw that”.*

Several teachers also feel that the theories behind the teaching approaches help little because those approaches are introduced for use in ideal contexts. Josue, who also teaches EFL in a teacher-training program at a university, argues that academia is repeating the same mistake they made with his generation. He highlights that he tells other professors: *“hey, we have to teach them [the student-teachers] what we are living. We don’t get anything out of making them read Brown, Rod Ellis, all these book-smart old men, if afterwards, when you come into the classroom, you don’t see anything of what is in their books”.*

Regarding training in TBLT, all but one participating teacher that studied TBLT at the university, commented that their lack of knowledge about TBLT theory and practice is another obstacle to implement TBLT. They feel that they were only introduced to TBLT in theory and only briefly in lectures about a variety of approaches. Only Pola was more widely introduced to

the approach and had some practice with it during her classes in teacher training. Most of the other teachers learned more about TBLT during PD courses.

Professors rush to cover contents. Another challenge mentioned by a few teachers is the rush of covering contents. In Aniel's case, the rush was because his program was "*A special program that was an intensive one-year program, doing the practica and studying at the same time*". In the cases of Josue, Lina, Corelli and myself most of the rush was because of the continuous strikes that university faculty were involved in. For example, Josue remembers when a professor used part of a course to teach the contents of a different course that had been interrupted because "*as usual the [name of the university], had been on strike for several days, and we didn't cover everything in the course*". Thus, the teachers in this study argue that for many reasons, especially pedagogically, they did not receive the best education nor the best examples from their professors.

Teacher evaluation. The new teacher evaluation system creates several challenges for the teachers, specifically neglecting other classes as they prepare to be videotaped and monitored on one specific class that they are teaching.

Teachers tend to neglect other classes. One of the challenges is that the teacher evaluation process is so new that in order to comply with its requirements teachers tend to pay less attention to some of their classes. All teachers who had been evaluated through the national teacher evaluation system agree that this program is a huge obstacle not only in implementing TBLT but also in conducting good quality lessons because, as seen in Chapter One, and in Appendix A, the evaluation system requires teachers to teach and report on a lesson plan through a portfolio and through a video recorded class in addition to other assessments. Teachers, like Josue, for example, admit: "*I think I spent too much time on this [recorded class] and left others in 'auto pilot'*". Corelli also feels that the new teacher evaluation system has negative

consequences because teachers sometimes take away time from other classes, and tend to focus only on the class that will be evaluated in the portfolio. Thus, she reveals: *“It doesn’t matter, I will do just this activity in this X class because I need to focus on this other activity, I need to prepare it”*. Thus, worrying about the portfolio leaves students in other classes, voluntarily or involuntarily, in a disadvantageous position. Nevertheless, Corelli acknowledges that with time and in the long run, students in the other classes will also benefit as teachers like her try to learn more through the evaluation process.

Inclusion program. Teachers in this study are not against the new Inclusion Law that abolished the academic performance selection process in all subsidized and public schools. However, since they were not fully prepared for this change, they acknowledge that the inclusion program is one of the factors that influenced them to lower the academic level of each class to accommodate a greater range or diversity of learners.

Teachers accommodate the academic level. In order to make the input comprehensible to all students, teachers feel forced to lower the academic level and many times they have to teach their lessons in Spanish. Corelli expressed: *“In the past, the students were super self-demanding ... But with this flexible system where anyone enters, the academic level of the course has dropped and that has obviously generated other dynamics ... And you need them [special needs students] to be part of the class because you have to integrate them, because if not, it’s like you are discriminating against them. And they will not understand instructions in English. So, then, unfortunately, one has to switch to Spanish”*.

Challenges from the social context. Several teachers expressed concern about the impact that the Chilean social context is having on the students and their motivation to learn a

foreign language. They mentioned limited opportunities to use English and societal problems as obstacles and challenges to TBLT implementation.

Limited opportunities to use English. Teachers find that the Chilean context offers very limited exposure to English. Aniel points out that *“In Chile we’re so isolated. This country is geographically isolated. And regarding the language area [English language], it is also isolated – you know that Chile, in America⁸, is one of the few countries that is surrounded only with Spanish speaking countries?”* This enhances people’s lack of motivation to learn another language as they do not see the need. In addition, because of Chile’s geographical location not many foreigners visit the country, thus further limiting the learners’ contact with English or ability to see the use of English in contemporary everyday life.

Societal problems. Many participating teachers lament that in several cases, the Chilean society fosters aggression and enhances low fulfillment of basic human needs. Several teachers, especially those that refer to their experiences in public schools, were very critical of the aggression in Chilean society, underscoring student aggression as another challenge in implementing TBLT. For example, Liza remembers her experience in a city public school where the students’ level of aggression was so high that classroom management was complex. Liza particularly remembers a student who had several legal issues and who did not have enough support: *“And I knew that this boy had slept on the beach and that he was carrying a gun and he was involved in super turbid things and I did not know how to keep him, I couldn’t. That still spins in my head and – like I could not do anything”*.

Perla adds that it seems that many students are being raised by grandparents and feel abandoned by their families: *“It’s like they don’t have a family. The aggression is increasing among the students ... Because now it is super difficult in that sense, especially among kids in*

⁸ In Chile, we use ‘America’ to refer to the continent and ‘United States’ to the country.

Grade 9, who have a low social level, who have been abandoned by their parents. Some parents are in jail. They [the kids] are raised by their grandmothers or great-grandmothers". In other words, students are lacking in basic physiological needs and love/belonging (Maslow, 1987), all of which also hinders their academic work. Josue describes a student whose father forced her and her mom to leave the house: *"the father got mad, he kicked the mom from home, he put her out on the street and she didn't know where to go with her little girl"*.

As seen in Chapter Five, Pola is already used to having students who fall asleep during her early morning classes because they had to work during the night, or students whose only daily meal is the one they receive at the school. Perla refers to these issues with sadness as she realizes that there is so much suffering in many of the students' homes: *"Look, I could never finish telling you what the problems of each student are. The aggression, the pain that they have had for years; It is heavy."* This kind of challenge is clearly impacting on teachers' pedagogical work as they must be ready and willing to provide the students the necessary support. Perla reflects: *"So, you have to stop thinking that you are an English teacher. You have to think about what process they are going through so as to, more or less, grasp what they want to learn. So, it is a lot. It's an enormous psychological fatigue for the teacher. It's hard to alleviate in that sense because you get tired every day. You prepare material, you go to bed and you wake up to the same routine. So, for me, it's somewhat exhausting"*.

Corelli sees the general social problems of society reflected in the heavy burden they have as teachers, because teaching English is only one of many jobs they have to do: *"There are plenty of margins, lots of things that sometimes make you question yourself, that teaching and making the students learn is not my only role, but there are so many other things that are loading me down, backpacks that burden me"*.

These kinds of societal problems are also directly impacting on students and teachers, making teaching practice highly complex.

Table 16 summarizes the list of challenges that Chilean EFL teachers face when implementing or attempting to implement TBLT. New insights or details are contributions to TBLT implementation and are in bold.

Table 16

Challenges According to Chilean EFL Teachers' Perceptions

TBLT approach	Task preparation may be time consuming. It may lead to fossilization It may have limited guidance	
Educational Actors	Teachers	Present classroom management problems May have low motivation Have a resistance to change, grammar-oriented approaches Have limited familiarity with TBLT Develop a poor teaching practice Have limited use of the target language Have low respect for the students
	School administrators	Provide limited support to teachers. Give limited relevance to the English language Impose heavy workload on teachers. - Time constrains Keep traditional education paradigms. Develop complex schedule design - Few Instructional hours - Rush to cover all contents Little respect for the class time. Keep large size classes
	Students	Have low motivation. Have low target language proficiency. Have special needs. Are shy and/or fear to make mistakes Present problematic attitudes Have traditional Ed. paradigms
Educational System	Standardized examinations	Make teachers feel forced to remain using grammar-oriented teaching approaches.
	Learning resources	Is not appropriate (boring, not meaningful, too difficult)
	Teacher-training	Emphasizes good EFL speakers/not necessarily strong teaching skills. Rushes to cover contents
	Teacher evaluation	Makes teachers neglect some classes
	Inclusion program	Makes teachers accommodate the academic level.
Social Context	Limited opportunities to use English	Gives little exposure to the target language.
	Societal problems	Foster aggression Enhance low fulfillment of human basic needs

Summary and Discussion

In summary, teachers identified several benefits and a larger number of challenges in implementing TBLT in the Chilean context. Some of the benefits and challenges align with those presented in the literature review, while a number go beyond those identified in the studies summarized in the literature review. Among the list of benefits and challenges there are several points that perfectly align with the findings in the studies presented in the literature review. However, teacher participants also pointed out several other benefits and challenges that, given the cultural and educational similarities that exist among most South American countries (Waissbluth, 2018), are a clear contribution to the field of TBLT implementation in South American countries.

Similar to the studies in the literature review, the participating teachers highlighted benefits that impact the L2 lesson, the students, and the teachers as well. The participating teachers identified that TBLT implementation promotes enjoyment and active classes which echoes the findings of Carless (2003) and Hu (2013). Among the benefits for the students, teachers mentioned the strengthening of soft skills such as autonomous learning, which aligns with the findings in McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007), and McAllister, Combes and Perret (2012), the strengthening of group work skills as in Cheng and Moses (2011), Hadi (2013), Jeon and Hahn (2006), Tabatabaei and Hadi (2011), and Tinker Sachs (2009), and the development of critical thinking as in McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007). Participants also added that students develop leadership skills as a result of group work. Although not all students are expected to be leaders in society, it is important that all students have the opportunity of developing leadership skills which are necessary when decisions must be taken or when opinions or points of view are required. Thus, it is important that all students develop their personalities in a balanced way.

Teacher participants also mentioned the enhancement of motivation which is also among the findings in Cheng and Moses (2011), Hadi (2013), Jeon and Hahn (2006), Lin and Wu (2012), Tabatabaei and Hadi (2011), Tinker Sachs (2009). Some of the factors that enhance motivation occur when students overcome social barriers and develop a sense of achievement after they have completed a task. Additionally, as the students' differences are celebrated, students realize that their variety of skills can also contribute to completing and reaching a goal. This implies that the students' motivation is enhanced when teachers give the students flexibility, time and space for them to use their own learning strengths to complete a task.

Regarding the students' L2 improvement, similar to findings in McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007), teacher participants also pointed out that TBLT promotes real and meaningful communication, and leads to language acquisition (Long, 2014; Hadi, 2013; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012). Additionally, teacher participants pointed out the benefit that free language usage brings when students feel confident to use the language to express some ideas. This also echoes the autonomy to learn as is stated among the SLA theories (Holec, 1980) which is key to learning a language.

In relation to the impact that TBLT has on teachers, one teacher suggested that teaching through TBLT allows shy teachers to develop their personality more.

As found in the studies in the literature review, participants identified challenges that emerge from TBLT, from the educational actors, and from the educational system. They also contributed their perceptions of challenges that may emerge from the social context. Among the challenges, there were several that correspond with the findings in the studies presented in the literature review and several others that may be more related to the Latin American context.

Accordingly, similar to Carless (2007), Hadi (2013), McAllister, Combes and Perret (2012), Leaver and Kaplan (2004), Lin and Wu (2012), and Xhaferi and Xhaferi (2014), teachers

pointed out that TBLT implementation may be time consuming. They also pointed out that because of the free practice, TBLT might lead to fossilization, which may be evidence of some misinterpretation of TBLT since in theory TBLT allows time for a grammar focus at the end of the cycle, thus giving students space for more explicit instruction if needed. Due to its free communicative style approach and limited teacher guidance, teachers also argued that TBLT is a challenge for the students. Some teachers linked this to the boxed-in learning style of the Chilean education system while others suggested that students lack learning autonomy which is key during the process of task completion (Holec, 1980).

Regarding the challenges that may emerge from teachers themselves, they consider that in some cases teachers resist implementing TBLT due to classroom management problems (Carless, 2003; 2004; 2007; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; and Li, 1998). Teachers may also develop low motivation (East, 2012, 2014; Hu, 2013; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Mustafa, 2010; Nahavandi & Mukundan, 2012), have a resistance to change using grammar-oriented approaches (East, 2012, 2014; Hu, 2013; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Nahavandi & Mukundan, 2012), and have limited familiarity with TBLT (East, 2012; Hadi, 2013; Mustafa, 2010; Lin & Wu, 2012; Nahavandi & Mukundan, 2012; Xiao-Yan, 2011; and Zheng & Borg, 2014). Additionally, participating teachers also perceive that sometimes the heavy workload imposed by school administrators and the demands of the Ministry of Education contribute to their poor teaching practice. In the long run poor practice could undermine broader implementation of TBLT as teachers, for example, enter a cycle in which they do not have the motivation to invest time preparing a class with enough comprehensible input which is also key to learning an L2 (Krashen, 1985), nor are able to provide strong and positive models for novice teachers to implement TBLT.

Some teachers also mentioned that they are not able to use English during the whole class. However, they see this constraint as a result of problems such as the students' low EFL

level, large size classes, special needs students, or students' attitudinal problems. No teachers expressed being insecure or having a low EFL level themselves. Teacher participants also perceive that how they deliver feedback – in a respectful manner – can contribute to the students' motivation to learn. This particular problem is highly instilled in the Chilean system as according to the participating teachers and experiences described in the Locating Myself section, the teacher-training programs tend to be very punitive in how they create high standards. This may influence teachers to follow that same system with which they were taught (Chan, 2014; East, 2012; Hadi, 2013; Van den Branden, 2009).

In relation to the challenges that emerge from school administrators, teachers' perceptions coincide with the findings in Adamson and Tong (2008), Galvis (2011), and Zhang (2007) regarding the limited support teachers receive. Teachers also pointed out the heavy workload imposed on them as in Hadi (2013), Lin and Wu (2012), McAllister, Coombe and Perret (2012), and the challenges of teaching in large size classes (Carless, 2007; Cheng & Moses, 2011; Deng & Carless, 2009; Hadi, 2013; Lin & Wu, 2012; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012; Mustafa, 2010; Nahabandi & Mukundan, 2012; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011). Participating teachers also add that some schools give very little relevance to EFL privileging other subjects, especially in technical-professional schools. Also, with few exceptions, schools maintain a traditional pedagogic paradigm which is enhanced because of the expectation of performing well in the SIMCE tests. Additionally, teachers point out that schools tend to develop complex schedule designs and/or conduct weekly activities that diminish the already few number of hours of instruction for EFL. This adds to the little respect some school administrators have for the instruction time allowing interruptions to classes at any time. This contributes to poor teaching practice and few learning opportunities as teachers must rush to cover the contents. These challenges create a severe problem regarding the implementation of TBLT and education

in general as on the one hand the Ministry of Education is investing in improving EFL levels, but, on the other hand, the school administrators are making decisions that hinder better results. Additionally, some challenges that emerge from teachers – teachers' low motivation, preference for grammar-oriented approaches, poor teaching practice – also seem to be a consequence of the school administrators' decisions.

With respect to the challenges that emerge from the students, teachers perceive that some of them tend to prefer traditional teaching styles, as in McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007), and resist participating in TBLT activities. Teacher participants also perceived additional challenges. They point out the students' low motivation to learn English, which is highly influenced by their social context. Teachers also attribute the students' shyness or fear of making mistakes to their low English language level which also reduces participation in TBLT tasks. Further, although teachers are willing to work with the students with special needs, they noted the extra work brought on by attending to the needs of these students and report a need for more assistance, training and lesson preparation time. Thus, the students' attitudes constitute a critical challenge as according to Chilean teachers in other studies, while they are able to overcome many challenges the students' complex attitudes truly complicate their pedagogical work (OECD, 2016). Particularly, the students' low motivation to learn and the students' problematic attitudes are serious challenges that contribute to the literature as they may put in jeopardy the implementation of TBLT in a whole class. Accordingly, if the students are not able to be autonomous (Holec, 1983) during the task completion and motivated (Ellis, 2008; Ortega 2009) to make efforts and try to complete the task, the main purpose of TBLT will not be fulfilled and may bring a whole class into traditional approaches where teachers can have more control and where students are more under control.

The educational system is also highly critiqued. Teacher participants consider that the standardized examinations influence their decisions to use grammar-oriented approaches, which aligns with the findings in Carless (2007), Deng and Carless (2010), East (2012), Hu (2013), and Zheng and Borg (2014). The learning resources distributed by the Ministry of Education are perceived as inappropriate regarding the students' language level and interests, coinciding in this way with Nahavandi and Mustafa (2012) and Xhaferi and Xhaferi (2014). Only one teacher participant in this study appreciates the resource. Additionally, participating teachers remarked that the in-service teacher-training programs' main goal is to prepare good EFL speakers rather than good EFL teachers, paying much more attention to the theories of education and SLA and to English language production. This is enhanced by the rushed and overloaded circumstances of professors who are not able to cover all of the prescribed course contents. The teachers expressed negative sentiments toward their experience in teacher training programs and noted a low level of support they sometimes received when they became new in-service teachers. Teacher participants also added the problematic they face during the teacher evaluation process which contributes to them neglecting other classes. The inclusion program which gives access to special needs students also conveys another challenge which could be also seen as a challenge from the students, but more importantly, it is a challenge from the school administrators who should provide teachers all the necessary support so that all students can have access to good quality education. All these challenges directly impact on the quality of teachers' teaching performance and TBLT implementation because teachers' unpreparedness or tiredness, may contribute to teachers' poor practice.

Teacher participants also identified challenges in the social context. They argue that it offers limited opportunities to be exposed and to practice the target language which is mainly due to the country's geographical location. In addition, they argue that there are severe societal

problems which foster aggression and low fulfillment of the basic needs of students, contributing, in this way, to the students' low academic performance and teachers' low pedagogical performance.

Finally, regarding the benefits of TBLT implementation and the different challenges that teachers face when trying to implement it, there is a vicious circle in which as Corelli states *“there are always aspects in which the improvements get trapped”*. For example, if we think about the challenges that emerge from the students (low motivation to learn, low target language proficiency, special needs, shyness, or traditional-oriented paradigm), teachers probably will have to draw upon different learning theories (social constructivism, experiential learning, and cognitivism) and also provide as much instances for the SLA theories (comprehensible input, output hypothesis, interaction, noticing, meaning and grammar combination, motivation, and autonomous learning) to take place and in this way motivate the students to participate in a TBLT class and harvest the benefit that the approach brings to education. Thus, teachers' hard work could eventually revert the students' original demotivated condition and see positive results, which could enhance the students and the teachers' motivation to continue with the educational process. Nevertheless, when teachers also find challenges in their working environment such as those that emerge from the educational system or from the school administrators, they tend to lose their own motivation to motivate.

Despite this, participating teachers and results in other studies have indicated that teachers could overcome several kinds of challenges, unfortunately challenges such as the students' attitudinal problems constitute an extremely serious issue that not all teachers are equipped to manage (OECD, 2016). For example, let's remember Corelli's one day teaching experience at a city public school, or Liza and her fear of the students' violence, or Perla who laments about the continuous presence of policemen at her school.

In Chapter Nine I will discuss the significance that these contributions have to the research field.

Considering all of the above and responding to the first sub-research question: *What are teachers' perceptions of TBLT and its successes and challenges?* Chilean EFL teachers are aware and value the benefits of TBLT as they have learned about it in theory and tried to implement it. However, the challenges that emerge from different sources make TBLT implementation complex and only a few teachers have been able to overcome the challenges in implementation.

The next chapter aims to respond to the second sub-research question:

In what ways do EFL teachers feel prepared (or not) to implement TBLT?

Chapter Seven: In what Ways do EFL Teachers Feel Prepared (or not) to Implement TBLT?

In this chapter I will respond to the second sub-question of this study: *In what ways do EFL teachers feel prepared (or not) to implement TBLT?*

In order to do so, I will firstly present how teachers have benefitted and been empowered through the Ministry's mandating of TBLT. More specifically, I will describe the opportunities for growth and development that teachers see in their contexts and how they contribute to their preparedness or ability to implement TBLT.

Secondly, I will report on the teachers' own perceptions of their preparedness to implement TBLT. Finally, I will attempt to respond to the research question presented above by considering the given opportunities, the teachers' perceptions of their own preparedness, and the challenges that EFL teachers perceive in implementing TBLT as presented in Chapter Six.

Opportunities for EFL Teachers

As opposed to the comments of many of the teachers reported in the studies in the literature review, Chilean EFL teacher participants mentioned opportunities that facilitate their teaching practice and empower them to better implement TBLT. In this section I present the opportunities that emerge through the Ministry of Education (continuing education opportunities, PIAP, teacher-training programs, and teaching resources), and through educational actors (school administrators and students).

Opportunities through the Ministry of Education. Teachers in this study are aware of the efforts the Ministry of Education is making to improve and facilitate the EFL teachers' TBLT teaching practice. Although, as seen in Chapter One and in Appendix A, the changes are

extensive, teachers do not perceive all of them as opportunities yet – for example, the PIE program. However, interviewees identified continuing education, PIAP, teacher-training programs, and teaching resources as positive opportunities for both teachers and students.

Continuing education. EFL teachers in Chile have the opportunity of continuing their education by pursuing graduate and/or specific PD programs in certain areas of their own interest. Teachers may self-fund or apply for scholarships granted by the Chilean Ministry of Education or scholarships granted by other countries such as the U.S.A. In this study, Corelli, Josue, and Osvaldo, pursued further education with Corelli being not only the most experienced but also the most educated EFL teacher in the group. Having the opportunity to expand their education strengthens the teachers' world views and equip them better to educate in general. For example, Corelli comments: *"When I took the 'Critical Thinking and English Language Teaching' course in 2013, I started to put a real emphasis on planning and how to teach the language. Now, with this other course [Teaching grammar communicatively], I have been understanding it [TBLT] more. However, it has been in these last years and specifically this last semester when I have worked on it more conscientiously"*. Josue, who took a TESOL course on TBLT in Costa Rica, admits that if he had not taken that course, he would not be so passionate about TBLT because during the teacher-training program he learned TBLT mainly in theory. He refers to the way he learned TBLT during his teacher-training program: *"Because it's as if I had been taught how to cook 'empanadas' but I only read the recipe and I never cooked them"*. Osvaldo comments: *"My girlfriend and I took an ESL course in an institute in Canada"*

PIAP. As presented in Chapter One and Appendix A, PIAP offers teachers several PD courses and seminars, EFL teachers' networks, language practice camps for students and teachers, and EFL online courses for students.

PD courses and seminars. Courses and seminars are available to all subsidized and public-school teachers free of charge. Corelli, Josue, Julio, Lina, Osvaldo, and Perla have taken PIAP courses and participated in different seminars where they have learned about TBLT and other general teaching and EFL teaching approaches. They find the courses very interesting and relevant not only to EFL teaching but also to educational contingency topics such as the new Inclusion Law. For example, Corelli comments: *“There was an Inclusion workshop, which kind of bothered me. I said to myself: ‘This has nothing to do with English’. However, understanding the reality in which we are at here, as a country, in relation to education - yes, the inclusion part is relevant”*. She adds: *“I’ve attended some courses that were kind of ‘boring’, but I always try to look at the positive aspects”*. On the other hand, Julio laments that the courses and seminars are too *“light”* and do not demand serious commitment from the EFL teachers. In other cases, teachers such as Aniel and Liza have not been able to be part of the courses because of their heavy workload.

EFL teachers’ networks. In order to be eligible to participate in a PIAP course/seminar, teachers must also be part of one of the many EFL teachers’ networks that exist throughout the country (See Appendix A). Corelli, Josue, Julio, Lina, Liza, Osvaldo, and Pola are all members of such EFL teachers’ networks. They have found them very significant for their teaching practice as they receive important information regarding course opportunities (Corelli), funding opportunities for current teaching resources (Corelli, Lina), teaching strategy tips (Osvaldo), and teaching and emotional support from other EFL colleagues (Liza). In addition, the teachers who participate in these EFL teachers’ networks may come together and organize an annual *“Song Festival’ in English, Spelling Bee competitions and Trivia contests”* (Osvaldo). Unfortunately, not all teachers have their school’s support to attend these monthly meetings (Corelli), or the district education departments failed in their organization. Perla comments that she raised a

public complain about the issue when the head of the education department and the mayor of the city visited her school. She comments: *“Two weeks ago I asked him [the head of the Education Department] ‘Where is the EFL teachers’ network? Why doesn’t it work?’ I told him several things, and the mayor was there, and they told me ‘we will look into that’; Look, it’s been two weeks and nothing has changed”*.

Camps and EFL online courses for students. These government-sponsored activities were designed to give students opportunities to engage in real and meaningful acts of communication in English among peers. In turn, when student participants would return to their classrooms with increased skill and desire to learn English their success would have a domino effect on other students, thus assisting teachers in reaching the CEFR goals. Perla and Osvaldo highlight the benefits that the English Winter/Summer camps and EFL online courses offer to their students. Osvaldo, who had 13 students participating in the English immersion Summer Camp reports that although difficult because the camps are total immersion, his students valued the experience: *“The students really liked it. They worked hard. They exposed themselves a lot to the language. At some point, it seemed a bit complicated, but they still managed it very well. Overall, the experience was very good”*.

On the other hand, although Perla is grateful for the opportunities through the PDs of PIAP, she regrets that her students’ low interest in improving their EFL skills impedes their participation: *“I have a couple of students who were certified with A1 level and now they are going for A2 level. There were only two students in this class. I haven’t been able to motivate others, even though it is a free course. There seems to be a lack of interest and motivation. Even for the winter camp that offered free classes, free food, even then that was not enough to produce more interest. They say it [their lack of interest] was because everything is in English”*.

Teacher-training program. Teacher participants appreciate the increased number of practica in their teacher-training programs and the increase in EFL standards for EFL teachers.

Number of practica. In the past, and according to my own experience as described in Chapter One, student-teachers were only offered one semester of a teaching practicum during their undergraduate degree. With increased awareness of international trends, educational authorities have strengthened the pre-service teacher-training programs to include a practica during each of four to six semesters of their program. Although most teachers value this increase in the number of practica, some report that they were sent to the field with little knowledge of planning, teaching strategies, and/or evaluation (Josue, Liza). In cases where the student-teacher showed evidence of some knowledge, it was primarily theoretical in nature. For example, Liza comments that she was taught with “*books, many books*”. Consequently, teachers think that entering a practicum without any practical experience from the University reduces the potential benefits of each practicum experience. Corelli, who like me, had only one practicum at the end of the program, jokes and comments: “*[I succeeded] thanks to my faith in Christ who gave us this vocation to serve and to teach others. If not, how could this be achieved with no mentorship or practicum?*”

EFL standards for EFL teachers. The new EFL proficiency level requirements (from B2 to C1) have empowered teachers to become more confident in their English abilities. On the one hand teacher-training programs are incorporating an EFL test to certify the language level of the student-teachers. This is adding even more EFL demands to the already existing ones. For example, Osvaldo comments: “*the EFL teacher-training program was a total immersion program. In fact, we had the pedagogy courses in English as well*”. Even though Osvaldo’s program was exceptionally EFL-oriented, other EFL teacher-training programs have also been highly demanding regarding EFL. Perla remembers that in one of her speaking and phonetic

courses, the professor was extremely demanding and would humiliate those students who did not reach the expected level: *“the professor would make us sit in a semi-circle and if one took too long to give a response, she would laugh. It was horrible... So, that made me study even harder”*.

Teaching resources. Also, as mentioned in Chapters One and Six, the Chilean Ministry of Education provides EFL textbooks free of charge to students and faculty in all public and subsidized schools. Although neither most teacher participants nor I see the benefits in these teaching resources, Julio, as seen in Chapter Six, still uses them as his students are not able to purchase better textbooks and Liza, located in a rural public school, comments that the contents of the textbooks in rural schools *“are more relatable to the students’ contexts”*.

Opportunities through educational actors.

The school administrators. The school reforms have led to an increase in accessibility to many new resources. In a few public schools, where the administrators have applied for a special EFL project called *Go 4 Valparaíso: All about English* (See appendix A) as is the case in Corelli’s report on a public school in her town, EFL teachers and students can receive several educational benefits. However, participation in these programs depends on the school administrators and the vision or goals they set for their schools. Some teachers identified personal and professional benefits as well as benefits to the students from the increased number of hours of instruction, the abundance of resources, good quality teaching materials, small sized classes and how the goals of the schools align with the EFL instruction and/or TBLT instruction. Other teachers also pointed out that they have benefitted from the 70% - 30% modification.

Number of hours of instruction. Corelli comments on the school in her town where the role of the principal has been key for increasing the numbers of hours of instruction and

emphasizing EFL education in general. She comments: *“the principal of that school is super involved in EFL education. The school applied for the ‘Go 4’ ... So, now, kids in elementary have up to six hours of EFL and kids in secondary education have up to 5 hours per week”*. Julio also reports that his school had up to five EFL hours which is higher than in most public schools or subsidized schools.

Resources. Corelli reports the benefits that the Go 4 Valparaíso program has brought to some public schools equipping them with language laboratories, smart boards, and PD courses in English speaking countries, all of which help teachers improve their teaching practice in general. Corelli comments on the school in her town: *“This school that has this program is constantly training. They have support from the bookstore that sends them the textbooks. Now, the coordinator and the assistant are going to England for five weeks in January, as part of this program. I wish I could go, but we are not able to because we are not part of that project”*.

Learning materials. Teachers in some public schools have access to high quality textbooks. This benefit may stem from the Go 4 Valparaíso project as mentioned by Corelli or through the SEP program as a benefit to schools that have a number of at-risk students and whose school administrators’ goals are EFL-oriented. For example, Corelli comments that all the teachers in her town had the opportunity to order high quality EFL textbooks for each student: *“But, this year the department of education at the community level decided to invest in a selection of texts that are called [Name of the textbook], and that cost more than 40 million pesos. They bought English textbooks for the whole community. That is parallel to those that the Ministry gives you. It is a good opportunity because it is very good quality material, which brings audio, a student book, and a workbook as well. In addition, it also brings a CD with activities for the students. The idea was to deliver it so that each student had his own material, which is super great”*. Unfortunately, as Corelli laments, the organization did not send textbooks

for each student, as had been expected, making the implementation of the textbook quite complex.

In other cases, although teachers were proud of the quality of resources in their schools, they noted that the professional-technological subjects which are the hallmarks of their schools, gained all the resources, not EFL. For example, Pola comments: *“But the school’s strong areas is the industrial area ... It’s a luxury school”*. Thus, no teacher talked proudly of the EFL resources in their schools. Only Corelli described what she has heard about EFL resources in other schools under the Go 4 Valparaíso project.

Small sized classes. Although having a small number of students per class is not common among public schools, Liza and Osvaldo, both from rural public schools have small sized classes.

Goals align with the EFL instruction. Having goals that align with EFL instruction is not a common characteristic among public schools. In this study, only Corelli reports on a school where EFL has a relevant place.

Goals align with TBLT principles. In some schools, teachers are expected and encouraged to emphasize group work, or project-based instruction as key aspects in their teaching. This has favoured Josue and Lina who feel rather comfortable implementing TBLT, although they still face other kinds of challenges. For example, Lina comments that group work is highly recommended along with integrating contents of other subjects: *“Because this is a technical-professional school...they learned about renewable and non-renewable energy, they watched videos about the same topic, they had to take notes and all. And since the school has a green hallmark, because we work with energy, and the recycling, the kids had to do a big project”*.

70% - 30% workload modification. Julio and Osvaldo are grateful for the 70%-30% workload modification that offers them more time to prepare their classes, although they note

that this is still at the discretion and “*good will*” of school leadership. Julio observes: “*That was one of the advantages that I had – I had time to prepare my classes. So, I tried to make them quite playful and entertaining. I would search for teaching resources... I had three hours a week for material preparation. I also had more non-pedagogical hours that were hours of collaboration with the PIE team, which also helped a lot and with the integration projects*”. For the teachers in this study, and as seen among the challenges, most find that after the 70% - 30% modifications, their workload increased.

The students. Similar to the findings in some studies based on adult education in FL contexts (e.g., Hadi 2013; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012) teacher participants see the students’ good discipline as helpful in implementing TBLT.

Students’ attitudes. In classes where students’ discipline is manageable, teachers tend to feel more appreciated and respected. This helps them develop a better attitude towards teaching communicative lessons. Although challenges in classroom management are associated with public schools as reported by Corelli and her one-day city public school experience, Aniel, Pola and Perla, this does not seem to apply to rural public schools, as Liza and Osvaldo attest. Regarding her current educational context, Corelli observes: “*I thank God, I could still say that this school has a veneer of a village school. Although, it is true that many people have come from the capital, from the big cities, so to speak, this school still has the profile of a quiet school*”.

Lina attributes students’ politeness and respect for those in authority to the entrance selection process used in her school which has not yet implemented the inclusion program. According to the interviewees this makes TBLT implementation possible despite other challenges such as large class size. Lina highlights: “*I believe that the selection process helps us a lot. I think it is more for the issue of attitudes and order – because the kids here are very well behaved*”.

Teachers' own Perceptions of their Preparedness to Implement TBLT

Teachers' perceptions of their own preparedness to implement TBLT are varied as most of them suggested that they learned TBLT only in theory. Some teachers, especially those who have taken indepth PD courses in TBLT such as Corelli, Josue, and Pola report that although they still need to learn more, they feel that they know TBLT and are eager to implement it. For example, Corelli, who is eager to implement TBLT, has not been able to implement it yet due to a number of challenges. She comments: *"I think I am [prepared]. In fact, I've been thinking that I will change my approach. I am still planning to do what the school asks, but I will change my approach so that my students, at the end of the year, can speak some English. I want to rescue at least 10 of them from the lion's mouth"*. Pola, on the other hand, although confident because of the high importance TBLT had in her teacher-training program, tends to hesitate because she feels that she needs more practice: *"Little by little. I feel it's more instinct than pure knowledge ... I need more practice"*.

Other teachers such as Aniel, Lina, Liza, Julio, Osvaldo, and Perla stated that they learned TBLT mainly in theory, both during university teacher-training programs and during teacher PDs. For example, Perla laments: *"The classes were very theoretical and the professor taught just a little bit among other approaches. There was no practice at all"*. Aniel also comments: *"In fact, using this type of approach [TBLT], was not a priority for them. In fact, it was one among thousands. It was never a priority"*. This may be one reason why, although they have implemented or usually implement TBLT in their classes, teachers think that they need more practice. For example, Aniel comments: *"You know what the problem is? I believe that [TBLT] is a very practical approach. This is attainable by putting it into practice. Theoretically, I know it. Everyone knows it in theory, or they have it in the back of their minds. But, these things are difficult to put into practice"*. This aligns with the same problematic presented by Van den

Branden (2009) in which he suggests that to fully empower teachers to implement TBLT, the approach must be deeply taught both in theory and in practice.

As mentioned in the delimitations section, due to the nature of this study I do not have observation data that could have further evidence teachers' understanding of TBLT. However, from the interviews I can interpret that most teachers state that they know TBLT in theory, and some of them also learned it through practice as well (Corelli, Josue, Pola). Thus, I can infer that they are reasonably well prepared. In addition, they all have implemented the approach, although they all confess that they need more practice. Thus, we could conclude that overall EFL teachers know TBLT but need more practice time with the approach.

Discussion

Summarizing, as presented in Chapter One, Appendix A and in this Chapter, the Chilean Ministry of Education has made important efforts to improve the public education sector. Chilean public school EFL teachers have especially benefitted from new initiatives accompanying educational reform by the Ministry of Education. These opportunities are mainly related to the continuous education, free of charge PD seminars and courses for EFL teachers and students given by PIAP, changes in the teacher-training programs, and free distribution of learning resources such as EFL textbooks and dictionaries. Some opportunities may also come from the school administrators depending on the goals of the schools and their willingness to implement changes such as the 70% - 30% modification.

However, it seems that, although generous, the opportunities in the implementation design still have some pitfalls as in the case of the EFL textbooks, some PIAP PD courses, the teacher-training programs, and the 70%-30% modification. These pitfalls have been described

according to the interviewees' perceptions of the challenges of TBLT implementation in Chapter Six and will be examined again in the analysis in Chapter Eight.

Regarding teachers' perceptions of their preparedness, as most of them learned TBLT only in theory, they feel that they still need practice in using TBLT, including Corelli, Josue and Pola who learned TBLT in both theory and practice.

In order to respond to the second sub-question: *In what ways do EFL teachers feel prepared (or not) to implement TBLT?* I need to examine the opportunities that directly impact teachers' preparedness to implement TBLT, the interviewees' own perceptions of their preparedness, and also challenges that were presented in Chapter Six.

The findings presented above indicate that modifications that come from continuing education, the PIAP PD courses, and even the PIAP courses offered to the students, are instances that may equip the teachers to be more prepared to implement TBLT. However, such changes do not always guarantee that they are taken up or are beneficial. In several cases, the proposed changes need to be accessible for all to be of greater value.

The participating teachers' perceptions of their own preparedness indicate that those who have practiced TBLT during their preservice training, tend to be more confident with its implementation. This may mean that in order to empower EFL teachers to implement TBLT, more practice is needed during the courses' instruction in both pre-service teacher-training and PD courses. Nevertheless, when looking at the challenges that teachers face (Chapter Six), it is possible to see that those teachers who expressed confidence in implementing TBLT, still cannot fully implement it regularly because of critical challenges in their teaching contexts. For example, Corelli, who has taken several certified courses and recently one on TBLT, and Pola, who states that TBLT had great importance during her teacher-training program, have both

reported several difficulties in teaching their lessons because of the inclusion program, and problems disciplining students.

Other teachers such as Perla, and Aniel, apart from learning TBLT only in theory, teach in contexts where the most recurrent challenge was also the societal issues among the students. Julio, Lina, Liza and Osvaldo, on the other hand, who also learned TBLT in theory experienced very few discipline problems in their contexts. Julio, whose students receive additional hours of instruction for EFL, has widely implemented TBLT, conducting his classes 90% in English and being able to improve his students' language skills.

On the other hand, Josue and Lina, who have different TBLT learning experiences – Josue in theory and in practice and Lina only in theory – not only feel confident, but also implement TBLT despite the large sized classes and the at-risk and special needs students because of the positive learning attitude their students maintain during classes.

This analysis suggests that when challenges are related to the students' attitudes in the class, or teachers receive little or no support from the school administrators, teachers' knowledge and experience using TBLT seems to be undermined. These two general observations are two of the contributions of this study to the field; their significance will be further discussed in Chapter Nine.

Concluding, and in an attempt to respond to the question: *In what ways do EFL teachers feel prepared (or not) to implement TBLT?* teachers' preparedness to implement TBLT is related not only to their own level of education on the approach and English proficiency but also on the context in which they teach.

Finally, knowing the teachers' perceptions of the benefits of TBLT, the challenges they face, and the opportunities they receive, will aid me in interpreting how teachers' perceptions towards TBLT inform us about teaching EFL in Chile in Chapter Eight.

Chapter Eight: How can Chilean EFL Teachers' Perceptions of the Implementation of TBLT at the Secondary School Level Inform us about Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Chile?

In this chapter I will respond to the main research question: *How can Chilean EFL teachers' perceptions of the implementation of TBLT at the secondary school level inform us about teaching English as a foreign language in Chile?* In order to do so, I will firstly review the findings of the first two questions which provided me with insights about the perceptions that the teacher-participants have of TBLT implementation in Chile. These considered the benefits of TBLT and the implementation challenges they face, which were presented in Chapter Six, and the opportunities they have in order to accurately implement the approach, which were presented in Chapter Seven. Thus, considering those findings, I will begin responding to the first part of the main research question by providing an overview of the teachers' perceptions of TBLT implementation along with identifying the key factors that empower teachers to implement TBLT. Then, I attempt to respond to the second part of the main research question which aims to uncover what teachers' perceptions of TBLT tell us about EFL education in Chile. This part is looked at through Janks' Interdependent model for critical literacy as a way of reading the Chilean educational context. In doing so, I draw upon background educational information that has been presented in previous chapters.

Teachers' Perceptions and Key Factors that Empower them to Implement TBLT

As discussed in Chapter Three, and using social constructivist theory, teachers' perceptions are subject to their context and lived experiences (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Thus, in this section, my first attempt was to go back and analyze the participating teachers' perceptions

of TBLT implementation as documented in the survey (Herrera, 2016b) in order to find similarities or differences that could help me better understand the teachers' experiences. The reader should remember that I tried to recruit EFL teachers with different types of perceptions (Table 17 summarized the teachers' perceptions as reported in the survey).

My next step was to try to find key features of the teachers' EFL teacher-training program, the teachers' experiences implementing TBLT, and the teachers' school contexts in order to understand how the contexts and lived experiences have influenced the teachers' perceptions towards TBLT implementation.

Perceptions according to the survey. In the survey, all the selected participating teachers indicated having a positive perception towards the benefits of TBLT implementation. However, their perceptions towards TBLT implementation in Chile were varied.

Considering their levels of agreement with key statements, I categorized the participants as shown in Table 16. Van den Branden (2006) uses the term 'conflicting' to denote the push and pull or positives and challenges of the implementation of TBLT.

Table 17

Teachers General Perceptions of TBLT Implementation as per the Information in the Survey

Positive	Conflicting	Negative
Josue	Corelli	Aniel
Lina	Perla	Julio
Osvaldo	Pola	Liza

Perceptions according to their teacher-training experiences. Teacher-participants find that their whole pedagogical learning experience was quite poor and mainly based on theories. Nevertheless, their personal initiatives to improve their teaching practice have led them to continue their education and learn more about TBLT among other approaches too.

Perceptions according to their experiences implementing TBLT. In relation to the impact that the experiences implementing TBLT have had among the teachers in this study, as seen in Chapter Six, teachers have had both positive and not so positive experiences. With few exceptions such as using topics that were not meaningful for the students (Josue, Lina) or limited guidance during task completion (Osvaldo), most of the difficulties have been triggered by the teaching contexts which were described in the ‘challenges’ subsection in Chapter Six.

Similar to the themes of the studies in the literature review, I classified the teachers’ perceptions toward TBLT as positive, conflicting, and negative. Having a positive perception means that the teachers value TBLT and they are able to implement it despite the challenges. Having a conflicting perception means that the teachers see the benefits of TBLT implementation, but the challenges hinder them from fully implementing it. Finally, having a negative perception means that teachers do not see much value in TBLT in the Chilean context and do not attempt to implement it. Since no teacher had a negative perception of TBLT implementation, the perceptions were classified in positive and conflicting terms.

Learning that the teachers’ perceptions are either positive or conflicting, is not enough. It is also important to understand the reasons teachers find this approach positive and what is preventing them from fully implementing it.

Who had a positive perception of TBLT and why? As seen in the section about the benefits of TBLT in Chapter Six, all teachers agree and highlight the advantages of using TBLT. And although they acknowledge that implementing the approach may be hindered by several challenges of the contexts where they work, they still try to use it to teach English as often as possible (Josue, Julio, Osvaldo, Liza, Lina). Despite coming from different teaching contexts, they all face similar critical challenges: too few instructional hours, heavy teaching and administrative workload, trying to help students with low EFL proficiency reach the standards

for their grade level, integrating special needs students, and trying to personalize large size classes.

Regardless of the challenges, some teachers have had some opportunities that seem to be key to overcoming all other challenges and actually implementing TBLT in their classes. As mentioned in Chapter Seven, one of these opportunities is the students' positive attitudes and the students' motivation to learn EFL. Thus, in these cases, one of the main commonalities shared by Josue, Julio, Osvaldo, Liza, and Lina is that their schools do not face discipline problems despite the fact that most of their schools no longer have an entrance filter process (Except Lina's school) and have several special needs and/or at-risk students. Josue observes: *"Look, in my school, discipline issues do not give you much trouble because the kids are formatted like the teacher is the authority in the classroom. And if the teacher says that everyone has to be quiet and sitting on one side of the room, they all stay there and nobody complains"*. Regarding motivation, teachers tend to claim that they always have a very motivated group and that is enough for them to move and motivate the rest of the class. For example, Osvaldo claims: *"Of the 25 or 26 [students] that I teach, I will not have 24, but I will have at least 5 or 7 students that can motivate the rest"*.

Another opportunity that helps teachers overcome the challenges is when teachers have the school's support to use TBLT, because the goals of the school align with TBLT principles. For example, the reader has seen that Josue's school promotes working through projects which imply group work and students' autonomy. Lina's school has similar goals and she adds: *"In order to prepare them [the students] for the workforce quickly, the idea is to teach them to work in groups – to learn teamwork"*.

Other teachers also have opportunities such as small-sized classes, which, although very rare in urban public schools, can be found in rural public schools as seen in Osvaldo and Liza's case, and in some subsidized schools as in the case of Julio's school.

Some teachers in this group also find themselves in contexts where students have benefited from several additional hours of instruction (Julio), which gives them the opportunity of maintaining continuity in their lessons.

These benefits (few classroom management problems, more or less motivated students, support within the school, and small sized classes), although not present in every school context, have offered Osvaldo's and Julio's students the opportunity to improve their language level; especially Julio, who also has from four to six hours of instruction per week and whose students have received certification of EFL B1 level through the EFL SIMCE tests. He also attributes his success to his extensive use of English in the classroom (approximately 90%). Despite the low EFL entrance level of the students, he has been able to conduct his classes in English: *"I used to do my classes 90% in English. If after the third explanation in English, and all the possible strategies were used, they did not understand, then I would use a little bit more of Spanish"*. Thus, considering the experiences of Josue, Julio, Osvaldo, Lina, and Liza, having the school support and self-motivated students can contribute to developing a positive perception of the implementation of TBLT. In addition, if small-sized classes and a larger number of hours of instructions are added, teachers' opportunities to actually teach the students to speak English, are enhanced, as is in Julio's case.

On the other hand, there are some teachers (Aniel, Perla, Corelli, and Pola) that I have catalogued as having conflicting perceptions. Although they have implemented TBLT and are aware of its benefits, they are not able to implement it very often because of the complexity of their teaching contexts. They experience similar challenges as the teachers mentioned above,

however, the main differences lie in the students' attitudes and little motivation to learn EFL, limited support from the school administrators, few instructional hours and large sized classes.

The teachers with conflicting perceptions were very critical regarding the students' attitudes at school. For example, Aniel argues: *"So, what is the issue? Children see the example in their parents and the low level of education the parents have, or the worse situation is ... They do not want to follow rules, laws or instructions and since they have so many emotional problems, as they see so much violence - because Chile is a very violent country. There is a lot of yelling, insults, bad words, sad faces, few smiles and not as polite. The children are obviously influenced by the violence and terror that they are exposed to"*. Corelli acknowledges that she has some classes where the characteristic of the group is quite positive – a Grade 12 girls' class who evidence respect for the teacher and are willing to learn – but that some other classes may be quite problematic. She contrasts two of them: *"With this class [the girls'] you can work. You 'whip' them, and they work. I have a Grade 10 and they are 38 men - horrible – 'Birthday party of monkeys'"*. Pola also concurs that the main problem in her school is the students' attitudes. Thus, she reflects: *"There you have to be a mom, a psychologist, a psychiatrist, a police officer, a head teacher – everything before you start teaching English"*. Perla's school situation, which is very similar to the ones just described adds *"I think it's a change in society. There are too many rights. In this country, students have too many rights"*.

Finally, when asked about the perceptions about having TBLT as a mandatory approach in all Chilean schools, most teachers, except for Corelli and Perla, find that the country is not ready yet. They think that TBLT can be easily implemented in private schools with highly motivated students, with a greater number of hours of instruction and with small sized classes.

Key Factors that empower teachers to implement TBLT. In the literature analysis in Chapter Three, I concluded that a successful implementation combines teachers' understanding of the approach, a positive perception of TBLT and language learning, an adequate level in the target language, and sufficient support for TBLT implementation. In that chapter I also argue that all four conditions must take place at the same time to increase the possibilities of a successful implementation of TBLT.

In this section of the study I am also seeking to identify key factors that impact the successful implementation of TBLT according to Chilean EFL teachers. These factors were identified considering the information presented above: the teachers' perceptions of TBLT implementation based on their lived experiences, the opportunities offered by the Ministry of Education, and teachers' perceptions of their own preparedness.

Although there are several opportunities and conditions that may contribute to teachers being capable of implementing TBLT successfully, no teacher in this study experienced them all. Despite this, all teachers in this study have been able, at some point, to overcome challenges and use TBLT in their classes. Some teachers have been able to implement it very often and others have not. Thus, we may ask: What are the conditions, henceforth referred to as *key factors*, which facilitate the successful implementation of TBLT?

Similar to the findings found in the literature review, this study also uncovered that teachers' understanding of TBLT (Ilin, Inözü, & Yumru, 2007; Van den Branden, 2009), teachers' appreciation of the benefits of TBLT (Carless, 2009; Carless, 2007), teachers' appropriate EFL level (Carless, 2004; Littlewood, 2007; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011), school administrators' support (Adamson & Tong, 2008; Tinker Sachs, 2009), and as an addition to the field, the students' positive attitudes during classes are key factors for the successful implementation of TBLT. However, they must all take place at the same time as they

complement each other. In other words, if one of the factors is not present, teachers might not be able to conduct a TBLT lesson. This is akin to how Schwab (1983) described the curriculum commonplaces of teacher, students, subject and milieu; when any one of these components changes the entire situation changes.

In this study, all teachers have an understanding of TBLT, at least in theory. This was assessed through the online survey that I conducted and that was used as a starting point to recruit participants (Herrera, 2017). Also, all participating teachers highly appreciate the benefits of TBLT implementation. In addition, as mentioned before, teacher participants tend to feel confident with their EFL level as their programs gave much importance to their language competency and, in addition, most of them have taken PD courses which aim to strengthen both language and teaching skills. Regarding the school administrators' support, in this case by giving permission to implement communicative approaches, some teachers experienced the pressure to focus on traditional approaches so as to accomplish the school requirements and keep the noise level in the classroom low. As per the students' positive attitudes, not all teachers have the opportunity of teaching in a respectful and safe environment.

In this study, when participating teachers such as Liza, Julio, and Osvaldo, have been able to implement TBLT they were experiencing some of the five factors (teachers' understanding of TBLT, teachers' appreciation of the benefits of TBLT, teachers' appropriate EFL level, school administrators' support, students' positive attitudes). Due to administrative support Liza, Julio, and Osvaldo had access to more opportunities such as smaller classes and extra non-pedagogical hours to prepare their lessons (Julio and Osvaldo). Josue and Lina, on the other hand, have very large sized classes (40 – 45) and perceive that they have a heavy workload apart from other common challenges such as at-risk and special needs students, or few instructional hours. However, Josué and Lina's understanding of TBLT, their positive perception

of TBLT, their appropriate personal EFL level, the school support that they receive, and the positive attitude of their students have empowered them to overcome the challenges. None of the teachers, although sometimes prepared to implement TBLT, reported always using the approach. Some of the reasons include, as Julio commented, TBLT does not always match the goal of the lesson. Or, although Liza feels happy working in a rural school, she finds that sometimes her students' attitudes towards a communicative approach are not fully accepting because of the boxed-in learning styles of her students. Or as Julio added, he started to have problems with the school administrators because of the ludic characteristics of his classes and then felt forced to shift to traditional approaches.

In the case of Aniel, Corelli, Perla, and Pola, they have implemented TBLT a few times but the generalized weak support from the school administrators or the students' lack of interest and cooperation have hindered the continuity of TBLT implementation.

To summarize, although teachers in this study have been able to successfully implement TBLT when they have experienced at least the five key factors, in general I would consider the teacher's perceptions of TBLT implementation as conflicting. All teacher participants have implemented TBLT, appreciated the benefits that TBLT has for teaching and learning an L2, and have made efforts to implement it; nevertheless, some of them are not able to put their positive perceptions into practice due to several challenges they have to face in their teaching context – poor support from school administrators and/or the complex of students' attitudes.

Figure 4 summarizes the key dynamic factors, and although it indicates that factors that emerge from teachers are greater in number, these alone cannot guarantee a successful implementation of TBLT if the factors that emerge from school administrators and students are not taking place at the same time. This is mainly because of the power dynamics as is presented later in this chapter.

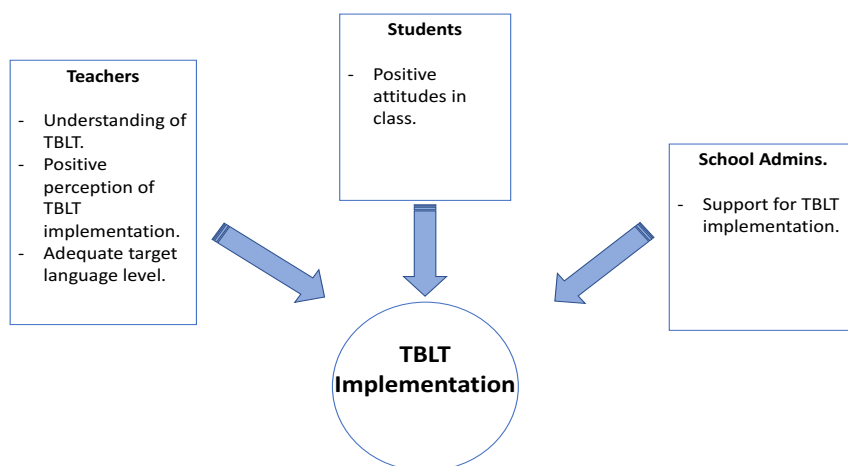


Figure 4. Key factors for a successful implementation of TBLT.

These findings align with the studies with conflicting results reviewed in Chapter Three (Carless, 2007; Carless, 2009; Cheng & Moses, 2011; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Nahavandi & Mukundan 2012; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012; Lin & Wu, 2012; Xiao-yan, 2011; Zheng & Borg, 2014), and add the key factor of students' attitudes as well. The findings in these studies also suggest that teachers have a positive perception of TBLT as a language teaching approach, but some of them tend to struggle and avoid its implementation due to several challenges.

Interestingly, participating teachers' perceptions in this study do not completely align with their reported responses in the survey. For example, in the survey when teachers were asked about their perception of TBLT implementation as a real possibility in Chilean classrooms, most of them indicated that its implementation was possible. However, in the interviews only Corelli and Perla maintained their positive opinions although they added that some modifications are needed. Corelli commented: *"I would say yes and no. In general, we have the resources and teachers are prepared; they have the skills, ok?"*. Then she adds: *"But teachers would have to be more motivated and change their way of thinking... it's not like 'Oh! I have to learn everything*

again!’ No, you just need to change your approach...Probably we will need some more special training, but it’s not that terrible”.

However, some of the teachers who expressed a high level of agreement regarding TBLT implementation in Chile in the survey, were not as positive in the interviews. For example, Lina who was consistently positive in the survey, stated in the interview: *“I don’t think so [referring to TBLT implementation in all Chilean schools]. Not in every school; unless they gave little kids a strong language foundation where they would teach them well during elementary education, we could do wonders in high school”.*

Perhaps, one of the reasons for this generalized negativity stems from the deep reflection on the topic during the PIAs and during the interviews, which probably was not attained in the survey.

Considering all of the above, what do these perceptions indicate about EFL education in Chile? Janks’ Interdependent model for critical literacy uncovers some critical issues.

Janks’ Interdependent Model for Critical Literacy

As presented in Chapter Four, Janks’ Interdependent model for critical literacy – consisting of an examination of design, access, diversity, and power in a context – aims to provide a framework to read the word and the world as Freire posited in 1972 (Janks, 2013). In this section I analyse the Chilean context (the world), by drawing upon the data (the teachers’ words) presented in this study about EFL teachers’ perceptions of TBLT implementation in Chile, to inform us about EFL education in Chile. As proposed in Janks’ model, in order for mandates to be implemented by all actors and have benefits among all those involved, there has to be a balance between design or possibilities to re-design, access to opportunities, diversity of those who have access and/or actors involved, and power.

Design. Redesign/design refers to the modifications that take place in the educational system so as to give space for power, access, and diversity to come together and bring a just educational environment for all students (Janks, 2000, 2013).

As explained in Chapter One, the Chilean education system is in a state of considerable transformation in order to provide good quality education for all students, and so that all students finish Grade 12 (4to Medio) with a B1 EFL level among other goals. To reach these goals there is a very extensive design to help support teachers and students.

By complementing the description of the Chilean educational context in Chapter One, the opportunities for teachers (such as the PIAP program, some modifications in the teacher-training program, and teaching resources), the list of strategies that the government has developed to improve the EFL level in Chile described in Chapter Seven, and the description of key educational concepts in Appendix A (such as the inclusion law, the PIE program, the JEC) it is possible to see an implementation design that not only aims to improve EFL education, but that is concerned with improving Chilean education in general.

Firstly, in order to improve and provide good quality education for all students, the Ministry of Education has implemented the PIE to provide students with academic, social, and psychological support, and the SEP to grant funds to improve the schools' infrastructure and teaching resources.

Secondly, in order to help students reach the B1 EFL level of proficiency, the Ministry of Education is strengthening EFL instruction by offering: free of charge EFL online courses; English winter/summer camps; PIAP school English week, textbooks, and dictionaries; volunteer EFL speakers at schools; Go 4 Valparaíso: All about English; well-trained EFL teachers and the EFL SIMCE test to assess the progress.

Most of the parts of the design have been presented in Chapter One and in Appendix A. However, I will expand on the design for having a well-trained EFL teacher in more detail here as it may shed more light on the teacher-participants' perceptions. The design of the TBLT implementation plan states that well-trained teachers should have a minimum of C1 EFL level and possess appropriate pedagogical competencies to teach EFL in a communicative way. In addition, since 2012 teachers have been expected to use TBLT as a teaching approach. Thus, in order to prepare teachers pedagogically, university teacher-training programs have increased the number of practica from one to four, or six in some cases. In addition, the EFL teacher-training programs are raising their language approval standards to C1. At the same time, the Ministry of Education, through the PIAP program grants pre-service teachers a semester in an English-speaking country. PIAP also has, as its main mission to provide numerous PD opportunities for in-service EFL teachers through courses, workshops during the English Winter Retreat and the English Summer Town, and EFL teachers' networks. In addition, schools that are under the Go 4 Valparaíso program, provide their teachers with additional PD support in Chile and in English speaking countries.

As regards education in general, the Ministry of Education is also providing teaching support to subject teachers and more teaching resources through the PIE and SEP programs, as a way of empowering schools and teachers to teach the diversity of Chilean students. The Ministry of Education has also increased the number of teaching hours through the 70%-30% modification. In addition, teachers are offered salary incentives for strong performance and evaluated every four years through the mandatory teacher evaluation program which offers a salary raise depending on the teacher evaluation results. Figure 5 represents my interpretation of the educational improvements design.

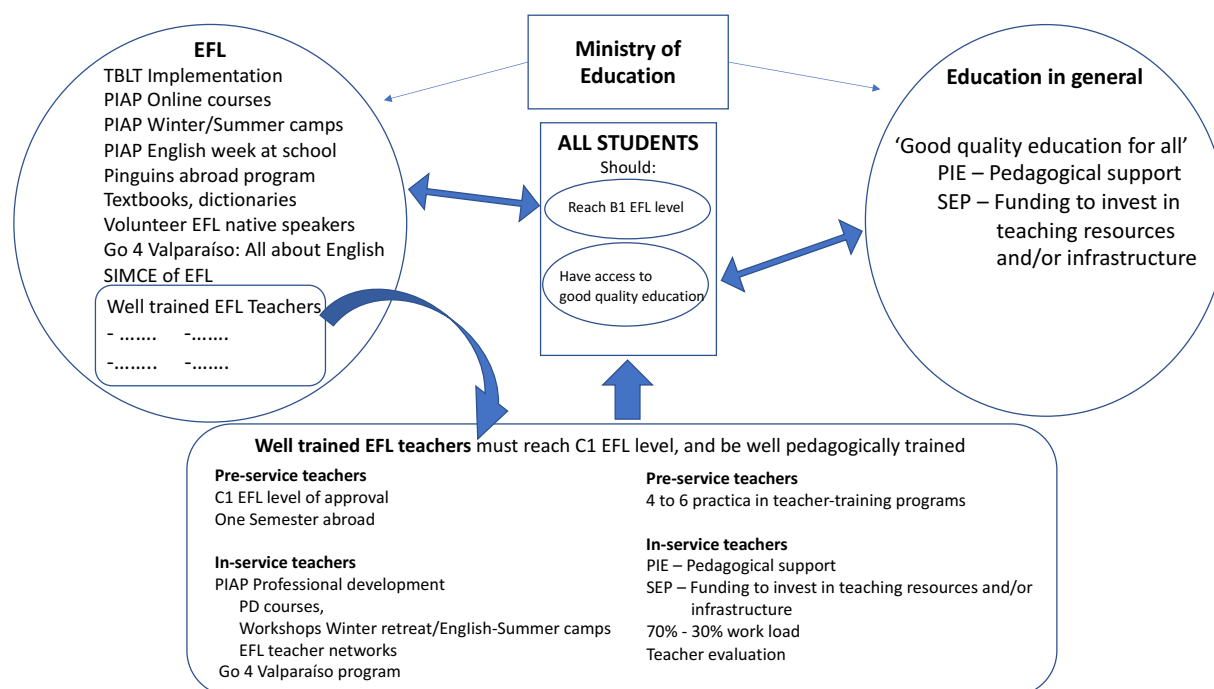


Figure 5. Design of improvements implementation plan.

Regarding the design and as seen in Chapter Seven, teachers in this study tend to agree that the Ministry of Education is making important efforts to improve education in Chile including the top-down mandating of TBLT as the approach to instruction, especially EFL education. For example, Aniel points out: *“I think they [the ministerial authorities] are not doing things wrong”*. In the creation of a newly designed system and approach to EFL education in Chile teachers have pointed out several obstacles. For example, Corelli feels that the efforts are not giving the expected results: *“Then, they have the intention that Chile will be a bilingual country, but there are things in which we are getting trapped”*.

Although the design shows many modifications which respond to ministerial endeavours, the Ministry of Education has not yet intervened in changing the starting grade for EFL instruction – it continues to be Grade 5, and the hours of instruction still seem to be too few to reach the proposed outcomes. This has undermined, in part, EFL educational growth as students from public schools continue having very low EFL level.

Additionally, although the camps are free of charge, their design still does not provide wide access to the many students who feel that their EFL level is not compatible with the English immersion approach of the camps. Regarding the textbooks, they are still not diverse enough to consider the varied language levels and interests of the students in Chile. Only rural schools receive content diverse textbooks. This mismatch, as seen in the participants' experiences, has contributed to teachers not using the textbooks.

Access. Janks (2000) states that in a just system, it is important that those involved have access to the dominant system. In this case, access to quality English language education. The reader may have noticed that despite the improvement implementation design to help students reach a B1 level of proficiency, the national and international educational results report that only a small percentage of students reach that goal. Thus, we must wonder if students and teachers have sufficient access to the opportunities provided in the design.

Although the educational opportunities are free of charge for students and EFL teachers, many students still do not participate in them. For example, some teacher participants commented that they cannot always motivate their students to participate in the Winter/Summer camps or in the EFL online courses because the students complain that “*everything is in English*” (Perla). In addition, teachers have also criticized the EFL textbooks arguing that they are not appropriate for the students' language level and that their topics are not of interest for either teachers or students. In other words, although these opportunities – EFL online courses, camps, textbooks, and dictionaries – are free of charge, many students do not have full access to them due to their limited EFL language level.

Continuing to question access and considering the data that emerged in this study, in this section I explore the EFL teachers' teaching practice and societal problems as possible additional aspects that may hinder the students' access to improve their EFL levels.

The EFL teachers' teaching practice. EFL teachers' TBLT/communicative-style of teaching practice is important to student success in English acquisition. For this reason, the Ministry of Education has created a number of PD opportunities for teachers. However, although free of charge, many teachers cannot access them due to the extra responsibilities and demands on their time as prescribed in the new mandates of the Ministry of Education, and the limited support of their school administrators.

Support of school administrators. Interviewees comment that they are always interested in improving their professional skills, but that they cannot always do so because of their heavy workload. Liza reported that she was extremely busy at the end of the school year and missed the deadline for registering for the English Summer Town. Aniel reflects that having such a heavy workload at school already keeps him away from living a balanced life: *"Look, let's face it. I used to work almost 50 hours a week last year. So, the last thing I wanted was to continue with – apart from designing the tests at home, and planning at home – to continue with courses on weekends or whenever; because one has responsibilities at home as well"*.

The 70%-30% workload modification has also constituted an increment in the workload of teachers. For example, Pola defines this modification as *"a lie"*. She laments: *"the 30% allotted time for teachers to work on classwork preparation is not real. The fine print states that 60% of that 30% is subject to the employer's discretion. So, they [the school administrators] may ask you to accomplish other tasks, and that is in your contract"*.

In other cases, they have found little support from the school administrators to be part of the EFL teachers' networks or PD courses. Corelli, who has participated in several PD courses

laments that she no longer has her school's support to be part of the EFL teachers' networks:

"Last year, for example, the English network group used to meet on Fridays and since I was in classes I was not able to attend. The school administrators did not give me permission to attend the meetings because we were in class". Aniel also comments that the principal in his school did not give much attention to the PDs: *"I was once invited to a course, and, you know what? the principal of my school loved me so little, that he told me about it after the deadline. He said 'Oh, you know I'm bouncing this email. I forgot to send it to you'".*

As explained in Chapter One, in the Glossary in Appendix A, and in the challenges in Chapter Six, the JEC, which was originally designed to improve education, has become a burden for both students and teachers because of the longer school day (with increased number of hours of academic instruction). Lina comments on this issue: *"They [the students] arrive at eight in the morning and leave at seven in the afternoon. For a little boy of 14 or 15 years this is a very long day".*

Corelli and Josue also point out the many interruptions during the school day which serve to increase the already few hours of instruction. They note that the many school assemblies and unplanned visits by inspectors or other school administrators disrupt class routines, reduce precious instructional time and in turn negatively influence student performance.

Taken together, teachers see these factors as obstacles to their concentration and the quality of their lessons.

Ministry of Education mandates. Teacher participants acknowledged that although the teacher evaluation process is beneficial as it invites them to reflect on their teaching practice, it also negatively influences the quality of their instruction. Teachers lament that they devote long hours preparing for the evaluation, which translates into tiredness, and a decrease in the quality of their teaching practice, especially in the courses that will not be observed. For example, Josue

acknowledges that sometimes he neglected his other classes and concentrated only on the one for which he was being evaluated.

Teachers also report that during the times of the EFL SIMCE test, many of them had to shift their teaching approach and train the students with grammar-oriented lessons and extra practice tests. Liza comments: *“You have to train the kids ... you stop teaching to just train them”*.

Teachers in this study also point out that the Inclusion Law and the PIE program, although educational improvements, also created a greater workload and in turn detracted their attention from planning and quality instruction.

Societal problems. Teachers in this study have also emphasized that many students, especially those in public schools, have very little interest in learning English. Although Chile’s geographic location and the high costs of travel prevent students from experiencing the value of English, the greatest obstacle to their motivation is the problematic lives that many of them live. This general discouragement to learning often translates into attitudinal and classroom management challenges in the classroom.

This is an issue, not only in EFL teaching and learning, but in education in general. In this section I have explored some of the challenges of access found in the Chilean context (the world), by drawing upon the teachers’ words. Improved design is required in order to give the teacher actors access that would empower them.

Diversity. Janks states that “different ways of reading the world in a range of modalities are a central resource for changing consciousness” (Janks, 2010, p. 24). In the critical literacy model, diversity is oriented towards creating diverse or different educational opportunities for all students and teachers, regardless of their socio-economic status and/or academic skills. Although

the Ministry has designed a spectrum of quality PD opportunities for teachers and extra-curricular projects for students, even the free tuition fees and textbooks limit the accessibility for the diverse range of actors in the education system. For example, the opportunities for learners to improve/strengthen their English outside of class are primarily offered in the form of summer and winter camps. Although numerous in number and located around the country, and free of charge, this is the only option available for strengthening language skills outside of class.

Students, especially those who consider that their EFL level is low and are afraid of an immersion approach, need other options – perhaps an occasional one to two hour English café with conversation partners and music or a weekly 15-30 minute student-generated radio show in English would ease students into participation in longer term camps. To ameliorate this situation the constraints placed on each actor in the implementation process merits revisiting.

The Design section summarizes the Ministerial endeavours to provide good quality education to the diverse spectrum of students in Chile and also professional development opportunities for EFL teachers. However, as seen from teachers' perceptions of the difficulties in the implementation plan, the opportunities offered to teachers and students are not necessarily accessible to the diverse characteristics of teachers and students.

Power. Janks indicates that “language, other symbolic forms, and discourse” are seen as “powerful means of maintaining and reproducing relations for domination” (Janks, 2010, p. 23). In this study, and in this analysis I have already identified that in order to help students reach a B1 EFL level, a design that involves changes in different areas (teacher-training program, PDs, courses for the students, teaching, learning, and social support) is being implemented in Chile. In addition, teacher participants have also indicated the challenges in reaching the expected results. This critical analysis has also uncovered that although the design is intended for all EFL teachers

and students (diversity), many teachers and especially many students still cannot access the opportunities.

Janks (2013) argues that sources of power may give or deny access to dominant discourses. In this light, this analysis has allowed me to identify two main sources of power which are either giving or hindering access to the provided opportunities: The Ministry of Education and the school administrators.

The Ministry of Education. Ministerial initiatives such as the PIE program, the teacher evaluation system, SIMCE, and even the JEC, which were introduced to improve Chilean education, are also obstacles to the creation of good quality EFL lessons and in turn, students' performance and achievement of the B1 EFL level of competency. One of the main obstacles lies in the time consuming and tiring administrative tasks that these initiatives demand, thus leaving teachers without the energy to be able to take advantage of the opportunities that have been developed in the design for English reform. For example, teachers reported on the long hours of a school day (Josue, Lina), the stress brought by the teacher evaluation (Corelli, Josue, Perla), and the extra demands on teachers because of the PIE program (Corelli, Josue).

The school administrators. Within the design of the improvements in education in Chile, school administrators hold much power and influence over the priorities in their school, especially the importance they place on EFL instruction (Waissbluth, 2018). Many teachers stated that their school administrators prevented them from participation in important programs designed for EFL reform.

In addition, as mentioned in Chapter Six and in the discussion on access, the schools' administrators also decide on the amount of class time allocated to English, the number of students per class, and the management of the 70% - 30% modification all of which influence the quality of instruction.

The data in this study did not address the reasons for school administrators' decisions; however, it does reveal cases in which the support of the school administrators opens the doors for teachers to improve their implementation of TBLT. For example, Lina comments that some of the first pieces of information she received when she started working at her school were about the English camps: *"The first things they [the school administrators] told me was: 'Hey, you know what? The kids of our school participate in the Summer camps', and they asked me if I wanted to participate and I said yes right away because that was new to me"*.

The data also revealed instances when the administrators closed the doors to opportunities such as when Aniel was not informed about an event until after it had taken place.

Discussion.

In an attempt to respond to the main research question of this study: *How can Chilean EFL teachers' perceptions of the implementation of TBLT at the secondary school level inform us about teaching English as a foreign language in Chile?* we see that the EFL teacher-participants present conflicting perceptions of TBLT implementation in Chile, which overall resembles several research findings conducted at the secondary school level in other parts of the world (Adamson & Tong, 2008; Carless, 2007; Cheng & Moses, 2011; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Li, 1998; Lin & Wu, 2012; Mustafa, 2010; Zheng & Borg, 2014). These conflicting perceptions inform us that even though teachers value TBLT and appreciate the efforts of the Ministry of Education in designing a myriad of valuable opportunities for language and pedagogic growth, they still see their access and the access of their students to these programs as limited. Paradoxically, the support of the Ministry of Education and the school administrators, which form one of the key factors for the successful implementation of TBLT, are the main limitation agents. As a result, the implementation of the extensive and diversity-oriented educational

improvement design is also fraught with obstacles that may hinder reaching the ministerial EFL goal – that students reach a B1 level at the end of their secondary education.

During the process of responding to the research questions, I could not avoid noticing a recurrent convergent point – the students' attitudes, which is another key factor for the successful implementation of TBLT. Teachers identified several attitudinal problems and students' lack of motivation, including students' lack of awareness of the value of English, their lack of interest in English, and their inappropriate classroom behaviour. The final point may be rooted in societal issues, as Galvis (2011) found in his study in Colombia, which may, in part, explain some of the reasons for unsuccessful TBLT implementation at the secondary school level in other countries as well. This, in addition to the limited access to the EFL reform opportunities, also hinders the successful implementation of TBLT.

Thus, this analysis informs us that EFL education is both empowered and undermined by the Ministry of Education and the school administrators. Additionally, the students' attitudinal problems that are visible in many secondary schools are also a source that may hinder EFL education.

Reflecting in a broad way, we can infer that the data analysis of Chapters Five, Six, Seven, and Eight not only contribute new factors to the field, but also informs us about Chilean education in general. In Chapter Nine I will aim to analyze the significance that these findings have for the field and for Chilean education. In Chapter Nine I will also draw upon the teachers' perceptions of TBLT implementation and EFL education in Chile to propose some changes regarding education and further TBLT implementation.

Chapter Nine: Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings from the literature review for this dissertation demonstrated that neither TBLT nor TBLT implementation have been widely studied in South America and that studies based on South American teachers' perceptions did not exist; this dissertation fills this gap by contributing to research on Chilean EFL education, TBLT implementation in Chile and teachers' perceptions of TBLT and EFL education in Chile. The literature review also suggested that effective and successful change requires leadership who can create a collaborative, supportive environment that demonstrates openness to grapple with change (Adamson & Tong, 2008; Tinker Sachs, 2009); this study confirmed the importance of such leadership and offers numerous examples of its shortcomings in Chile's implementation of TBLT. Further, since no studies on TBLT implementation have been analysed through critical literacy, this dissertation offers insights about TBLT implementation in terms of power (dominance), diversity, access and design/redesign. In this chapter I will provide a summary response to the research questions, highlight the contributions to the field and practice, and propose recommendations to address the findings.

Summary of Findings

In order to answer the research questions, I considered the interview data and how it compared to studies in the literature review.

Responses to the first research question - *What are teachers' perceptions of TBLT and its successes and challenges?* – added to some of the themes found in the literature review.

Drawing on the study data, the analysis allowed me to conclude that:

- Chilean teachers' perceptions of the benefits of TBLT and the challenges of its implementation are quite similar to those reported by teachers in other FL contexts – positive, negative and conflicting.
- Chilean EFL teachers, like their counterparts elsewhere, highly appreciate the benefits of TBLT implementation though they find that their contextual challenges hinder sustainable use of TBLT.

As further elaboration and contributions, the analysis also indicate that:

- The most difficult challenges teachers face stem from the
 - school administrators (due to their power position and the influence they have on class size and the teachers' time, schedule and ability to participate in PD) and
 - the students' attitudes.
- the Ministry of Education's reform mandates offer both an advantageous design and unforeseen obstacles that need to be addressed and overcome for the benefit of students.

To respond to the second research question – *In what ways do EFL teachers feel prepared (or not) to implement TBLT?* – I considered the opportunities that have been given to student-teachers, in-service teachers, and school students to improve EFL levels in the country.

The social constructivist perspective highlighted that

- The many opportunities that teachers and students have in the design of the EFL Reform initiative give teachers a sense of preparedness to implement TBLT.
- The challenges posed by some of the opportunities, especially the limited access to them, hinder the teachers' sense of sustainable use of TBLT.

To respond to the main research question - *How can Chilean EFL teachers' perceptions of the implementation of TBLT at the secondary school level inform us about teaching English as a foreign language in Chile?* – I responded to the first part of the question by paying attention to

the factors that have shaped teachers' perceptions, that is to say, the benefits and challenges teachers discussed when implementing TBLT along with the opportunities that they have and that support their teaching practice. The analysis indicated that:

- While teacher-participants value the benefits that TBLT brings to learners of an L2, they also find TBLT implementation challenging and complex in their contexts.
- There are five key factors that, when all present, contribute to the EFL teachers' preparedness to implement TBLT:
 - their understanding of TBLT
 - their belief and appreciation of the benefits of TBLT
 - their English proficiency level
 - the degree of support they receive from their school's administrators
 - the attitudes of their students during class.

To respond to the second part of the research question I drew upon Jank's Interdependent critical literacy framework and observed that:

- The teachers identified the Ministry of Education and the school administrators as the main sources of power in the implementation process.
- The design of the implementation process was generally strong and considered the needs of teachers and students to learn English; however, more attention is needed to align SIMCE with TBLT or communicative teaching.
- The implementation plan needs to address the diversity of schools, teachers and students in Chile; considering social class and certain geographical factors, among others, exam results should be decoupled from the financial reward system offered to schools.

- Access to the key features of the design plan need revisiting; administrators need to become aware of and understand the consequences of their decisions regarding EFL PD, class scheduling, class size and tasks of the 70-30 workload policy

After responding to the research questions, this dissertation contributes in the following ways:

1. The exploration of Chile's multi-dimensional top-down curriculum reform design shows that it has played an important role in giving teachers confidence in implementing TBLT.
2. The design showed a weakness at the point of decision-making (power) over events and teacher participation in TBLT implementation. There is a need to provide mechanisms that insure that school administrators do not block opportunities for support for teachers in the implementation plan.
3. Although the reform was designed to give teachers and students access to learning and using English outside the classroom, its diversity of opportunities was limited thus failing to reach all schools in all locations and offering a variety of ways to meet the needs of different teachers and different students, especially those with lower English ability and a lack of confidence.

Before proposing the recommendations, I would also like to present a summary of the commonalities that the findings in this study have with my lived experiences as an EFL teacher. In returning to the description of situating myself in Chapter One, so many of the teachers' stories resonated with my own. For example, like the teachers with a positive perception of TBLT implementation, I had also attended many PD courses in order to understand communicative approaches. I also appreciated the benefits of the approach I was using, in my case PPP, I had the school's support and I was able to manage the students' attitudes and

behaviours. However, and also similar to the experiences of teacher participants, when I sensed that school support was fading when I tried to implement a communicative approach, or when I was going through the intensive teacher evaluation process and preparing my students for the SIMCE test (and felt like I was under a magnifying glass), I lost my motivation and questioned my role as an educator.

Another commonality is the description of our experiences as student-teachers and the feeling that how we were taught imprisons us in traditional and oppressive systems. For example, Osvaldo refers to the educational system as being designed so that the teacher pours some content into the students, who retain little - what Freire called banking education (Freire, 1970). This last analysis suggests that despite the many changes and efforts to change education, over time change in students' education and the teachers' working conditions seems to be slow and marginal.

How teachers' perceptions shed light on the reasons behind their actions (Borg, 2006, Chan, 2014; East, 2012; Hadi, 2013) was discussed in Chapter Three. The findings in this study align with this statement as we see how all of the perceptions that teachers have of TBLT implementation, and of education in general, directly impact their teaching performance. Additionally, when teachers believe that they do not receive sufficient support from their school administrators, or if they feel burdened by the demands of the new ministerial reforms, they tend to display a less positive attitude. Martinic, Huepe, and Madrid (2008) argue that when teachers develop these kinds of perceptions to new mandates, the success of the endeavours is challenged. Thus, the following proposed redesign elements are offered to change teaching conditions for teachers, and in turn, for students.

Recommendations and Insights for Changes

Similar to the proposed changes given by authors in the literature review, my suggestions are mainly related to institutions (Ministry of Education and school administrators), teachers and TBLT itself. Table 19, found at the end of this section, summarizes the proposed changes and highlights in bold the new insights and contributions the dissertation makes to the field of TBLT implementation.

Ministry of Education. The critical analysis indicates that due to their impact on teachers and in turn on students, ministerial initiatives such as teacher training, the teacher evaluation system, the EFL SIMCE test, the PIE program, the JEC program, the amount of EFL instruction, PIAP PD programs, and even the selection of TBLT for Chile, although all well intentioned, require reassessment, as below.

1. Teacher-training programs. Based on the teacher participants' concerns over the excessive theory-based instruction they received during their teacher-training programs, their university program could benefit from exposing them to non-traditional approaches to SLA, providing them with supervised in-class practice, and offering them more feedback on their teaching during in-field supervision.
2. Teacher evaluation system. Teachers in this study raised grave concerns over the teacher evaluation system and its time consuming, competitive and reward-punishment characteristics. This process could benefit from a more formative character, consider incorporating supportive mentorship, and integrate paid time for teachers to prepare their portfolios.

3. EFL SIMCE test. How the students' SIMCE test results are used as a financial reward- punishment system for a school and a reputation-builder/destroyer for a teacher needs to be reviewed. The test design could also benefit from the addition of an oral component in order to better align with communicative approaches.
4. PIE program. Given comments about class disruptions and the time needed to work with special needs teacher assistants, EFL teachers require more support and specialized training in order to understand and implement the PIE program for the benefit of all students.
5. JEC system. Teachers reported feeling an imbalance in their and their students' personal-school (professional/family) lives as a result of the reformed JEC system. Thus, front line decision makers in the implementation process, such as school administrators, require workshops, and perhaps even supervision, as to: 1. Healthy and balanced practices in prioritizing integral learning (and not overly downloading tasks onto teachers); 2. School- and classroom- based approaches to motivate, and not demotivate, students; 3. EFL teachers' needs for (access to) PD opportunities; and 4. The priority that EFL has in Chile's vision to become a bilingual country.
6. Amount of EFL instruction. In order to attain the country's bilingual goals, teachers suggest that more hours of instruction are needed along with starting EFL instruction earlier, such as in Kindergarten or at least in Grade 1.
7. PIAP PD programs. Based on some teachers' perceptions of the very high value of PIAP courses, might they be reconfigured into a more mandatory and certificate-based program whose completion is linked to teachers' salaries? In this way more teachers would be required to attend and likely also be compelled to more seriously consider professional instruction on TBLT in a non-punishing way.

8. Designing/adapting TBLT for Chile. Echoing Li (1998) and his study conducted in an Asian country and Galvis (2011) and his study conducted in a South American country, TBLT may not be appropriate for Chile. Designed by Western academics for use in Western contexts that value independence, the culture of doing vs. the culture of living and results-oriented cultures vs. process-oriented cultures (Martin & Nakayama, 2008) TBLT might best be adapted or redesigned for use in Chile. Redesigning a teaching approach should consider the needs, interests, strengths and weaknesses of the local context and take into account the political, economic, social, and cultural factors and, most important of all, the EFL situations in [its own country]” (Li, 1998, p. 698).

School administrators. Holding a key decision-making role in the educational system and the process of educational reform, school administrators would benefit from learning more about the EFL mandate of the country and their role in helping to realize it, especially ways to support their EFL teachers as the curriculum implementers. Teachers need to be heard and given a voice in decision-making – a chance to be a part of the changes being built (Berger, 2000; Hamp-Lyons, 2007). After all meaningful changes and successful curriculum implementation require all the actors in the education system to support each other (Leaver & Kaplan, 2004; Tinker Sachs, 2009). In addition to the recommendations already mentioned, administrators also need to integrate the following knowledge areas into their decisions.

1. EFL relevance and teacher PD. Based on teachers’ perceptions of school administrators, the latter might create a system through which they can support the participation of EFL teachers in the EFL teachers’ network and request evidence of the work the teachers are doing in those networks.

2. Pedagogical paradigms. Due to the positive experiences that some teachers have had when schools allow non-traditional educational approaches, school administrators might learn more about these perspectives in order to embrace, learn, and inform all educational actors about these new teaching practices.
3. Class size. Given that teachers perceive their classroom management problems to emerge from large class sizes, thus hindering the quality of the instruction, school administrators should consider smaller classes to help teachers and students have a better and more personalized teaching/learning experience.
4. Workload. School administrators need to understand teachers' views on the workload modification of the Ministry's new 70 %-30 % mandate and monitor the tasks and timelines they assign teachers so as not to detract from the planning time teachers require for quality EFL teaching and learning.
5. JEC system. To increase students' attention and focus, school administrators should revisit the principles they follow in designing teachers' and students' schedules (timetables) so that EFL as an academic subject is preferably taught in the mornings with complementary workshops in the afternoon.
6. Time management. Several teachers argued that much time is taken away from their pedagogical hours by the weekly school general assemblies and other interruptions. Thus, school administrators need to be more vigilant about maximizing teacher-student contact hours of instruction.

Teachers. In light of the identification of five factors that contribute to the successful implementation of TBLT and three of them involving teachers (namely teachers' understanding

of TBLT, their positive perceptions of TBLT, and their level of EFL proficiency), the following teachers' actions would benefit their students:

1. Participate more in teacher-training workshops and EFL teachers' networks. EFL teachers should work to increase their participation in PIAP PD courses, maintain communication with the school administrators as to their importance, and inform them of what is being learned in the PDs so that they can see how the school and students benefit.
2. Be more open to implementing TBLT and more positive about TBLT. Some teachers commented that they tend to prefer traditionally oriented instructional approaches over TBLT because of the many systemic and societal obstacles that come to the fore in training students to embrace a new paradigm of learning. Teachers need to develop more openness to change for as Xhafery and Xhaferi (2014) emphasize, "the teachers' attitudes towards certain instructional approaches influence the way they teach, having positive attitudes towards TBLT is very important because it will be implemented more successfully" (p. 55).
3. Be open-minded and caring. Given the societal and attitudinal conditions of secondary school students, teachers need to be aware of the students' social contexts and characteristics of their age in order to provide them with appropriate opportunities and support.

TBLT implementation. The presentation of teachers' perceptions in the literature review indicates that most challenges for TBLT implementation occur at the school level, specifically in secondary schools (Adamson & Tong, 2008; Chan, 2012; Deng & Carless, 2009 and 2010; Galvis, 2011; Li, 1998; Mustafa, 2010; Zheng & Borg, 2014). For this reason and also echoing the changes proposed by the same authors, secondary school systems may not be sufficiently

prepared to fully implement TBLT. Apart from the reasons provided by the participating teachers, the little generalized success reported in the research literature suggests that student attitudes and inexperience with autonomous learning need to be revisited in favour of an adapted version of TBLT.

Thus, the following modifications are proposed.

1. Weak version of TBLT. Following suggestions of authors such as Ellis (2003), Carless (2004; 2007), and Littlewood (2007) and the framework of Nunan alongside some PPP (See Appendix K), teachers might consider implementing a weak version of TBLT. This could include integrating grammar earlier in the lesson if students do not feel confident in using the target language without guidance. This could also imply providing more pedagogical support and more specific guidance so that students feel that they have more structure and can transition into more autonomous learning and self reflection.

Table 18

Summary of Proposed Changes and Insights

Institutional-related changes	Ministry of Education	<i>Changes in teacher-training programs</i>	-Use non-traditional approaches - Provide supervised in-class practice - Invest on more in-field supervision.
		<i>Changes to teacher evaluation system</i>	- Have a more formative character. - Provide teachers with extra time to prepare their portfolios.
		<i>Changes to the EFL SIMCE test</i>	-Invest in an oral component - Consider educational context differences.
		<i>Changes to the PIE program</i>	- Allot more pedagogical hours to non-academic subjects and other subjects such as EFL. - Supervise school administrators.
		<i>Changes at school administration level</i>	-Support the EFL teachers. - Implement the ministerial mandates.
		<i>Changes regarding EFL instruction</i>	- Increase the number of hours of instruction. - Start EFL instruction in Kindergarten or at least in Grade 1.
		<i>Changes in PD programs</i>	- Should have a more mandatory and certificate-based character.
		<i>Design of a local teaching approach</i>	- Consider the local needs and interests.
	School Admins.	<i>Changes regarding EFL relevance</i>	- Allow the EFL teachers participate in the EFL teachers' network.

Teacher-related changes		-Require evidences of the work the teachers are doing in EFL networks.
		-Allow and support teachers to use teaching approaches in which the students' learning process is the priority.
	<i>Changes regarding pedagogical paradigms.</i>	-Embrace, learn, and inform all the educational actors about non-traditional teaching approaches.
	<i>Changes regarding class size</i>	-Design smaller classes to help teachers and allow students have a better and more personalized teaching/learning environment.
	<i>Changes regarding workload</i>	-Respect the mandate and allow teachers good quality time to improve their teaching practice.
	<i>Changes regarding the JEC</i>	-Improve the schedule design.
	<i>Changes regarding time administration</i>	-Have fewer school assemblies. -Respect teacher-student contact hours in class time.
	<i>More participation in teacher-trainings and EFL teachers' networks</i>	-Commit and participate in PIAP PD courses -Maintain communication with the school administrators and inform them of what is being learned in the PDs.
TBLT-related changes	<i>Be more open to implement TBLT</i>	-Develop more openness to changes.
	<i>Be more open-minded and caring</i>	- Be aware of the students' social contexts, needs and age
	<i>Weak version of TBLT</i>	

Future Research

At the beginning of this dissertation, apart from the main research questions, I also wondered about the following questions: Do teachers need to have an accurate and indepth understanding of TBLT in order to implement it successfully? Are teachers willing to risk and explore new teaching methodologies? Are schools prepared for changes? Is the country prepared to shift from grammar-oriented national tests to more productive-skill oriented and practical assessments? What implications does SIMCE have in the implementation of TBLT? Now I realize that future research on school change should also include the voices of multiple stakeholders including school administrators and policy makers, parents and students. There is

also a need to explore implications of the misalignment of the grammar-oriented national SIMCE test with productive-communicative and practice-based instruction.

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APPENDIX A

Glossary

70% - 30%: The 70% - 30% modification refers to an increment of teachers' non-pedagogical hours from 25% to 30% in 2017, and from 30% to 35% in 2019. This modification was mandated by the "Law 20.903," in 2009 in an effort to acknowledge and support the teachers' teaching practice and to strengthen education for all students. This is also a benefit for all schools that receive funding from the government (public, subsidized and delegated administration). This law also states that teachers that work in schools with an 80% or more PIE students will have 40% non-pedagogical hours since 2019 (Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional, 2016; "Sistema de Desarrollo Docente: Información sobre el incremento del tiempo no lectivo, uso y asignación," 2016; Tapia, 2016)

English Winter Retreat / English Summer Town for EFL teachers: The English Winter Retreat and English Summer town are two or five days of English teaching PD. This is organized by PIAP and is free of charge for all public and subsidized school teachers. This PD takes place in each region of the country and its main objective is to provide EFL teachers teaching methodology tools and strategies to face the current educational contexts ("Se abre convocatoria para los English Summer town 2017 – 2018," 2017).

English Winter/Summer camps for high school students: The English Winter/Summer camp is a free of charge English immersion program organized by the PIAP and has benefited more than 2.000 public and subsidized high school students each year since 2007. The last English Summer Camp benefited more than 2.800 students in 46 English immersion camps nationwide. The 'Camps' are immersion days in the English language that are designed to give

students the opportunity to practice and learn English in real contexts, with interactive and dynamic activities that include role plays, representations, group projects, competitions and playful activities, among others. The team in charge of the activity is made up of Chilean EFL teachers, students-teachers in an EFL teacher-training program and English-speaking volunteers.

Since its beginnings, more than 27.000 students have participated in this initiative in winter and summer camps that develop and promote communication skills, promotes teamwork and promotes cultural exchange among students and volunteers. The following YouTube video summarizes this initiative https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7UxDw_cJtds (Programa Ingles Abre Puertas Mineduc, 2016; Programa Inglés Abre Puertas abre postulaciones a los English Summer Camps 2018, 2017)

EFL teachers' networks: These are composed of EFL teachers who belong to the same city or town. They held monthly meetings in which they reflect together, share their pedagogic experiences, receive little workshops and pedagogic orientation. The EFL teachers' networks are chaired by one local EFL teacher, but the whole group is supported by PIAP through a regional representative. Being part of the EFL teachers' networks is key for EFL teachers to have easier access to PIAP PDs and educational opportunities for their schools and students (Programa Ingles Abre Puertas: PIAP, 2017).

EFL online courses: The English online courses is a program created and organized by the PIAP and the University of Antofagasta en Chile. Since its beginnings in 2016 this has benefited thousands of public and subsidized school students from Grade 7 to Grade 12. This plan contemplates the delivery of pedagogical resources of English and the realization of free online English courses for students along with a certification at the end of the course. The program

includes three EFL online courses which correspond to levels A1, A2 and B1 of the CEFR (“Cursos de Ingles en Linea,” n.d.; “Estudiantes completan Curso de Inglés Online A1,” 2016).

EFL SIMCE test: The *Sistema Nacional de Medicion de la Calidad de la Educación* SIMCE evaluation system started in 1988 to assess the students’ performance in the areas of mathematics and language in Grades 4 and 8. Later, students in Grade 10 were also added to the compulsory assessment and in 2010 the evaluation included the subject of English language for the first time. (Mineduc, 2012)

“Go 4 Valparaíso: All about English” program: This PIAP initiative started in 2016 and has benefited so far 40 public schools in the province of Valparaíso. This program provides extra resources to schools so that they can implement a thematic classroom with personal laptops for each student. This also includes more pedagogical hours and national and international PDs. In addition, subject areas teachers can also access to EFL training so that all teachers can include EFL in their classes. (“Lanzan iniciativa regional: Go 4 Valparaíso: All About English,” 2016).

Inclusion Law: The Law, 20.845 – the Inclusion Law – was passed in May 2015 by the President Michelle Bachelet Jeria. This law put an end to students’ entrance selection process and to co-payment system in subsidized schools. The later means that subsidized school will progressively either become 100% private or no profit foundations which will be funded by the government (Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional, 2015).

JEC (Jornada Escolar Completa – Full school day): The JEC was introduced in 1997 by Law 19.352 as a way to improve education by adding ludic opportunities to the students and in this

way, create a more integral learning environment. Before 1997, there were two school times – morning and afternoon. After 1997 schools started having a long school day that would usually start at 8 am and finish at around 5 or 5:30 pm. The overall evaluation of the JEC is that it has been positive in terms of infrastructure development, but that its impact in academics has been poor. Reports indicate that both teachers and students finish the day tired and the system has created a generalized demotivation (Fernández, 2017).

Law of Teaching Career: The Law of Teaching Career was passed in 2016 (Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional, 2016; “Las claves de la política nacional docente,” n.d.) increasing the pre-requisites to enter teacher university programs, implementing specific evaluations during the program to assess the quality of future teachers, and by implementing more supervision in universities so as to monitor the regulations and standards. In addition, all new teachers will have mentors that will guide them during the first months of official teaching practice. Moreover, in order to recruit and prepare the best future teachers and in this way, improve school education, in 2016 the government also established free tertiary education to all those high performing students who decide to study in a teacher education program at a University.

The reform also seeks to improve in-service teachers’ teaching practice by providing them more opportunities for PDs. Also, the new Law of the Teaching Career aims to improve the teachers’ working conditions by increasing the number of non-teaching hours (from 25% to 30% – 35%) and by increasing their salaries depending on their performance in the mandatory teacher evaluation and specific subject and pedagogical knowledge tests (“Las claves de la política nacional docente,” n.d.; Ministerio de Educación, 2015).

Penguin Revolution: (2006) The penguin revolution of 2006 arose as a reaction against school bus fares and university entrance fees and serious infrastructure problems in some high schools. It started on April 24, 2006 when students in a high school, tired of the infrastructure problems in their school, decided to protest by taking over their school. Later more schools in the country with similar problems joined the fight. After the President Michelle Bachelet failed to address educational reform in the annual presidential speech on May 21, 2006, student leaders called for a national educational strike that resulted in more than 400 school takeovers in the country and thousands of school students marching on several demonstrations along Chile. Very soon, university students and school teachers also joined the revolution demanding an educational reform (Chovanec & Benitez, 2008).

PIE: The PIE (Programa de Integración Escolar – Student Integration Program). This program, created in 2015 in the context of the Inclusion Law, aims to facilitate the integration of special needs students to the educational system (“Antecedentes generales PIE,” n.d.). The program provides additional human and financial support to the school or group of schools (PIE comunales) (Ministerio de Educación: Gobierno de Chile, n.d.).

PIAP: The PIAP (Programa Inglés Abre Puertas – English Opens Doors Program) was established in 2003 so as to improve the EFL level of the students from Grade 5 to Grade 12. Since then, PIAP has contributed to the continued EFL teachers professional and linguistic PDs. PIAP is also in charge of providing the students educational support. The following are the PIAP initiatives that seek to promote more presence of the English language in schools:

-*Spelling Bee* for grades 5 to Grade 6

-*Public Speaking* Grade 7 to Grade8

-*Debates* Grade 9 to Grade12.

The PIAP is also recommending the school stake holders to take the following actions:

-Each classroom should have a *bulletin board* in English.

-*A thematic classroom*

-*School signs in English*

-*Language laboratory* for those schools that aim their students to develop a C1 level

-‘*Yo Estudio*’ online portal (I study).

-‘*It’s My Turn*’ teaching/learning resource for Grades 5 and 6 in rural schools

-*Recursos educativos complementarios (REC)* (Complementary educative resources) in the EFL textbooks.

PIAP is also providing financial support to those schools that decide to do one or more of the following activities:

-An inter or intra school *English day/week*

- *English Winter/Summer camps* for secondary education students

-*Online EFL courses* for secondary education students.

PIAP also provides wide PD opportunities to teachers and motivate them to participate in the following initiatives so that they can improve their linguistic and teaching skills:

-Upgrading *methodology and linguistic courses*

-Upgrading *methodology workshops*

-Upgrading *B1/B2 linguistic level courses*

-*Good teaching practice workshops*

-*Curriculum courses*

-*Conferences and seminars*

-Development of *action research project*

-Participation in *EFL teachers' networks* (Programa Ingles Abre Puertas: PIAP, 2017)

SEP Law: The SEP law (Subvencion Escolar Preferencial – Preferential School Grant) No 20.248 was mandated in 2008 as a way to enforce the economic resources in schools with at-risk or special needs students (Gobierno de Chile Ministerio de Educación, 2008).

Types of schools:

Delegated administration schools: Up until 1980 public schools were administered by the Chilean government. Then, they were transferred to the local municipal administration. However, 70 technical-professional high schools that had good academic results, were transferred to a non-profit foundation or corporative administration. From the year 1980, it began the transfer of fiscal educational establishments to municipalities and municipal corporations. The establishments are classified as sixty-nine technical professionals and one artistic (Gobierno de Chile Ministerio de Educación, 2008).

Private schools: These types of schools are 100% funded by parents. These schools do not receive any type of the government grants.

Public schools: These schools are currently under local municipal administration. However, since 2017, it was mandated that public schools would return from municipal administration to Ministry of Education administration as it was up until 1980 (“La desmunicipalización fue aprobada y despachada por el Congreso,” 2017). The gradual transition has already started in March 1, 2018 with 50 establishments and nine child care schools (La Tercera, 2017).

Subsidized schools: These started in the 1980s during the dictatorship period and up until 2016 subsidized schools constituted 49% of the schools. However, as part of the Inclusion

Law, subsidized schools have been transitioning to becoming either private and continue to profit or becoming, within two years, a corporation. The corporations will be able to receive more funding from the government and gradually diminish the contribution made by the students' families or legal guardians. Thus, the co-payment system that characterizes subsidized education started its gradual end in 2016 and school owners are not permitted to charge more than \$85.000 Chilean pesos a month. Due to the current transition in education, the percentage of schools that continue being subsidized is uncertain.

Teacher Evaluation: The Evaluación del Desempeño Profesional Docente – Teacher evaluation – mandates that all public-school teachers must be evaluated every four years since 2003. This evaluation is conducted by external bodies and is based on a self-evaluation, third-party reference report, peer evaluation, and teacher performance portfolio (OECD, 2013). The possible results by this body may be: Unsatisfactory (teachers with this assessment are evaluated again the following year); Basic; Competent; and Outstanding. In addition, teachers must also take a specific and pedagogical knowledge test in order to assess their pedagogic and subject area knowledge in more detail. With an eligible score, they receive an increment in their salaries for up to four years, until they are evaluated again.

Volunteer Native English Speakers: The native speaking teachers receive free accommodation and in the last decade, more than 1.800 qualified volunteers have assisted and worked with Chilean EFL teachers in public and subsidized schools (EF EPI, 2014).

APPENDIX B

Estrategia Nacional de Inglés 2014 – 2030

The strategies that involve the family and the society:

- 1.- Creation of a unit that assesses the process of the strategies and its competitiveness.

Short term actions (1 – 2 years)

- 2.- Movies in English with subtitles in Spanish on television.
- 3.- Campaigns that promote ELL.
- 4.- Educative programs in English on television.

Medium term actions (3 – 10 years)

- 5.- Educative channels on line that support ELL.
- 6.- Signage in both English and Spanish on important public buildings and if possible in touristic places too.
- 7.- Promote that touristic services and places have a signage in both English and Spanish along with local language in the case of indigenous towns.

The strategies that involve the schools and the students are the following:

Current actions

- 8.- SIMCE in Grade 11.
- 9.- Curriculum for English language from Grade 5 to Grade 12. This sets the goal for Grade 8, which should be A2 and for Grade 12, B1.
- 10.- Support for those schools which decide to start English language in Grade 1.
- 11.- Distribution of free English language textbooks for those schools that start English language in Grade 1.
- 12.- Increment of English language class hours from 2 to 3 hours in Grade 6 and Grade 7.
- 13.- English language textbooks for all rural schools.
- 14.- Dictionaries for Grades 3, 5, and 9.
- 15.- Digital educative resources for the English language departments in each school.
- 16.- More English speaker volunteers.
- 17.- e-learning courses for high school students and for teachers.
- 18.- Spelling Bee tournaments for Grades 5 and 6.

- 19.- Public speaking tournaments for Grade 7 and 8.
- 20.- Debates in English from Grade 9 to Grade 12 (Summer and Winter).
- 21.- English camps from Grade 9 to 12 (Winter and Summer)
- 22.- Ramón Barros Luco scholarship for learning English

Short term actions (1 – 2 years)

- 23.- Books in English for libraries in schools and in public libraries.
- 24.- Software to practice English for both students and teachers.
- 25.- Promote English language certification among Grade 12 students.
- 26.- Improve ‘Penguins without borders’ program.

Medium term actions (3 – 10 years)

- 27.- More language teaching resources for Kindergarten’s classes.

Long term actions (10 years or more)

- 28.- Mathematic and Science teaching in English as mandatory.
- 29.- Assess the 4 language skills in the SIMCE test.
- 30.- Advance the SIMCE test to Grade 8.
- 31.- Incorporate English language classes gradually since Grade 1.

The strategies that involve the initial and continuous training for English language teachers are the following:

Current actions

- 32.- Guiding standards for initial training of English language teachers.
- 33.- Semester Abroad Scholarship for English language student-teachers.
- 34.- Seminars on initial teacher-training.
- 35.- English language face to face courses for teachers of primary and secondary education.
- 36.- Postgraduate degree in English language for primary teachers.
- 37.- English language teaching workshops.
- 38.- Rural English language teachers’ training.

Medium term actions (3 – 10 years)

- 39.- English language level C1 compulsory for all teachers.

- 40.- Minimum certification of C1 for all new teachers.
- 41.- Six months internship in an English speaking country for teachers.
- 42.- Summer internship for teachers in an English-speaking country.

English for specific purposes:

Current actions

- 43.- CORFO scholarship for workers and professionals.
- 44.- Free online English language course for workers.
- 45.- Leveling English language courses for students on scholarships abroad.

Short term actions (1 – 2 years)

- 46.- Incorporate to the National Tourism Strategy the language skills training for public officials and workers in the tourism sector.

Medium term actions (3 – 10 years)

- 27.- English language as part of the PSU exam (compulsory exam to enter the University).

(Gobierno de Chile, 2014, pp. 22 – 35)

Gobierno de Chile. (2014). Estrategia nacional 2014-2030. Retrieved from

<http://www.economia.gob.cl/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/140307-Presentacion-CS-lanzamiento-ENI-v3.pdf>

APPENDIX C

Research on TBLT in FL contexts

ASIA

Author and year	Country	Context	Focus of study	Participants	General evaluation
Adamson & Tong (2008)	China	Real classroom (Secondary Ed.)	TBLT implementation from the teachers' perspectives and class observations.	23 participants of Secondary school. (3 different schools) (staff in leadership positions, school principals, English teachers)	Negative
Angela (2013)	Thailand	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Impact of task-based language learning incorporated with learning strategies to acquire English language.	50 students in total. 5 native English speaking teachers. 5 non-native English speaking teachers.	Positive
Carless (2003)	China	Real classroom (Primary Ed.)	Factors in the implementation of task-based teaching in primary schools	3 EFL primary teachers and their students (6 – 7 years old students)	Mixed
Carless (2004)	Hong Kong, China	Real classroom (Primary Ed.)	Exploration of how a task-based innovation was implemented in three primary school classrooms in Hong Kong.	3 Cantonese native-speaking English teachers in different primary school settings implemented the task-based innovation TOC in their classroom.	Mixed
Carless (2007)	Hong Kong, China	Real classroom (Secondary Ed.)	Exploration of the suitability of task-based teaching in Hong Kong secondary schools.	11 secondary school teachers and 10 teacher educators	Mixed
Carless (2009)	Hong Kong, China	Real classroom (Secondary Ed. and Adult Ed.)	Exploration pros and cons of TBLT and PPP from teachers' perspectives.	12 secondary school teachers and 10 teacher educators.	Mixed
Chan (2012)	Hong Kong, China	Real classroom (Primary Ed.)	Qualitative differences in novice teachers' enactment of TBLT.	4 teachers of primary ESL classrooms.	Negative
Chan (2014)	Hong Kong, China	Real classroom (Secondary Ed.)	The implementation of TBLT in Hong Kong secondary classrooms, and	10 EFL secondary teachers. 5 of them with more than 10	Mixed

			how teachers' beliefs impact the implementation of the approach.	years of experience.	
Cheng & Moses (2011)	China	Real classroom (Secondary Ed.)	Teachers' perception of TBLT implementation in secondary schools in China	132 secondary school teachers	Positive
Chuang (2010)	China	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	TBLT implementation in a college EFL class and students' perceptions of the approach.	A Chinese college EFL	Positive
Deng & Carless (2009; 2010)	Guangdong, China	Real classroom (Primary Ed.)	Evaluation of TBLT implementation.	4 primary teachers and their students	Negative
Dunne (2014)	Chile - Japan	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Telecollaboration task implementation.	36 Chilean students and 36 Japanese students	Positive
Farsani, Tavakoli & Moinzadeh (2012)	Iran	No real classroom (Adult Ed.)	The effects of TBLT in learning existential construction (there is/are)	60 EFL learners from 14 to 24 years of age	Positive
Hadi (2013)	Iran	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Comparison of teachers' and learners' perceptions of TBI.	51 Iranian EFL teachers and 88 EFL learners at an Iranian institute	Positive
Hayati & Mohammadi (2009)	Iran	No real classroom (Secondary Ed.)	Task based instruction vs translation method in teaching vocabulary	40 secondary school students.	Negative
Hu (2013)	China	Real classroom (Primary and Secondary. Ed.)	TBLT implementation and its pedagogical implications	30 public school English teachers.	Positive
İlin, İnözü & Yunru (2007)	Turkey	Real Classroom (Primary Ed.)	Teachers' and learners' perception about tasks.	Students and teachers from 3 private school classes	Negative
Luo & Xing (2015)	China	Real Classroom (Secondary Ed.)	Teachers' perceived difficulties in TBLT implementation	47 secondary school English teachers	Mixed
Nguyen, Newton & Crabbe (2015)	Vietnam	Real Classroom (Secondary Ed.)	How teachers prepare learners to perform communication tasks.	9 English language secondary teachers.	Positive

Alwi (2015)	Malaysia	Real Classroom (Adult Ed.)	Language learning performance using engineering – based tasks via text chat	48 engineering students	Positive
Freiermuth & Huang (2015)	Taiwan – Japan	Real Classroom (Adult Ed.)	Promoting interaction through tasks based on online chats.	39 students divided in 9 small groups.	Positive
Park (2015)	Korea	Real Classroom (Secondary Ed.)	Teachers' and students' need analysis compared with the existing curriculum.	185 secondary EFL students and 12 EFL teachers.	Mixed
Darasawang (2015)	Thailand	Real Classroom (Adult Ed.)	Implementation of task-based materials to teach English in an undergraduate program.	Undergraduate students at KMUTT university	Positive
Widodo (2015)	Indonesia	Real classroom (Secondary Ed.)	Designing and implementing task – based materials at a secondary school.	3 EFL teachers and 30 students	Mixed
Butler & Zeng (2015)	China	Real Classroom (Primary Ed.)	Task – based assessment for young learners.	3 EFL teachers and their 6 th Grade students (24 students)	Mixed
Jeon & Hahn (2006)	Korea	Real Classroom (Secondary ed.)	Teachers' perceptions of task-based language teaching (TBLT) in a Korean secondary school context.	228 teachers at 38 different middle and high schools in Korea.	Mixed
Li (1998)	Korea	(Secondary Ed.)	Teachers perceptions of communicative-oriented language approaches	18 English language teachers	Negative
Lin & Wu (2012)	Taiwan	Real classroom (Secondary ed.)	Teachers' perceptions and understandings of TBLT and teachers' views on the feasibility of TBLT in the Taiwanese context.	136 English language teachers from 30 junior high schools in four counties in central Taiwan.	Mixed
McDonough & Chaikitmongkol (2007)	Thailand	Real classroom (Adult ed.)	Teachers' and learners' reactions to a task-based EFL course at a Thai university	35 first-year students EFL learner-participants. 13 EFL teacher-participants at a Thai University.	Positive
Meng & Cheng (2010)	China	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Students' perception of communicative tasks and the teacher's role in the classroom.	96 undergraduate students	Positive
Moore (2012)	Japan	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Focus on form in oral task-based interaction.	8 undergraduate EFL students	Negative
Mustafa (2010)	Malaysia	Real classroom (Secondary Ed.)	Teachers' levels of use of TBLT in the classrooms and the challenges encountered by the teachers in the adoption of the approach.	210 teachers participated in a survey and 8 teachers responded interviews.	Negative

Nahavandi & Mukundan (2012)	Iran	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Examination of teacher/learner interactions in task based settings and understanding teachers' perceptions about using task-based approach in reading comprehension classes	2 English language university level classes and 2 instructors of those classes.	Negative
Ooyoung (2013)	Korea	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Learners' perceptions towards TBLT	91 college students	Positive
Panahi (2012)	Iran	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Implementation of task-based assessment	32 EFL teachers 10 different EFL centers 470 adult students	Mixed
Park (2012)	Korea	Real classroom (Secondary Ed.)	Implementation of computer assisted TBLT lessons	30 Grade 7 students in middle school.	Positive
Pei (2008)	China	Real Classroom (Secondary Ed.)	TBLT implementation in China by school teachers	4 EFL teachers.	Positive
Rashtchi & Keyvanfar (2012)	Iran	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Form-focused instruction through TBLT	145 adults students and 36 English language teachers	Negative
Rohani (2011)	Indonesia	No real classroom (Adult Ed.)	The impact of TBLT oral communication on learning strategies	23 undergraduate students	Positive
Sasayama & Izumi (2012)	Japan	Real classroom (Secondary Ed.)	Effects of task complexity and pre-task planning on EFL learner's oral production	23 Japanese – L1 high school students	Mixed
Shintani (2011)	Japan	Real classroom (Secondary Ed.)	Comparison of TBLT and PPP implementation.	24 Grade 1 and 2 students from a private school	Positive
Shintani (2014)	Japan	Real classroom (Primary Ed.)	TBLT implementation in English FL beginner class.	15 six year old children.	Positive
Tabatabaei & Hadi (2011)	Iran	Real Classroom (Adult Ed.)	Teachers' perception of TBLT implementation in Iranian English classes	51 EFL teachers of a language institute.	Positive
Tinker Sachs (2009)	Hong Kong, China	(Primary Ed.)	Taking risks in task-based teaching and learning by combining TBLT and cooperative learning.	12 teachers and their students in 3 government primary schools.	Positive
Weaver (2012)	Japan	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Formative assessment in the TBLT cycle.	46 undergraduate business students	Positive
Xiangyang & Shu-Chiu (2013)	Taiwan	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	TBLT implementation in big-sized classes	103 first year university students	Positive
Xiao-yan (2011)	China	(Adult Ed.)	Adaptability of TBLT in college English teaching. Teachers' and students' perceptions of TBLT	Who were the participants?	Mixed

Vilches (2003)	Philippines	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	TBLT implementation in a EN 10 course.	An English language beginner course at a University in Philippines.	Positive
Zhang (2007)	China	Real classroom (Primary Ed.)	Implementation of TBLT by the stake holders in primary education in China.	3 English language primary teachers and 2 students from each teachers' class.	Negative
Zhang (2015)	China	Real classroom (Primary Ed.)	Exploration of TBLT through 3 cases studies	3 primary school teachers	Mixed
Zheng & Borg (2014)	China	Real classroom (Secondary Ed.)	Teachers' understanding of what TBLT is	3 secondary school teachers	Negative

EUROPE

Author and year	Country	Context	Focus of study	Participants	General evaluation
Malicka & Levkina (2012)	Spain	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Whether language proficiency mediates the perception of task difficulty and whether intended task complexity differences are reflected in the language production (fluency, accuracy, and complexity) of learners of different proficiency levels in English.	37 (20 advanced and 17 pre-intermediates) undergraduate students	Mixed
McAllister, Combes & Perret (2012)	France	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	EFL teachers' perceptions of a task-based learning program in a French University	14 teachers in a first year undergraduate business English program.	Positive
Genc (2012)	Turkey	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Effects of strategic planning on the accuracy of EFL learners' performance on oral and written narrative tasks.	60 English language university level students.	Mixed
Xhaferi & Xhaferi (2014)	Macedonia	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Teachers' perceptions and understanding of TBLT implementation and the effects of TBLT in the classroom.	20 University English language teachers.	Positive

NORTH AMERICA

Author and year	Country	Context	Focus of study	Participants	General evaluation
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Herrera (2012)	USA	Real classroom (Secondary Ed.)	Task-based assessment in Spanish language learning.	4 classes of Spanish. (2 control groups and 2 treatment groups)	Positive
Leaver & Kaplan (2004)	USA	(Primary and secondary Ed.)	Task-based instruction in U.S. government Slavic language programs	Czech, Ukrainian, Russian and English as FL instruction in primary and secondary schools.	Positive
Mora (2004)	USA	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Using media based tasks in teaching Spanish.	1 class at Yale university	Positive
Macias (2004)	California USA	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Task based instruction for teaching Spanish to professionals.	1 (Spanish for Specific Purposes) class in California.	Positive
Lai, Zhao & Wang (2011)	USA	Real classroom (Secondary Ed.)	Implementation of TBLT through an online course	38 students along with their four teachers	Positive

SOUTH AMERICA

Author and year	Country	Context	Focus of study	Participants	General evaluation
Arias, Roberto & Rivera (2013)	Colombia	Real Classroom (Adult Ed.)	Increasing critical thinking awareness through the use of task based learning approach.	Level 4 of English language course at a University	Positive
Chacón (2012)	Venezuela	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Enhancing oral skills through film-oriented activities in TBLT classes.	50 third year teaching education program students (undergraduate)	Positive
Córdoba (2016)	Colombia	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Implementing TBLT to integrate language skills in an EFL program at a Colombian university	6 students of a basic English class of 25 first year university students.	Positive
Dunne (2014)	Chile - Japan	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Telecollaboration task implementation.	36 Chilean students and 36 Japanese students	Positive
Quintanilla & Ferreira (2010)	Chile	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Communicative abilities in L2 mediated by technology in the context of task based teaching and cooperative learning.	12 students of a language institute	Positive

Galvis (2011)	Colombia	Real classroom (School level Ed.)	Identification of crossroads between the Common European Framework, TBLT, and the Colombian culture.	'a small group of pre-service teachers' (p. 204)	Negative
Herazo, Jerez, & Arellano (2009)	Colombia	Real classroom (School level Ed.)	Developing communicative competence in EFL classes	A class of Grade 6	Positive
Lopez (2004)	Brazil	Real classroom (Primary and secondary Ed.)	TBLT implementation to teach English in a Brazilian school.	A school in an English language program in Brazil	Positive
Morales & Ferreira (2008)	Chile	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Implementation of TBLT and cooperative learning.	24 first year English language pedagogy students	Positive
Peña & Onatra (2009)	Colombia	Real classroom (School level Ed.)	TBLT implementation to enhance oral language skills.	4 groups of students of Grade 7.	Positive
Pasos de Oliveira (2004)	Brazil	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Implementation of task-based assessment.	An English language teaching center	Positive

AUSTRALASIA

Author and year	Country	Context	Focus of study	Participants	General evaluation
East (2012)	New Zealand	Real classroom (Primary and secondary Ed.)	How TBLT is perceived by practitioners in terms of their understanding of it and level of practice.	19 modern FL teachers and 8 language advisors.	Mixed
East (2014)	New Zealand	Real classroom (School level Ed.)	Beginning teachers' understanding and perceptions of TBLT.	20 beginning modern FL teachers.	Positive
Rolin-Ianziti (2010)	Australia	Real classroom (Adult Ed.)	Task implementation in a French class	2 French language teachers at an Australian University.	Mixed

APPENDIX D

Research on teachers' perceptions of TBLT in FL contexts

ASIA

Source	Focus	Context	Conclusion
Adamson & Tong (2008)	Teachers' conceptions of TBLT and classroom practice, and the support provided by senior management	23 School administrators and teachers from 3 secondary schools. <u>Hong Kong</u> (Secondary Ed.)	TBLT can be more easily implemented if there is mutual collaboration between the school administrators and teachers.
Carless (2003)	Factors in the implementation of task-based teaching in primary schools	3 EFL primary teachers and their students (6 – 7 years old students) <u>Hong Kong</u> (Primary Ed.)	TBLT perceptions are varied and their implementation in classrooms still needs further work and research. Teachers show understanding of TBLT.
Carless (2004)	Exploration of how a task-based innovation was implemented in three primary school classrooms in Hong Kong.	3 Cantonese native-speaking English teachers in different primary school settings implemented the task-based innovation TOC in their classroom. <u>Hong Kong</u> (Primary Ed.)	TBLT implementation is perceived as complex due to: use of the mother tongue, classroom management or discipline problems, and the quantity of target language produced. Positive attitudes. Low understanding of TBLT.
Carless (2007)	Exploration of the suitability of task-based teaching in Hong Kong secondary schools.	11 secondary school teachers and 10 teacher educators <u>Hong Kong</u> (Secondary Ed.)	There is understanding of TBLT and although it is perceived as a positive language teaching method, it is seen as a difficult to implement approach.
Carless (2009)	Exploration pros and cons of TBLT and PPP from teachers' perspectives.	12 secondary school teachers and 10 teacher educators. <u>Hong Kong</u> (Secondary Ed. and Adult Ed.)	PPP is more appreciated among teachers, due to its facility to teach grammar. TBLT is however perceived as beneficial for students if it correctly implemented.
Chan (2014)	The implementation of TBLT in Hong Kong secondary classrooms, and how teachers' beliefs impact the implementation of the approach.	10 EFL secondary teachers. 5 of them with more than 10 years of experience. <u>Hong Kong</u> (Secondary Ed.)	Levels of implementation vary from fully implementation, partial and none. This variety is due to the different beliefs that they have of TBLT principles.
Chan (2012)	How TBLT is implemented in primary schools according to the way teachers manage linguistic, cognitive, and interactional demands of tasks.	4 EFL experienced teachers. <u>Hong Kong</u> (Primary Ed.)	There are significant qualitative differences in how teachers interpret TBLT and put it into practice.
Cheng & Moses (2011)	Teachers' perception of TBLT implementation in secondary schools in China	132 secondary school teachers <u>China</u> (Secondary Ed.)	TBLT is perceived as positive but with some external constraints such as class size and lack of confidence to evaluate the students' performance.

Deng & Carless (2009 and 2010)	Evaluation of TBLT implementation.	4 primary teachers and their students <u>Guangdong, China</u> (Primary Ed.)	Teachers do not implement TBLT accurately and they rather focus on form due to large class sizes and examination demands.
Hadi (2013)	Comparison of teachers' and learners' perceptions of TBLT	51 Iranian EFL teachers and 88 EFL learners at an Iranian institute <u>Iran</u> (Adult Ed.)	Most of the participants perceive positively the application of TBLT in English language classrooms, along with having a wide understanding of the approach.
Hu (2013)	School teachers' perceptions of TBLT.	30 public school English teachers. <u>Beijing, China</u> (Primary and Secondary Ed.)	TBLT is perceived as possible to be implemented approach in Chinese schools.
İlin, İnözü & Yunru (2007)	Teachers' and learners' perception about tasks.	1 EFL teacher and 3 EFL primary classes in Adana, Turkey. <u>Turkey</u> (Primary Ed.)	Teachers show understanding of task-based teaching principle, but their implementation does not follow the TBLT principles.
Jeon & Hahn (2006)	Teachers' perceptions of task-based language teaching (TBLT) in a Korean secondary school context.	228 teachers at 38 different middle and high schools in Korea. <u>Korea</u> (Secondary Ed.)	Overall findings of the survey show that the majority of respondents have a higher-level of understanding about TBLT concepts, regardless of teaching levels, but that there exist some negative views on implementing TBLT with regard to its classroom practice.
Li (1998)	Communicative-oriented language teaching approach and teachers' perceptions about it	18 English language teachers. <u>Korea</u> (Secondary Ed.)	The results show that in general teachers find the CLT challenging for several reasons and that western teaching approaches do not always are suitable for FL contexts.
Lin & Wu (2012)	Teachers' perceptions and understandings of TBLT and teachers' views on the feasibility of TBLT in the Taiwanese context, with a special focus on ELT in junior high schools.	136 English language teachers from 30 junior high schools in four counties in central Taiwan. <u>Taiwan</u> (Secondary Ed.)	It is considered a very good teaching approach but difficult to be implemented due to contextual and cultural constraints. In addition, teachers did not show much understanding of TBLT.
McDonough & Chaikitmongkol (2007)	Teachers' and learners' reactions to a task-based EFL course at a Thai university.	35 first-year students EFL learner-participants. 13 EFL teacher-participants at a Thai University. <u>Thailand</u> (Adult Ed.)	TBLT course encouraged learners to become more independent and addressed their real world academic needs.
Mustafa (2010)	Teachers' levels of use of TBLT in the classrooms and the challenges encountered by	210 teachers participated in a survey and 8 teachers responded interviews. <u>Malaysia</u> (Secondary Ed.)	Most teachers use TBLT but following the instructions given by the authorities. A small number has

	the teachers in the adoption of the approach.		initiative to conduct the class based on their own ideas.
Nahavandi & Mukundan (2012)	Examination of teacher/learner interactions in task based settings and understanding teachers' perceptions about using task-based approach in reading comprehension classes.	2 EFL teachers at Islamic Azad University <u>Iran</u> (Adult Ed.)	Teacher participants do not have a clear understanding of TBLT. In addition, their classes tend to be more grammar-focused.
Tinker Sachs (2009)	Taking risks in task-based teaching and learning by combining TBLT and cooperative learning.	12 teachers and their students in 3 government primary schools. <u>Hong Kong</u> (Primary Ed.)	Both teachers and students increased their use of the target language.
Tabatabaei & Hadi (2011)	Teachers' perception of TBLT implementation in Iranian English classes.	51 EFL teachers of a language institute. <u>Iran</u> (Adult Ed.)	Teachers had a wide understanding of TBLT principles and perceive it as a positive and beneficial language teaching approach.
Xhaferi & Xhaferi (2014)	Teachers' attitudes and understanding of Task-based language teaching (TBLT). Identify positive effects that TBLT have in the classroom and also the reasons why teachers decide to implement this approach in their instruction.	20 language teachers at South East European University (SEEU). <u>Macedonia</u> (Adult Ed.)	Teachers have a high level of understanding of TBLT. They also expressed positive views towards its' implementation in the classroom.
Xiao-yan (2011)	Adaptability of TBLT in college English teaching. Teachers' and students' perceptions of TBLT.	<u>China</u> (Adult Ed.)	Although it is perceived as positive, the lack of understanding of the principles makes its implementation difficult.
Zheng & Borg (2014)	The understandings of TBLT of three Chinese secondary school teachers of English and the implementation of TBLT in their lessons.	3 EFL secondary teachers <u>China</u> (Secondary Ed.)	Teachers did not show a wide understanding of TBLT. However, one of the teachers was willing adapt in order to follow the curriculum whereas the other two were more inclined to continue using a more grammar-focused approach.

AUSTRALASIA

Source	Focus	Context	Conclusion
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East (2012)	How TBLT is perceived by practitioners in terms of their understanding of it and level of practice.	19 modern FL teachers and 8 language advisors. <u>New Zealand</u> (Primary and secondary Ed.)	In general, TBLT is extensively used in New Zealand but the understanding of the approach is rather low.
East (2014)	Beginning teachers' understanding and perceptions of TBLT.	20 beginning modern FL teachers. <u>New Zealand</u> (Primary and secondary Ed.)	Overall TBLT is perceived as a positive approach in spite of challenges such as levels of understanding of, and receptivity to, innovation among more experienced colleagues, made a difference to successful task utilization.

NORTH AMERICA

Source	Focus	Context	Conclusion
Leaver & Kaplan (2004)	TBLT in U.S. government Slavic language programs	Czech, Ukrainian, Russian and English as FL instruction in primary and secondary schools. <u>United States</u> (Primary and Secondary Ed.)	Although TBI implies certain challenges, the benefits are more prominent and students are able to develop and improve their language skills.

EUROPE

Source	Focus	Context	Conclusion
McAlliste, Combes & Perret (2012)	EFL teachers' perceptions of a task-based learning program in a French University	14 EFL university teachers. <u>France</u> (Adult Ed.)	Teachers are willing to TBLT implementation but at the same time feel that this approach is complex in terms of workload.

APPENDIX E

Invitation Letter to EFL teachers to participate in interviews

Date:

Dear potential participant,

I am a doctoral student in Secondary Education at the University of Alberta and I am conducting my research on Chilean English language teachers' perception of Task-based language teaching (TBLT). As you participated in a survey based on this same topic and were willing to be part of the interview process for a more indepth conversation, I am contacting you to officially invite you to share your teaching experiences and more specifically, to share your perceptions of a novel language teaching approach such as TBLT.

Research of teachers' perceptions of TBLT in countries where English is not the first language, has shown that although TBLT, if well implemented, may be a beneficial approach to enhance students' language skills. However, the approach has also been perceived as challenging in some aspects. Considering that TBLT has also been mandated by the Chilean Ministry of Education and that it is being taught in teacher education programs, I consider highly relevant to learn about EFL teachers' perceptions of this pedagogical change.

If you decide to participate, you will be part of at least two face to face or Skype interviews at a mutually agreed time and private place of your choice at your school. Both interviews will be semi-structured and you will be asked a series of open-ended questions about your perceptions of TBLT. The interviews should last about 45 to 60 minutes and will be audio-taped, with your consent.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the research process, the interviews will be transcribed and send to you a few days after each interview, so that you verify the accuracy of the information and add some comments in case you consider it important.

Your participation is voluntary and you have the right to ask the recording to stop at any point during the interview. In case you do not want to continue being part of the research all the data collected until that point (recordings and/or transcripts) will be destroyed.

To keep your identity anonymous and your comments confidential you may choose a pseudonym for your name which will be use in the transcripts and in the thesis document. In addition, I personally will transcribe the interviews and only my project supervisor and I will have access to this information. Recordings and transcripts will be securely stored (in a locked cabinet in a locked room) at the University for a period of five years, at which time they will be destroyed. Please, keep in mind that there will be no monetary compensation for participating and that you may be asked for clarification or new information throughout the participation of this study. Please see the interview questions attached.

I will be happy to answer any questions you have about the study. You may contact me by email at herrera1@ualberta.ca to accept this research participation if you are interested. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
 Marcela Herrera Farfán
 Ed.D student
 University of Alberta
 Secondary Education,
 Second Languages

APPENDIX F

PIAs Prompts

Purpose of the interview:

My research interest is in the area/topic of Chilean EFL teachers' perceptions and understanding of TBLT in Chilean secondary classrooms. In our interview, I hope to learn something about how you experience/have experienced TBLT implementation in your English language classes.

There are two parts to the interview:

- Pre-Interview Activities (PIAs) and
- Open-ended Questions

Pre-Interview Activities (PIAs): About the person in general

Please **complete one or more** of the following visual representation activities and bring them to our interview. Please use pens, pencils and preferably colored markers on blank paper. We will begin our interview by having you show me and tell me about the ones you completed. There should be six to choose from

1.	Think of an important event in your life. Make two drawings to show what things were like for you before and after the event happened. Feel free to use thought bubbles or speech bubbles.
2.	Think of an activity that has been an interesting part of your life for a long time. Use colors to make three drawings that symbolize how your experience of that activity has changed over time. (Any activity is fine, for example, cooking, exercise, family care, reading, etc.)
3.	Think of an <u>important component in your life</u> (anything—a relationship with a particular person; cooking; sports; finances; exercise; family.) Make a timeline listing key events or ideas that <u>changed the way you have experienced this component</u> .
4.	Think of an activity that is important to you. Make two drawings showing a “good day” and a “not so good day” with that activity. Feel free to use thought bubbles or speech bubbles.
5.	Think of an activity that is very engaging for you. Use three colors to make an abstract diagram that expresses what it is like for you to do this activity.
6.	Draw a picture or diagram or map of a place that is important to you and use keywords to indicate the parts and perhaps what happens in each of the parts.

Pre-Interview Activities (PIAs): About the topic of the research

Also, please **complete one or more** of the following visual representation activities and bring them to our interview. Please use pens, pencils and preferably colored markers on blank paper. We will begin our interview by having you show me and tell me about the ones you completed.

1.	Imagine that someone is going to make a movie about your experience implementing TBLT in your class. Make a list of (or make drawings of) five important scenes that should be included in the movie.
2.	Think of your experience of being an EFL teacher. Make two drawings: one showing a good day as an EFL teacher and one showing a not so good day as an EFL teacher. Feel free to use bubbles or speech bubbles.
3.	Use colors to make three drawings that symbolize how your experience of being an EFL teacher has changed over time.
4.	Use three colors to make an abstract drawing that expresses how you have experienced implementing TBLT in your classes.
5.	Make <u>a timeline listing key events or ideas</u> that changed the way you have experienced being an EFL teacher.
6.	Make a list of 20 important words that come to mind for you when you think about implementing TBLT in your classes. Divide the list into two groups in a way that makes sense to you. (Please bring both the original list and the two smaller groups of words to the interview.)

APPENDIX G

Examples of Participants' PIAs

The drawings below are Aniel's responses to the following PIA:

- Think of your experience of being an EFL teacher. Make two drawings: one showing a good day as an EFL teacher and one showing a not so good day as an EFL teacher. Feel free to use bubbles or speech bubbles.



Figure 6. A good day as an EFL teacher.



Figure 7. A not so good day as an EFL teacher.

The following series of drawing is part of the Lina's response to the following PIA:

- Imagine that someone is going to make a movie about your experience implementing TBLT in your class. Make a list of (or make drawings of) five important scenes that should be included in the movie.

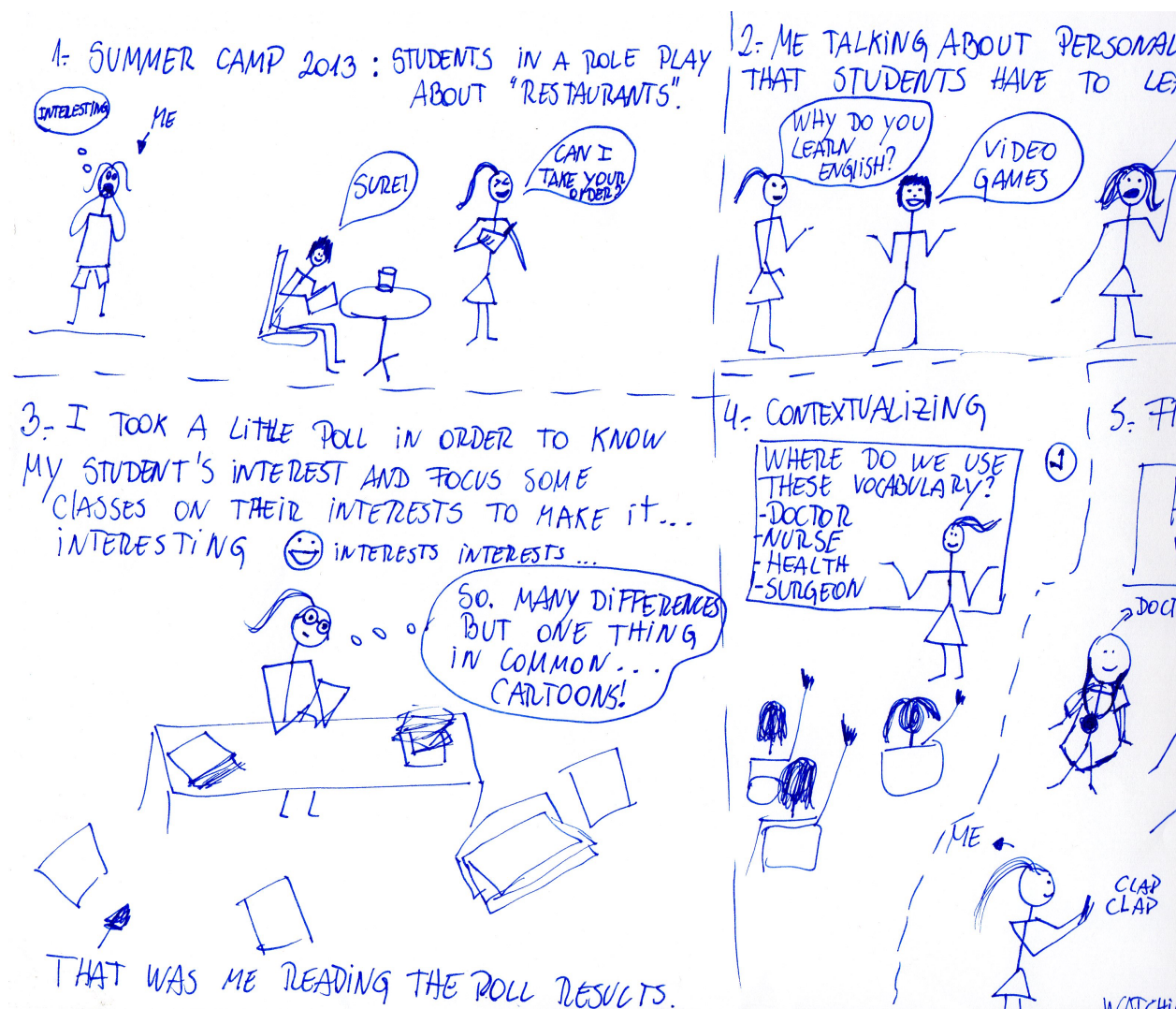


Figure 8. Five important scenes of the teacher implementing TBLT.

Drawing number is 3 Josue's response to the following PIA:

- Use colors to make three drawings that symbolize how your experience of being an EFL teacher has changed over time.

Drawing number 4 is Josue's response to the following PIA:

- Use three colors to make an abstract drawing that expresses how you have experienced implementing TBLT in your classes.

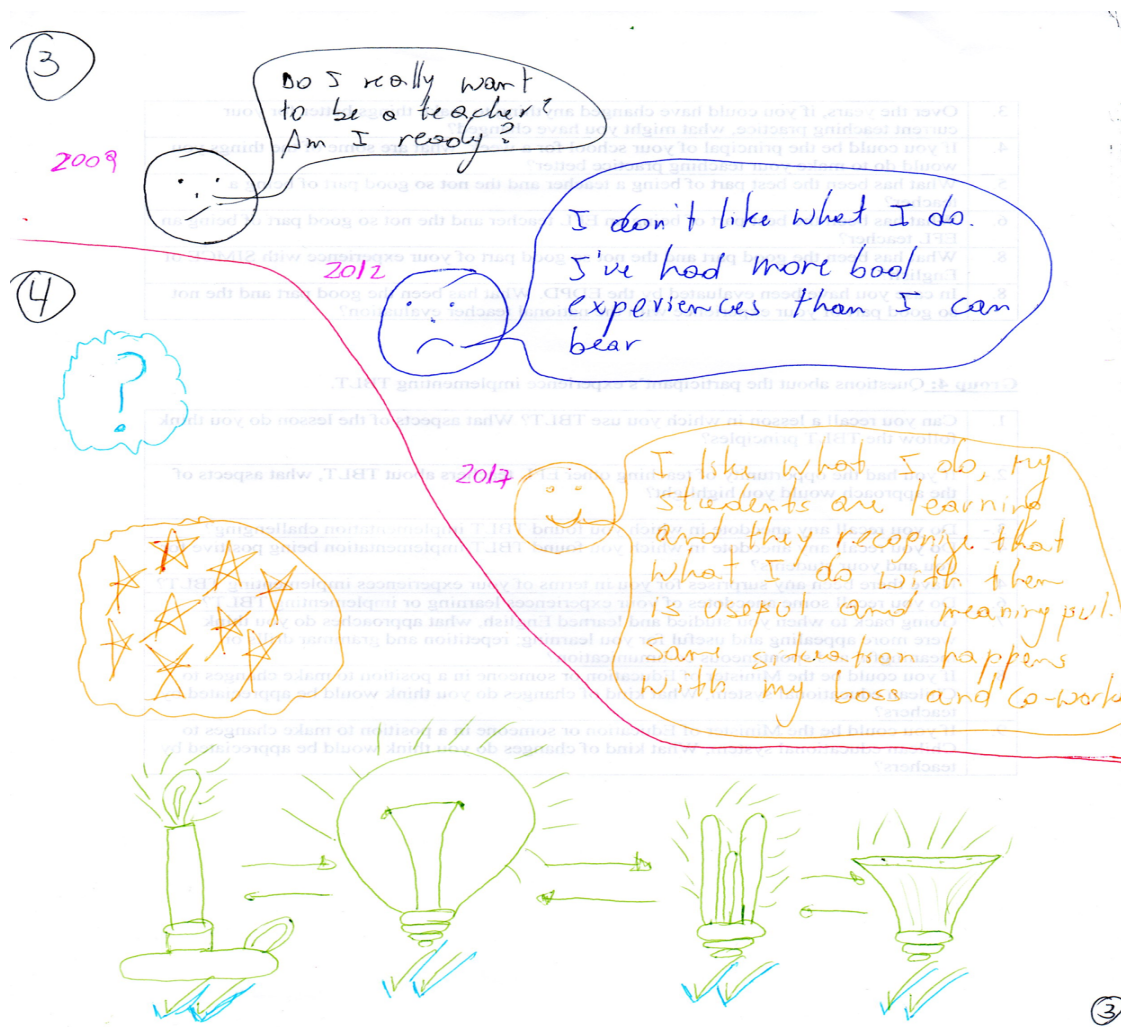


Figure 9. Drawing that symbolizes the teacher's experience being an EFL teacher.

APPENDIX H

Interview Protocol

Title of the study: EFL teachers' perceptions of TBLT in Chile

Participant's name:

Researcher: Marcela Herrera Farfán

Date:

Thank you for taking the time to be part of my research study and volunteering to participate in the interview component of the study. It is based primarily on open ended questions. Before we begin, let me review the ethical agreement of the research.

-As you already know this study seeks to understand EFL teachers' perception of Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in Chile. Thus it will be interesting to know about your own experience with this approach.

-The interview will be conducted through Skype and your responses will be audio recorded for accurate transcription. The written transcription will be sent to you so that you can have the opportunity of verifying if what is written is what you said and also of adding or deleting some information.

-Participation is voluntary and you can choose to stop the interview at any time; however, once you have responded to the questions we cannot retrieve your data.

-Although the interview process does not convey any risk for you, you might feel a little bit tired at some point. Thus you may take some minutes to rest if you consider it necessary.

-By participating in this interview you are confirming that you understand the procedures and give permission to use your answers in this research.

-Your answers will be confidential.

-There are no right or wrong answers.

-The data will be encrypted and stored in a locked and safe place at the University of Alberta for five years and then destroyed.

-Results of the study will be published in the researcher's dissertation, scholarly articles and/or for conference presentations.

-Your participation in this research project will benefit students, EFL teachers, and policy makers and possibly help to improve English education in Chile. The interview and study results may also be beneficial for you as you will be able to reflect on your teaching practice.

-For further information please contact the researcher Marcela Herrera Farfán at herrera1@ualberta.ca or her supervisor, Dr. Olenka Bilash at obilash@ualberta.ca.

-The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Research Ethics Office at (780) 492-2615.

Let's start with the questions:

How old are you?

What kind of school do you work in?

How many students do you have per class?

Which grades do you teach in (Elementary, junior high and/or high school)?

How long have you been an English language teacher?

Which pre-interview activities did you complete?

These questions are about the teacher's knowledge of TBLT

1.- Where did you learn about TBLT and when? (e.g. discuss your university and student teaching experience, PD experience)

2.- Please tell me or explain what TBLT is?

3.- According to your knowledge how would you define a 'task'?

4.- What place does grammar have in TBLT?

These questions are about the teacher's experience using TBLT

5.- Have you been able to implement TBLT? If so, Could you describe a lesson in which you used TBLT? How was it structured? What are some of the challenges and strengths you faced in implementing TBLT in the classroom? How was it received by the students? Please offer some examples.

6.- How often have you used TBLT?

These questions are about the teacher's opinion of TBLT

7.- Do you think our educational system (curriculum, administrators, teachers, students, and parents) is ready for a communicative approach such as TBLT? Why or why not? Please offer some examples.

8.- Tell me if TBLT could change EFL teaching in Chile.

9. According to your experience, what do you think are the main benefits that arise from TBLT implementation? Why?

10.- What do you think are the main challenges and obstacles when implementing TBLT? Why?

These questions are about your teaching practice

11.- In relation to your teaching practice, what do you give more importance to in your classes? Why? For example, enhance spontaneous communication, focus on grammar, that students develop accuracy, that students develop their fluency, that students are prepared for standardized tests such as SIMCE?

The following question invites you to reflect on English teaching practice in general

12.- Finally, what do you think are the main challenges that EFL Chilean teachers have today? And what are the main opportunities that EFL Chilean teachers have?

Thank you very much

APPENDIX I

Informed Consent Form

University of Alberta
 Department of Secondary Education
 Title: EFL Chilean teachers' perceptions of TBLT
 Investigator: Marcela Herrera Farfán
 Project Supervisor: Dr. Olenka Bilash

Consent form:

Thank you very much for your interest in participating in the interview process and being part of my doctoral research.

The study is designed by me, Ms. Marcela Herrera, doctoral student at the University of Alberta and its goal is to learn about Chilean English language teachers' knowledge and perceptions of TBLT implementation in Chilean school classrooms. This will be built from the researcher and EFL teachers' interviews.

Please read carefully the following and sign below and if you accept the term of this research, provide your signature at the bottom of this document.

I understand that:

- I may choose the time and place to respond to have the interviews.
 - There will be one or two interview sessions.
 - The interviews will be audio taped and transcribed by the researcher and sent to me within a two week period.
 - After the interviews I will be asked to read the transcripts to verify their accuracy.
 - When reviewing the transcripts, I can make some changes and/or add more information in case I consider it pertinent.
 - Although being part of the interviews does not convey risk I may feel tired for a while, but I can take some minutes to rest and then continue.
 - Participation is voluntary and I can choose to stop the interview at any time; however, once I have read and approved the transcription of the data, I cannot retrieve the data. Thus, by approving the transcripts and sending them back to the researcher, I am giving permission to use my answers in this research.
 - My answers will be confidential and will be anonymous.
 - The data will be encrypted and stored in a locked and safe place at the University of Alberta for five years and then destroyed.
 - Results of the study will be published in the researcher's dissertation, scholarly articles and/or for conferences presentations.
 - There will be no monetary compensation for participating.
- My participation in this research project will benefit students, EFL teachers, and policy makers and possibly help to improve English education in Chile. It may also be interesting for me to look back on my career and share reflections.

- This study is being conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Print Name Signature

For further information please contact the researcher or her supervisor, Dr. Olenka Bilash at obilash@ualberta.ca, Marcela Herrera Farfán at herrera1@ualberta.ca

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Research Ethics Office at (780) 492-2615.

APPENDIX J

NVivo 11 Screen Shots Examples

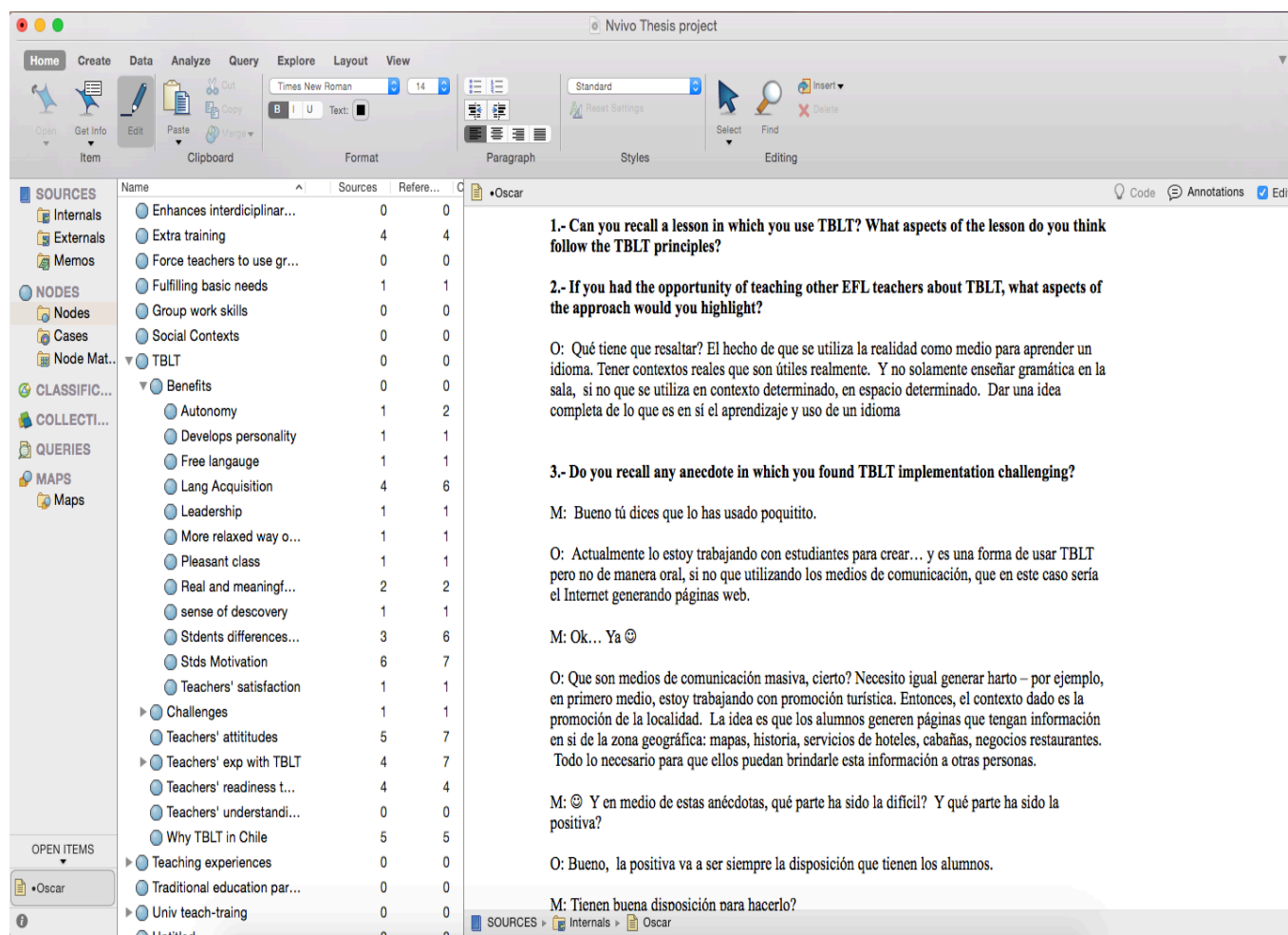


Figure 10. Screen shot of the first list of codes along with an extract of an interview transcription.

The screenshot shows the NVivo software interface. The left sidebar contains a hierarchical tree of nodes. The main window displays a list of codes with columns for Name, Sources, and References. The right pane shows a quote from 'Internals\Paula' under the code 'Students differences are celebrated'.

Name	Sources	References
Chile, low level of English	1	1
Chilean society	4	5
Educational system	0	0
Enhances interdisciplinar...	0	0
Extra training	4	4
Force teachers to use gr...	0	0
Fulfilling basic needs	1	1
Group work skills	0	0
Social Contexts	0	0
TBLT	0	0
Benefits	0	0
Autonomy	1	2
Develops personality	1	1
Free language	1	1
Lang Acquisition	4	6
Leadership	1	1
More relaxed way o...	1	1
Pleasant class	1	1
Real and meaningf...	2	2
sense of discovery	1	1
Stdents differences...	3	6
Autonomy	6	7
Teachers' satisfaction	1	1
Challenges	1	1
Teachers' attitudes	5	7
Teachers' exp with TBLT	4	7
Teachers' readiness t...	4	4
Teachers' understandi...	0	0
Why TBLT in Chile	5	5
Teachers' experiences	0	0

Students differences are celebrated

Summary **Reference**

J: Because, in the end, they know a lot, but they don't know how to express it, because they are not interested, and things like that. That has been like one of the things that TBLT has left to me when using it in the school. And the other thing is that it has helped me to realize that children have different abilities, as I told you on Friday. So, of course, uhm, you put them, for example, to do a play as a task, or create a sketch of something, or a personification of something, and they do it very well. 'Very well' from the point of view that they completed the task. Perhaps, the level of English is 'crap', but it doesn't matter, they do the task very well. So, that has been like the surprise, to see that there are kids who also have great things, but that sometimes one, as a teacher, you do not see them.

Internals\Paula
1 reference coded, 0.37% coverage

Reference 1: 0.37% coverage

P: Y a los que les va mal en las pruebas, por ejemplo, dibujan muy bien – descubrirlos en realidad. Eso me sorprende – como los voy descubriendo, como me doy cuenta de que puedo llegar a ellos de otra manera.

Internals\Paulina
1 reference coded, 0.21% coverage

Reference 1: 0.21% coverage

De hecho, ahí ellos sacan todo el talento para hacer filtros, colocan subtítulos, le ponen eh... cómo se llama cuando enchulan sus videos?... efectos especiales.

Figure 11. Screen shot of the first list of codes with some participants' quotes under the code 'Students' differences'.

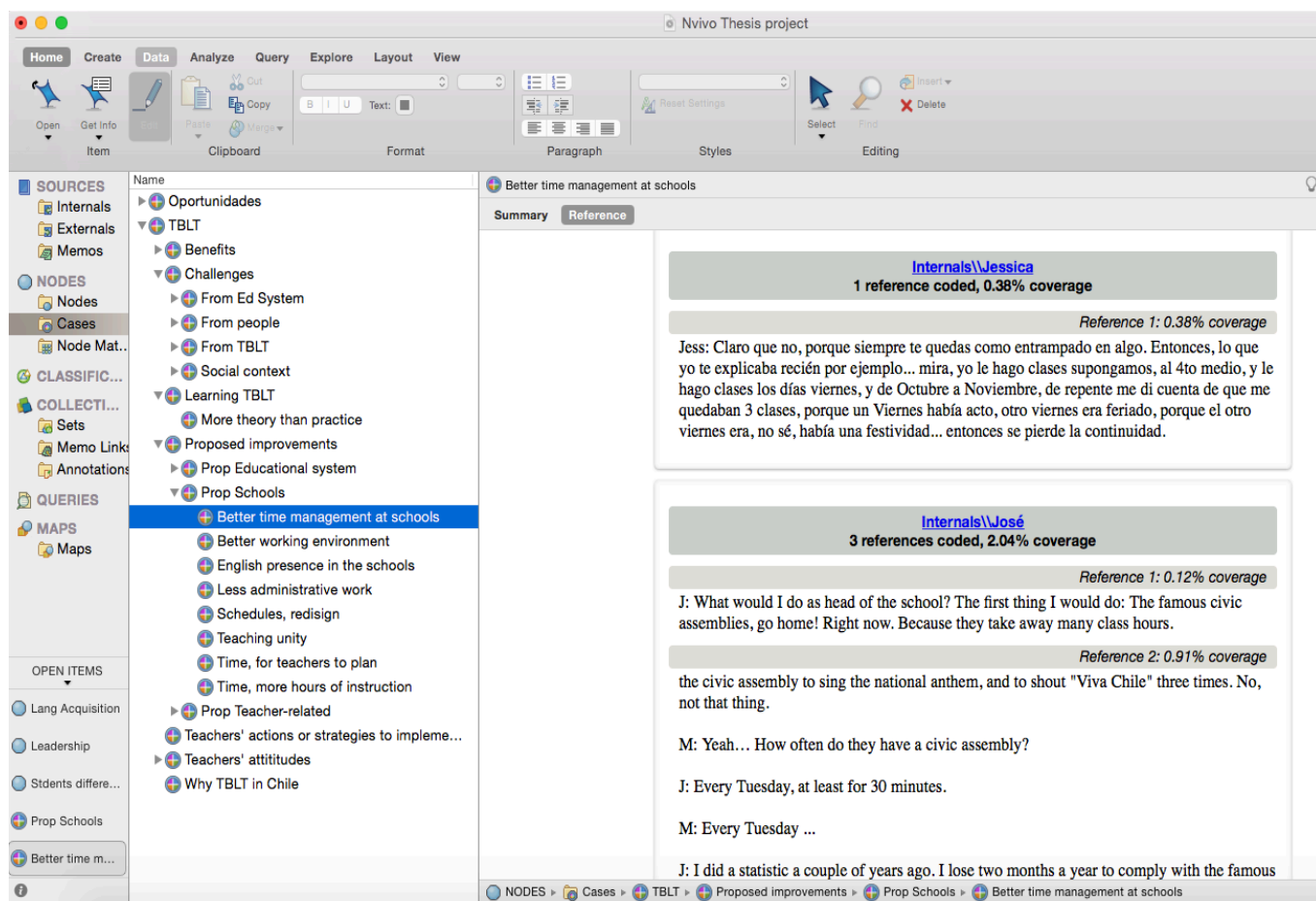


Figure 12. Screen shot of the second list of codes that aimed to respond to the research questions, along with some participants' quotes under the code 'Better time management at schools'.