Exploring a Professor's Learning During Teleworking: a Life Story

Explorando el aprendizaje de un profesor durante el teletrabajo: una historia de vida

Catalina Herrera Mateus †   Michael Stiven Ávila Rendón ‡

Juan Camilo Barragán Sarmiento §   Valentina Peña Cerquera ¶

Stefanny Nivia Parada ‖

Abstract

Teachers around the world have had to reinvent their work routines because of the COVID-19 pandemic. During that time, teachers were teleworking and this impacted their lifestyle, their way of teaching, their cognition, and even their health. This article aims to present the results of a narrative inquiry that explored a teacher's experiences while teleworking and how they fostered learning in different aspects of

†Universidad Santo Tomás. Correo: catalinaherrera41@hotmail.com. ORCID: 0000-0002-9703-8608.

†Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios. Correo: michael.avila@uniminuto.edu.co. ORCID: 0000-0003-1331-4853.

†Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios. Correo: juan.barragan@uniminuto.edu.co. ORCID: 0009-0006-2438-6245.

†Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios. Correo: valentina.pena@uniminuto.edu.co. ORCID: 0009-0004-9260-2371.

†Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios. Correo: stefanny.nivia@uniminuto.edu.co. ORCID: 0000-0003-2282-3270.

their life. The concepts of telework and experience as a form of learning were analyzed. An individual interview was used to collect the experiences of a female teacher pf bachelor's degree in Language Teaching. The personal account evidenced: first, that telework initially fostered emotions that altered the teacher's mental well-being, social and work life, and redefined her beliefs about teaching and technology; second, it enriched teachers' professional learning in how to use technology to communicate and design activities; third, interaction and collaboration were essential for developing professional knowledge and managing emotions. In conclusion, emotions and interactions during telework become sources of personal and professional learning and encourage the teacher to (re)evaluate her beliefs and teaching practice.

Keywords:

emotions, experience, digital competences, learning, teleworking, pandemic, virtual education

Resumen

Los docentes de todo el mundo han tenido que reinventar sus rutinas de trabajo debido a la pandemia de COVID-19. Durante ese tiempo, los docentes trabajaron desde casa, lo que afectó su estilo de vida, su forma de enseñar, su cognición e incluso su salud. El presente artículo tiene como objetivo presentar los resultados de una investigación narrativa que exploró las experiencias de una docente durante el teletrabajo y cómo estas fomentaron el aprendizaje en diferentes aspectos de su vida. Se analizaron los conceptos de teletrabajo y experiencia como forma de aprendizaje. Se utilizó una entrevista individual para recopilar las experiencias de una profesora de grado en Enseñanza de Lenguas. El relato personal puso de manifiesto: en primer lugar, que el teletrabajo fomentó inicialmente emociones que alteraron el bienestar mental, la vida social y laboral de la profesora, y redefinieron sus creencias sobre la enseñanza y la tecnología; en segundo lugar, que enriqueció el aprendizaje profesional de los profesores sobre cómo utilizar la tecnología para comunicarse y diseñar actividades; en tercer lugar, que la interacción y la colaboración fueron esenciales para desarrollar los conocimientos profesionales y gestionar las emociones. En conclusión, las emociones y las interacciones durante el teletrabajo se convierten en fuentes de aprendizaje personal y profesional y animan a la profesora a (re)evaluar sus creencias y su práctica docente.

Palabras clave:

emociones, experiencia, competencias digitales, aprendizaje, teletrabajo, pandemia, educación virtual.

Introducción

The COVID-19 pandemic radically changed the way of working, especially for a large number of teachers who were used to working on-site. These changes included working from home, developing personal skills, adapting their methodology, encouraging the use of Information and Communication technologies (ICTs) and thinking about teaching from a different perspective.

In Colombia, these changes began when the government through the Decree 457 (2020) announced a lockdown for all citizens to prevent infections and deaths caused by the coronavirus. That is why most workers were forced to telework unless there was one of the exceptions established in the decree. The Minister of Education (2020a) took measures to ensure the health of teachers and students and the continuity of the academic year. The measures included virtual teaching, the use of ICTs and collaborative tools to facilitate communication and the reorganization of the academic year. Moreover, the same Minister (2020b) suggested that all institutions had to implement strategies to reduce the curriculum, promote autonomy, and understand the dynamics of each student and family according to the current moment.

As a result, telework became the main method of work during 2020 and 2021. Although it has been implemented since the 1970s as a strategy during the oil crisis to reduce automobile use in the United Sates (Havriluk, 2010), in education, telework has been used especially in virtual or distance learning undergraduate and graduate programs.

Research on teachers and teleworking can be analyzed before and after the lockdowns. Before the emergency caused by COVID-19, a few studies analyzed this way of working in the educational field, especially at the university level. A couple of studies were found oriented to analyze the attitudes and aptitudes of teachers towards telework (Tapasco & Giraldo, 2016). They concluded that teachers would like to telework to evaluate and tutor, but not to teach. Other studies (Beauregard et al., 2019; Carmona et al., 2012; Mora, 2012) focused on proposing telework as a work alternative for teachers to enhance virtual education and develop new attitudes, knowledge and skills, and reduce work-life conflicts.

These findings showed that even for teachers who have always teleworked, teaching remotely becomes a great challenge because it requires the use of other resources and methodologies and the design of digital material that is not used in face-to-face classes. In many cases, teachers are not trained for this type of work, so teaching remotely becomes an agony.

In contrast, the number of studies conducted on telework during and after lockdowns increased drastically at all educational levels, but focused more on the negative consequences of telework (Bravo et al., 2022; Klapproth et al., 2020; López et al., 2021; and Naranjo, 2020). These include high levels of stress and technostress, work intensification, little time to rest, burnout, work-life balance and anxiety. In addition, attending meetings at any time, the use of their resources to create material and the lack of training in the use of digital resources (Cortés et al., 2023; and Soriano et al, 2022) make it difficult for teachers to telework during the months of the lockdown.

Other studies analyzed teachers' teleworking skills, such as planning, discipline and self-control (Medina et al., 2021), digital competence, the use of resources to develop online classes (Burbano et al., 2020; Trust & Whalen, 2021) and the design of material in virtual environments (Vásquez et al., 2022). It evidences that even though telework affected the mental health of teachers and altered their routines, it also contributed to enhance other skills and redefine their teaching work; however, the knowledge acquired and the competencies developed were mainly the result of the experiences and their own training; a little support was perceived by the institutions during the first moments of the lockdown.

In the Colombian context, the conclusions of teachers' teleworking were not different from the studies mentioned above. Velandia, et al, (2022) determined that the rapid adaptation teachers had to make to telework and develop their digital competencies impacted their emotions and mental health; evidenced by the fear, anxiety, and uncertainty teachers experienced when their routines were abruptly changed. However, Barragán and Calderón (2022) suggested that the pandemic taught teachers and institutions that combining telework and face-to-face work could increase teacher productivity in terms of research and development of didactic materials. Again, telework was not considered a good option for teaching.

For Londoño (2023), high productivity is also the result of the strengthening of personal skills such as autonomy, discipline, teamwork and assisted communication to have well-being and be effective during telework. In contrast, Burbano et al., (2020) concluded that teleworking affected the research productivity of teachers, as they have difficulties to have a balance between work, social, and personal life, and younger teachers developed digital competencies faster than older ones.

In general, teleworking is familiar in educational mainly in distance and virtual programmes since it was introduced before the COVID-19 pandemic; for most teachers, it was a new type of work with which they had to become familiar. The abrupt change forced teachers to adapt their way of teaching and working; as

a consequence, some of them suffered from mental or physical illnesses, especially older teachers who were not very proficient in the use of digital resources. However, teachers who managed to adapt quickly to telework increased their productivity, improved their ICT skills and strengthened their personal skills.

The results presented in the above studies come from mainly quantitative studies and presented a general picture of teachers teleworking during the COVID-19 pandemic, there is not much evidence of teachers' stories during this period that illustrated the experiences and how they coped with the emotions and situations experienced on different occasions of the pandemic. In this sense, the research question that arose from the situation described above was: what were the teachers' learnings from the experience of teleworking during the COVID-19 pandemic?

This article aims to narrate the experiences lived by a teacher of the bachelor's degree in Language Teaching at a private university in Bogotá while teleworking. This could contribute to understanding from the voice of the teachers the emotions and professional and personal learning that a new way of working entails. From the results, it is expected that institutions will design strategies to support teachers' telework in terms of ongoing training and mental support to maintain or increase productivity. Finally, it is expected to reveal how personal experiences become an incredible source of learning that contributes to teachers' cognition and performance.

Theoretical Framework

Teleworking

Teleworking is one of several work modalities. The term began to be used in the 1970s to refer to remote work from the office, primarily through telephone communication as a substitute for physical travel (Jackson & Van der Wielen, 1998), particularly during a time when fuel shortages limited car use.

Teleworking involves more than simply working away from the office; it requires specific conditions to ensure its effectiveness. Martínez (2010) and Osio (2010) define teleworking as a productive activity carried out from the employer's office, requiring a computer and ICT tools for communication and task delivery. Along the same line, the Colombian Labor Minister (2012) describes teleworking as a form of organization, involving the performance of remunerated activities under an employment contract through the use (ICT) and technological devices. This means that the employee does not need to be physically in an office, but require the appropiate devices, a good internet connection, and knowledge about how to use the different tools to communicate and develop the work successfully. Although the Colombian Labor Minister in 2022 regulated the conditions, functions, and responsibilities that employers and employees must have when a remote work contract is signed (Decree, 555, 2022), the decree does not include specific provisions regarding the type of telework, training, or mental health support that employees, particularly educators, should receive.

Teleworking can be classified into three categories. According to the Colombian government (2008) and Martínez (2010), teleworking may be autonomous, mobile, or supplementary. The key distinction among these types lies in how frequently the employee is required to go to the office. In the case of teachers, during the lockdown period, their telework was predominantly autonomous, as they worked from home, rarely visited schools or universities, and relied on ICTs to carried out their duties.

Ramos et al. (2020) and Wang et al. (2021) affirm teleworking is flexible, as it can be done from any location, allows for variable working hours, and contributes to improved job performance and autonomy, provide that the employee organizes their schedule and applies self-management strategies to fulfill their responsibilities. Velásquez and Vera (2018) argues that teleworking contributes to an assessment based on results, while Raiborn and Butler (2009) points out that teleworking helps reduce employees' expenses,

pollution, and social issues. Since employees work from home, they save spend money on transportation and food, limit the use of vehicles, and reduce social contact to those they live with.

Some drawbacks of teleworking have also been identified. Rainbow and Butler (2009), and Pérez and Díaz (2021) concluded that teleworking increases stress, extends working hours, and creates difficulties in disconnecting, which may negatively affect mental health. Velásquez and Vera (2018), Wang et al. (2021), and Toscano and Zappalá (2020) found that teleworkers often experience social isolation, refused communication, and increased difficulties in interacting with colleagues.

Although Colombian regulations stipulate that employees must receive a subsidy for internet connection (Decree 555, 2022), in the case of teachers, support must go beyond internet connection. Teachers also require access to educational resources and applications to design instructional materials, many of which are paid, or offer limited functionality in their free versions.

Overall, teleworking is a work modality that requires employers to provide the necessary tools and training to enhance teleworkers' skills, such as the use of ICT for communication and the implementation of autonomy strategies, to ensure success. At the same time, companies must implement strategies to mitigate potential negative mental and physical effects, recognizing that teleworkers may work longer hours and struggle to balance professional responsibilities with personal life.

Learning

Learning cannot be understood merely as the "act of gaining knowledge" (Banner & Delbanco, 2017 p. 7), since it does not occur only when the learner listens to an expert in formal educational settings. As Jarvis (2009) suggest, learning is a state that often happens naturally and sometimes even unnoticed, whether in formal or informal context. In this sense, learning takes place when new experiences emerge and becomes evident when the acquired knowledge is applied to solve different situations.

Kolb (1984) goes beyond the simplistic notion of learning as the accumulation of knowledge and instead defines it as a process in which knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. In other words, learning is not static; rather, it is enriched and reshaped by each experience, thought, emotion, and perception. From this perspective, learning is inseparable from experience, and it becomes meaningful when the knowledge, emotions and insights gained can be applied to future challenges.

Jarvis (2009) states that learning involves both body and mental experiences that are transformed into emotions, knowledge, or practice. This suggests that not only knowledge can be acquired from learning activities, but emotions are also learned and they can contribute to making decisions and acting in a certain way in future experiences. Therefore, learning can be considered as a combination of social, mental, and emotional experiences that shape how individuals think and act. However, not all experiences necessarily lead to learning unless they hold personal significance for the individual. This means they have a positive effect when the person is able to interpret a particular context making use of the emotions and learning acquired previously.

Based on the above, teleworking emerged as a valuable source of learning. Teachers lived through a range of personal and professional experiences during different phases of the COVID-19 pandemic, which enriched their knowledge, transformed their teaching practices and beliefs, and strengthened them mentally.

Method

This research was constructed within a qualitative paradigm aimed at exploring and understanding lived experiences (Creswell, 2010), in this case, the professor's experiences during teleworking in pandemic times.

These experiences were collected through a narrative inquiry, which seeks to explore and conceptualize lived experiences through storytelling (Creswell, 2010).

This narrative study followed Creswell's model (2010). First, the phenomenon, experiences during teleworking, was identified. Then an individual was selected to share, understand, and analyze their teleworking experience. Afterward, personal narratives were collected, and the reconstruction of the story began. In this stage, the researchers aimed to describe the story, analyze the themes that emerge, and identify the different times of the story, the place, and the characters. Once the story was reconstructed, it was returned to the participant to be analyzed and verify the experiences written. Figure 1 summarizes the stages of this narrative study.
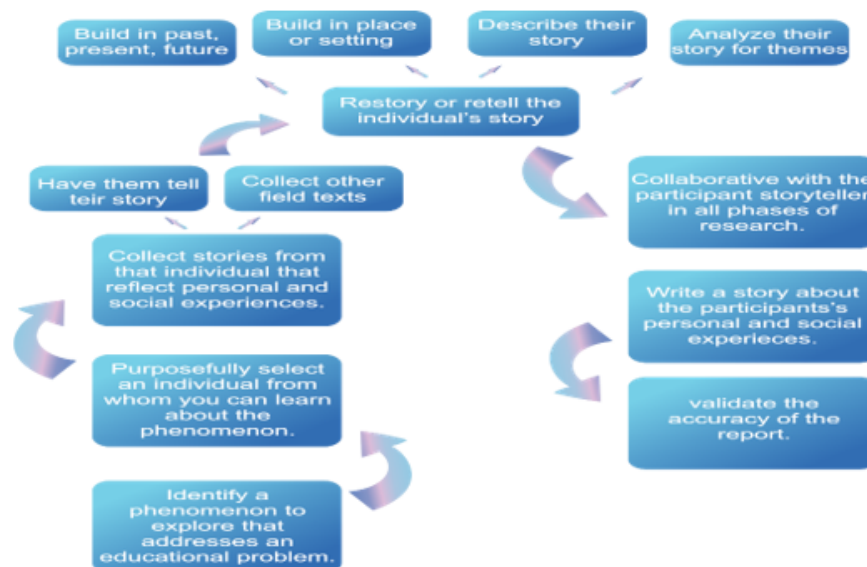

Figure 1. *Narrative research design*
Fuente: model taken from Creswell (2010).

Data Collection Instruments: Personal narratives

Personal narratives are an oral technique used to recount personal experiences through the construction of stories that follow a temporal sequence of events (Labov & Waletzky, 1997). In this study, the personal narrative was collected through an individual interview consisting of 34 questions focused on the teacher's experiences during teleworking. The interview was conducted in Spanish to ensure the teacher could describe and explain deeply all the emotions and experiences lived during teleworking. Table No. 1 shows some of the questions asked.

Section	Questions
Personal information	What is your name? Where do you live? Who do you live with? Do you live in a house or in an apartment?
Beginning of teleworking	When the university asked you to telework, how would you describe the learning process of teaching remotely?
During teleworking	After teleworking for almost a year, what new learnings related to work, family relationships, and emotions, could you name? describe them
End of teleworking	If you compare your classes at the beginning and at the end of teleworking. What main changes could you mention?

Table 1. *Personal Narratives*
Note: example of the questions asked during the application of personal narratives
Source: Own Creation

Sampling

The research was carried out with two teachers from the bachelor's degree in Language teaching. However, in this article, only one professor's narrative will be described and analyzed. A consent form was signed by the participants; it specified the objective of the interview, the method of recording, and the number of sessions in which the interview would be carried out. The form also clarified that participation was voluntary, that pseudonyms would be used in all reports, and that the information collected would be used exclusively for research purposes.

Participant

Professor Johanna is 49 years old, single, and lives alone in the western part of the city. She holds a degree in Philology and Languages, a specialization in Translation, and a master's degree in Literature. She has more than 25 years of teaching English. Johanna has spent the last six years working in the bachelor´s degree program, where she teaches English, Portuguese, didactics, and literature. Additionally, she has guided pre-service teachers during the teaching practicum and is the leader of the students' support area in the program.

Several aspects of Johanna's lifestyle are worth highlighting. Until recently, she was not fond of technology. She replaced her old cellphone with a smartphone recently, her internet connection at home was through the telephone line, and she saved all the information in a USB stick. She loved working with practitioners and listened to students to help them with their academic and/or personal issues.

Data Analysis

The personal narratives were collected during the first semester of 2022, shortly after professors returned to on-site classes. Two interview sessions were conducted to collect the information. The sessions were recorded and saved to a drive, then transcribed into a Word document and analyzed using Atlas.Ti.

During the analysis, the setting, characters, and the order of the events were identified. Once the narrative structure was established, codes related to experiences were extracted from the interview and grouped into similar categories. As a result, three main themes were identified: 1. Experiences that promote emotional learning; 2. Experiences that promote professional learning, and 3. Experiences that promote collaborative learning.

Results

The beginning of Johanna's narrative

This story began on March 12th, 2020, when the Colombian government declared a sanitary emergency through Decree 547, and nationwide lockdown became mandatory. At that moment, Johanna was a full-time teacher at the bachelor's degree in Language Teaching, responsible for didactic, literature and research courses.

Johanna was living alone in a small apartment in the western part of the city. She was not particularly fond of using technology. As a result, she did not own a smartphone, only a very old cellphone capable of making and receiving calls. At home, she used an ooutdated modem that required monthly recharges. So, the speed of the internet was slow, and as she did not work too much from home, it was not necessary to have a smartphone or a reliable Wi-Fi connection before teleworking.

Experiences that promote emotional learning

When the University instructed professors to work from home, Johanna was surprised, as it required her to change her working style; This shift involved moving from the university office to her home and using her own resources to plan and teach remote sessions. She expressed that she was not emotionally or mentally prepared for such abrupt changes: "it was a difficult process, primarily because neither I nor anyone else expected it. I didn't even have internet at home since I did everything at the university, often working late there, so having internet at home wasn't necessary". (Johanna's Interview, 12 June 2022).

Johanna also felt shocked and frustrated, as she was neither fond of technology nor skilled in using ICT tools for teaching. Abruptly having to change her beliefs about teaching, without any prior training, caused her to feel overwhelmed: "I am not good with technology, and for me, it was a hard shock because I had to learn many new things, adapt to various changes, and start from scratch. This transition was quite challenging." (Johanna's Interview, 12 June 2022).

As a result, she chose not to work during the first few days and moved to her sister's apartment, both to avoid feeling alone and to have internet access while she installed it in her home.

> Despite the restrictions, I had to take my bags and moved to live with my sister because I did not have a good internet connection at home, so I could not work from there. that was the first major change I had to face (Johanna's Interview, 12 June 2022).

This first part of the story revealed that, at the beginning of teleworking, Johana experienced emotions of uncertainty, as she was unprepared for the unexpected changes that pushed her out of the comfort zone. Her long-held beliefs about teaching and working were suddenly shaken, and new knowledge began to take shape. in other words, emotions contributed to the (re)construction of Johanna's cognition.

Started living with her sister was not an easy process, considering she had lived alone for a long time; so, sharing the apartment with her sister made her restate her routine and habits so that at the end of the second week, she felt anxious and depressed:

> That was a difficult change because I was used to live alone, and my sister too. So, living together was challenging and I felt scared. Even though we were busy and each one respected the space and customs After two weeks of lockdown, I felt depressed and anxious because it was not clear how much time it would take. The mayor had announced the lockdown would last 5 months more if the deaths and infection rates would not decrease. (Johanna's interview, 12 June 2022).

As time went on, she learned how to cope with those negative emotions by staying active and connecting more with her relatives and colleagues.

> Fortunately, my sister's support helped me to overcome those emotions, because I could not do it alone. My family was also a great support. Before the lockdown, I did not usually keep in touch with them, but from that moment on, we became closer and began to look out for each other. For example, we did a cooking contest and shared the dishes' photos in a WhatsApp group. That contributed to improve the communication with my parents and brother, and now we are closer and pay more attention to my parents' health. (Johanna's interview, 12 June 2022).

This excerpt of Johanna's story also reveals that her beliefs and skills regarding technology began to change. At that point, technology became an essential tool for communication, and she started to explore its multiple uses.

The working conditions during teleworking also had emotional impact on Johanna. On one hand, she felt frustrated because the institution did not provide training to use ICT tools, clouds, video conferencing apps, and productivity applications for planning and teaching. On the other hand, she felt disillusioned with the institution for failing to offer adequate resources or show concern for teacher's mental health conditions.

> However, I did not receive support from the institution in any way. They only checked if we were working, how we were teaching, what resources we were using, and if students had internet access or computers for the remote classes, but they never asked about teacher´ mental health or weather our working conditions were adequate. (Johanna's interview, 12 June 2022).

Fortunately, she received support from her colleagues and supervisor; they guided her in using basic digital tools to plan her lessons and allowed her to take some time off to manage her emotions, adjust to working from home, and adapt her teaching beliefs to the new reality.

> The first days of teleworking were overwhelming, as I did not know how to make video calls, I felt desperate. Fortunately, some close colleagues offered me help to do that. Luckily, the program's director and coordinator listened to all my concerns and supported me by giving me time off or extending deadlines for my duties. (Johanna's interview, 12 June 2022).

This part of Johanna's story highlights the importance of institutional support for teachers, not only in terms of meeting assigned working hours, but also regarding access to resources, training and mental health support. When there is support, it is easier to adapt to the abrupt working changes, and deal with the emotional burden that teleworking might produce.

Fortunately, those negative emotion were experienced only a couple of weeks. Once Johanna had the adequate resources to work (a good internet connection and PC) her cognition was enriched with re-stated beliefs about the use of technology, and knowledge about basic tools for teaching remotely. Also, her levels anxiety, uncertainty and frustration decreased thanks to free time activities she started to do. "After a

couple of weeks, I could control my anxiety and depression by implementing breathing exercises and walking daily, so I could telework quietly and effectively. (Johanna's interview, 12 June 2022).

Experiences that promote professional learning

Johanna found it difficult and frustrating to teach remotely at the beginning of teleworking, as all her experience consisted of teaching on-site using paper activities or power point presentations: "I did not know anything about ICT, when I started teleworking. I could not make video calls or arrange meetings in Teams; I just knew how to upload workshops in the virtual classroom." (Johanna's interview, 18 June 2022).

The shift to a new scenario where the use of ICT was essential forced her to learn new ways of planning and designing activities. Initially, she focused on learning how to use technology for communicative purposes. However, changing the planning methods she had used for years required time, which impacted her personal life.

> My lack of knowledge using ICT affected my daily schedule in the first few months; I spent too much time setting up video calls and workshops, uploading or downloading information from the cloud, and searching for apps to support assignments. I used to work more than 12 hours, sleep only 5 hours each night, and had not free time to enjoy my hobbies. However, as soon as I became proficient in using ICT and apps for remote classes, I was able to find a balance between my personal and professional life. (Johanna's interview, 18 June 2022).

Once Johanna learned how to use technology for communication, she moved to the next level. She began designing online activities to support her teaching and encouraged students to use applications to present their knowledge and understanding in new ways. As a result, she built new pedagogical knowledge and increased student engagement in her classes.

> I had to reconsider the type of activities students did and how they submitted them as well because I could not assign only workshops to upload in the virtual room. As a result, I learned to use different apps in which students present their assignments in different formats, such as videos, Padlets, etc. I also learned to store information in the cloud, use breakout rooms, and plan remote lessons. (Johanna's interview, 18 June 2022).

This excerpt illustrates Johanna's early attempts to innovate in the classroom and adapt her teaching beliefs and practices to the demands of teleworking. It could be said that teleworking offered her an opportunity to develop new skills and explore areas that would not be explored if Johana had continue working on-site.

Experiences that promote collaborative learning

Most of the pedagogical and didactical knowledge Johanna acquired during telework was thanks to the interaction and collaboration of her sister and co-workers who were aware of the difficulties she had using ICTs. During the first weeks of teleworking, collaboration was more evident as she was trying to learn how to teach in a remote setting. Thanks to her sister, she learnt the basics of using ICTs and technology to communicate with her students: "during those first days, my sister taught me how to upload and share information from the cloud (Johanna's interview, 12 June 2022).

Johanna also needed to use Zoom, Blackboard and Microsoft teams to teach and participate in the program's meetings. Therefore, during the following weeks she was trained by another colleague to use those communication platforms: My colleagues knew I had some difficulties, and they wanted to help me; some of

the said "come to my house and I told you" or "let's make a video call" (Johanna's interview, 12 June 2022). "One of my colleagues was looking out for me. We had a video call, and she explained to me how to do the classes. During that call I learned a lot and I felt calm since then" (Johanna's interview, 18 June 2022).

This part of Johanas' story shows that meaningful learning occurs when it comes from interactions with others. In this sense, it is very important to foster communities where teachers can share experiences and knowledge to nurture each other's cognition. This does not mean that institutions do not have to train teachers in the use of ICTs; on the contrary, they should provide spaces to share experiences and explore new and updated applications and resources for teaching.

The End of Johanna's Narrative

Despite all the difficulties and challenges Johanna experienced during the first months of teleworking, the experiences she had helped her to get used to teleworking and teaching remotely. The following months were a satisfactory experience, as she learned how to teach using remote teaching methodologies, and how to use technology for communication purposes and to design digital resources. In an interview, Johanna said:

> It was easy for me to telework in 2021. I got used to working from home and teaching remotely. For example, I learned to share materials, make groups in teams, and so on. That showed me that it does not matter how old I am, I must be open to new and innovative experiences and learnings, and my students have been essential in it. They have taught me different applications to design activities (Johanna's interview, 18 June 2022).

Discussion and Conclusions

This study aimed to narrate a teacher's experiences while teleworking and how they contributed to personal and professional learning. Excerpts from Johanna's narration evidenced that work and personal experiences trigger emotions and feelings that need to be understood and expressed to increase job satisfaction and motivation. Hernández (2020) and Madrid et al. (2020) concluded that when employees properly manage their emotions, they make better decisions, encourage work-life balance and face challenges more effectively. As a result, employees feel satisfied with their work and obtain better results.

Izarra and Hirsch (2023) concluded that some critical conditions such as working conditions, resources and teaching environment during the pandemic affected teachers' job satisfaction and mental health. These findings coincide with Johanna's narrative where the situations affected her mental well-being, social relationships and work life due to permanent academic stress to fulfill her responsibilities. It can be said that most of these conditions are the result of the lack of institutional support, as universities were not prepared provide working conditions that support teleworking and distance learning.

The pandemic and teleworking presented an opportunity for teachers to adapt quickly to the new circumstances and become resilient by developing innovative teaching strategies, leveraging digital tools, and fostering flexibility in their instructional approaches in a short time. However, Hirsch (2023) and Negrete et al. (2023) suggest institutions must provide tools and training to achieve rapid adaption and resilience. Without institutional support, teachers may face significant challenges in maintaining long-term effectiveness in digital and remote learning environments.

Regarding emotions, they are a fundamental part of a teacher's identity and beliefs, as they allow them to reflect on their practice in terms of what skills or methods they need to be improve and how to navigate through difficulties and maintain engagement in their work. Along these lines, Jones and Kessler (2020) concluded that emotions such as frustration and stress during the pandemic forced teachers to reconstruct

their beliefs about teaching and technology, and to learn about ICTs as a support for their teaching roles. This means that negative emotions are also essential to (re)construct beliefs and professional development.

Teleworking was an opportunity to evaluate and reframe teachers' long-held beliefs about teaching. Although redefining beliefs is not an easy task as they are part of the teacher's cognition, Johanna's story demostrates that experiences and critical incidents can powerfully influence teachers' beliefs (Borg, 2018; Mateus, et al, 2021; and Saadati, et al, 2021) and social interaction becomes experiences in learning (Johnson & Golombek, 2011).

Teleworking is also an opportunity to develop and strengthen their digital competence. Izarra and Hirsch (2023) and Esteve, et al. (2022) state that the pandemic and telework accelerated the need for teachers to develop digital competences, moving from the level of merely using digital tools to the level of designing inclusive and innovative learning experiences in which they could use more complex applications and support students with more sophisticated tools. However, being digitally competent could increase work time because designing learning experiences using ICT for a distance or virtual modality requires investing more time searching for and learning how to use digital tools. Barja and Gallardo (2021), Izarra and Hirsch (2023) and Orrego (2022) also concluded that the process of adapting to online teaching and the need to develop digital tools caused teachers to experiencet work overload and reduce their free time.

In this sense, this study agrees with Barragán and Calderón (2022) who affirm that teleworking did not significantly increase teaching productivity, but it had an impact on those teachers who did research during that time, because they were able to manage their time and increased their academic production. In this sense, it is necessary the institutions design policies that increase the productivity of teachers without affecting their mental and social life; so, combining on-site and telework might impact teachers' research production.

In conclusion, retelling Johanna´s story evidenced the difficulties teachers had to deal with their emotions during telework, if they were not prepared to work from home, teach remotely, change their daily routine or live in different conditions never imagined. Nevertheless, experiencing that number of emotions allowed teachers to find opportunities to explore new fields and increase their working hours, as they spent more time looking for new teaching strategies and designing innovative learning experiences.

Johanna´s story also revealed that although the teachers lacked ICT skills, the social interactions allowed her to acquire new knowledge and apply it in the activities and resources created for the classes. It shows that teleworking contributed to the teachers' pedagogical and didactic knowledge and redefined their identity as language teachers.

Nevertheless, the teachers' lack of knowledge about methodologies and material for distance or virtual teaching affected their mental health and daily life, which turned teleworking into a stressful and emotional experience lived at the beginning of the pandemic. Therefore, it is very important to train teachers to manage emotions in stressful or new circumstances. Even though educational institutions offer psychological services, they are usually offered to students, so teachers do not have access to professionals who can guide them in managing their stress or simply listen to them.

The above findings contribute to understanding how appropriate working conditions are required in terms of mental support, training and resources from institutions are to feel that teachers can deal with different teaching and working modalities. In that sense, it is possible for teachers to change to a more positive attitude towards teleworking, contribute to increase teaching productivity and develop new skills that would be applied in different scenarios.

In addition, educational institutions should design ongoing professional programs to enrich teachers' knowledge of active methodologies, the use of ICTs and Artificial intelligence. These programs should

include networks in which teachers have the opportunity to share their experiences and learn from others. In this way, support networks create more active learning and contribute to the construction of new beliefs about language teaching. Finally, the results conclude that experiences and interaction with other members of the academic community encourage teachers to reflect on what they believe and reaffirm their identity as teachers. In this way, a real change in their teaching practices becomes visible, as new resources and methodologies are used, and it does not matter how old the teacher is.

Although the narrative revealed interesting and relevant information about teleworking, there were some limitations during the research. Firstly, since the researchers were not very close to Johanna, as they had not had any classes with her, it was quite demanding to make her feel confident to answer personal questions during the interview. To overcome this problem, it was necessary to schedule some previous appointments with the teacher, so that she would feel more confident and the hierarchical student-teacher relationship was set aside so that during the interview she would open her mind and heart.

The second constraint was the time it would take for the personal narrative, since as the researchers prepared questions to raise the situations experienced by Johanna during almost two years, it would be quite long to ask all the questions in a single interview. Consequently, the interview was conducted at two different times and was divided into a few sections, so that Johanna would not feel tired and would provide all the necessary details.

Future research should focus on three areas; first, it would be recommended to explore how teaching remotely was experienced in rural and urban areas to understand how teachers and students dealt with the lack of connectivity and resources, what they learned from that experience, and how their beliefs and identity were reconstructed. On the other hand, knowing students' experiences and learning during remote classes from a narrative perspective would provide insight into their emotions, difficulties, and learning that teachers could use to understand students' behaviors and make changes in their practice. Third, further research could focus on analyzing how teachers' cognition and practices may have changed after teaching remote classes and whether their re-built ideas and beliefs are evident in their face-to-face teaching, as some teachers have decided to return to their old practices once they returned to face-to-face classes.

In general, having teachers move to new working and teaching scenarios forces them to live emotions and learning experiences that enrich their pedagogical and didactic knowledge, and to reflect on what they believe and who they are as teachers. As a result of this learning, teachers can transform their way of dealing with emotions and their practices into ones that use a wide variety of resources to engage and motivate students to learn.

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Reseña de autores

† Directora del programa Licenciatura en lenguas extranjeras inglés, Universidad Santo Tomás.

‡ Licenciado en idioma extranjero inglés de la Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios. Docente del instituto de Lenguas American School Way y miembro del semillero de investigación Lengua teachers and identity.

§ Licenciado en idioma extranjero inglés de la Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios. Docente de la academia de idiomas Smart. Miembro del semillero de investigación Lengua teachers and identity.

¶ Licenciada en idioma extranjero inglés de la Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios. Miembro del semillero de investigación Lengua teachers and identity.

‖ Licenciada en idioma extranjero inglés de la Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios.