

PEDAGOGICAL TACT IN AN ESL CLASS AT A PRIVATE SCHOOL FROM RIONEGRO,
ANTIOQUIA

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CONTENT

	Pag.
ABSTRACT	5
1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	6
2. RESEARCH QUESTION	8
3. JUSTIFICATION	8
4. OBJECTIVES	9
4.1 General objective	9
4.2 Specific objectives	9
5. LITERATURE REVIEW	10
6. CONCEPTUAL REFERENCES	15
7. METHODOLOGY	18
7.1 Methodological approach	18
7.2 Participants	19
7.3 Data Collection Methods	19
7.4 Interviews	20
7.5 Likert scale	20
7.6 Class Observation	21
7.7 Ethical considerations	21
8. FINDINGS	23
9. DISCUSSION	32
10. CONCLUSIONS	35

REFERENCES	37
ANNEXES	38

ABSTRACT

This work inquired about the influence that in the formative process of the students, specifically in the ESL classroom, the pedagogical tact with the empathic relationship between the student teacher intended is to be signified. This investigation is based principally on five categories: empathy, intuition, ESL, symbolic interactionism, and pedagogical tact. Data were collected to understand the role of pedagogical tact in a tenth-grade ESL class in a private school. A Likert scale, a teacher's interview, and (3) class observation took place. Participants describe through a Likert scale the presence of empathy as an essential component in teacher student relationships. Although a short-scale project, results proposed that pedagogical tact is present in the population studied.

Keywords: Pedagogical tact, empathy, ESL, Symbolic Interactionism.

1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Today it is a must to recognize the necessity to treat students as subjects rather than as objects, for in the classroom where the pedagogical tact is a lack, it is conceivable that there is not a broad glance of the students. Also, it is significant that the teacher places himself in the students' situation to understand them better.

Although it may not seem like it, the attitude of the teacher in the classroom has effects on the training of students, results that are not reduced to the merely intellectual but transcend the emotions, feelings, and behavior of the student. Thus, these effects of teaching initiatives are not immediately perceived, and some of them are even observed in the long term (Sipman, 2019, p. 1186)

This work takes as a starting point the social fact in the encounter of two actors: the teacher and the student, and how this relationship could improve in the classroom, specifically, in an English class context. This research project emerged after reflecting during various semesters that students need an empathetic and tactful teacher in the classroom. So, the teacher could lead the student on the path, taking into account that pedagogues serve as guides (Mercado, 2008).

Moreover, I consider it is pertinent to enhance the classroom setting. When learners feel unable to focus their interest, they do not have the motivation, or when fears emerge towards the new language exposure, that is where the teacher has to act as motivation plays a significant role in learning a second language. In our context, for instance, due to the students' educational and cultural backgrounds, educators must know how to handle diverse situations. To exemplify, there are children that come from homes where education is well-valued, receiving support from their parents and family in general. Other children, on the contrary, come from less caring homes. So, at a certain point, this is a relevant aspect to come up with because teachers ought to act as a source

of motivation and endurance. Teachers are called to generate those spaces where children feel the necessity to learn (Harmer, 2007).

Furthermore, the contribution that pedagogical tact can give to students is great, understanding that teaching English in our context requires teachers to be not only well trained but also resolved to improve classroom situations, fears, misconceptions about language acquisition and anxiety. It is in fact relevant to give a look at motivation and how this could be a triggering factor at the moment of learning a second language. Pedagogical tact fosters the teacher's abilities to manage their performance in complex situations, acting with intuition (Sipman, 2019, p. 1186). Intuition is manifested in situations where it is not present a foreseeable result, or when the principal actor, the teacher, does not know how to provide an answer, a solution, or act in a certain moment. Intuition is not learned by theories, there is not a guidebook, and it is practiced by the teachers' spontaneity (Flores, 2017).

Moreover, what Flores, 2016 suggests occurs more than ever in the Colombian context, because the current state of research on pedagogical tact needs a more profound study in Latino America, more specifically in Colombia. In terms of this topic, I did an extensive research in different databases and journals in the field such as Ikala and Scielo and found little results about Pedagogical tact, I only found one resource in *Repositorio Institucional UPB* and it was a master's degree project on pedagogical tact, from *La Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana in Montería, Colombia*

2. RESEARCH QUESTION

What is the role of pedagogical tact in a tenth grade ESL class in a private-school context?

3. JUSTIFICATION

This proposal is part of an exploration of particular interests, finding out the value in educational settings. This topic is relevant in the Education Faculty because it provides knowledge about what pedagogical tact is and to know how to act in specific situations that require the use of immediacy, intuition and empathy. Therefore, it may help teachers recognize students' capabilities without diminishing their value, especially in second language acquisition. The pedagogical tact may help the ESL field assisting teachers in enhancing their teaching practices since this pedagogy provides an answer in those situations where the teacher does not know what to do and require an immediate response. Besides, the ESL and the pedagogical tact are crucial in guiding the students through a path mediated by ethical processes in the classroom. The ESL field must nourish from pedagogical tact and interconnect one from another take as an advantage its positive results.

This research study is significant for me as a future teacher and for my fellow because it implies an improvement from all human dimensions, and it is a way upon respect and empathy, two essential qualities in every classroom. Pedagogical tact reinforces the teacher's attitude towards some situations, not necessarily bad ones, but tact enriches the teaching profession. In our Colombian context, the use of pedagogical tact in the ESL classroom needs to be considered and taken into account, given that one of those principal commitments of this type of pedagogy is the enhancement of teacher – student relationships, thus as part of caring management in the classroom.

To sum up, the paragraphs before providing a detailed justification of this pedagogical proposal reinforcing the idea of drawing close to those aspects that enhance teaching, not because it is recognized negative factors in the ESL classroom. But, it is an obligation to try to improve our teaching practice. Besides, this type of proposal not addressed enough may contribute to the ESL and foreign languages field or those who want to contribute to the education from the pedagogical perspective.

4. OBJECTIVES

4.1 General objective

To analyze the role of pedagogical tact in a tenth grade ESL class in a private-school context.

4.2 Specific objectives

1. To diagnose the role of non-verbal communication in teacher student relationships.
2. To describe the presence of empathy within teacher-student relationships.
3. To explore teacher's and students' perceptions towards pedagogical tact.

5. LITERATURE REVIEW

After an extensive search in different databases and journals in the field such as Ikala and Scielo, and analyzing various projects connected to the topic, I found three research projects related to pedagogical tact as the theme of study; projects accepted and published in recent years, (2010, 2018, 2019) which in this segment I will be describing. Two international studies are related to pedagogical tact and one research study was carried out here in Colombia. I noticed that one of the texts explained intuition as a significant aspect associated with pedagogical tact. The conclusions from these studies enabled me to enact my own research as described below.

The first study that I will mention was done by Emilia Aho, Hanna-Leena Haverinen, Hannu Jusso, Seepo J. Laukka, and Ari Sutinen in 2010. The information was gathered through the use of video recordings and using Nvivo8 software, which is a qualitative data analysis software. This type of software helped researchers to organize and analyze qualitative data like interviews, open-ended questions, journal articles and web content. The study was carried out by questioning three primary school teachers from the Oulu Teacher Training School in the Faculty of Education in Finland. The purpose of this study was to determine why teachers acted the way they did, and also, the way in which they perceive the pupils' thoughts and behavior. The researchers in charge used recorded interviews to analyze facial impressions, body movements, and nonverbal communication.

The research method applied, called stimulated recall, was used to track down the teachers' thinking and the areas of decision making. Likewise, half-structured interviews were conducted, and the material was analyzed using thematizing. The findings of this study were presented as a combination of three teachers' experiences. Also, the researchers showed in various stages, the teachers' beliefs, and the teacher's personality in which their opinions and thoughts around their

reactions were manifested: the emotional state, the uniqueness of the educational situation, among others. The results of this study yielded various relevant aspects: in knowing the pupils, teachers pointed out that working with children made you know what string to pull with each student, while working with the small ones, it takes more importance the techniques you use. Teachers also asserted that they increased their understanding of each one of the students through school-home collaboration. It is notable and relevant how these teachers expressed their feelings and thoughts, saying that it is necessary to interpret just what the child's behavior means, which denotes comprehension and kindness from teachers. In an aspect such as the emotional state, a teacher stated that losing control or getting angry might be the worst things that could happen, even though she pointed out that she's only a human and those situations need to occur. Consequently, educators are confronted with various situations that emerge in student teacher relationships, "some disruptive encounters in classroom management that need to be considered here" (Emilia Aho, 2010, p. 395). Considering what Emilia's Aho quoted in this study, it is pertinent to say that this point of reflection is what matters; it is authentic to all the challenges teachers need to face in everyday classroom situations.

The second study was done by (Sipman, 2019). It took place in three school districts and a college in the Netherlands. It examines the pedagogical tact in-depth based on how intuition displayed in those moments where the teacher, the main actor in the classroom, does not know what to do. "It is defined as pedagogical tact as a teacher's ability to instantly act upon the complexity of classroom situations" (Sipman, 2019, p. 1186). The purpose of this second study aims to improve the social, emotional and behavioral outcomes of students in primary school. Furthermore, a qualitative approach was undertaken to stay close to the stakeholders. Focus group discussions were carried out to explore how educational professionals observe the role of intuition

in teaching practices. Additionally, for this study, several groups of teachers, managers, and principals give their voices to answer three (3) questions: First, how do educators perceive the role of intuition in a teacher's pedagogical tact? Second, what helps or hinders teachers from using their intuitive pedagogical tact? And third, what are educators' views about strengthening teachers' intuitive pedagogical tact?

In response to the first question, the teachers reasoned that using intuition is becoming progressively vital for teachers' pedagogical tact, and they recognized positive virtues in those who are able to use their intuition. Also, they argued that intuition takes a huge role, and it has to move you to do what you do with all your soul and recognizing that certain situations need to build on prior knowledge. The teachers mentioned in this research study concluded that intuition is required no matter what circumstances existed in the classroom. They argued that this quality needs to grow naturally, and teachers must develop it to understand pupils' necessities.

In reply to the second question, teachers mentioned that intuition nowadays is losing its value because of the madness of the day. Even though, for many teachers who have a strong opposition to intuition, it remains as an intangible concept, it is losing its force and derives from science. It is interesting how intuition has become a mysterious concept to the majority and overly abstract to be described. Such is the case when one of the teachers interviewed said that when he talked about this with his coworkers, everybody senses what he means. At a certain point, it can mean that intuition as a concept is understandable in people's minds, but it may not make sense.

In the third question, all the educational researchers perceived differences in teachers' capacities to manifest intuition so, examiners made a characterization according to teacher's intuitive capacity. The first characterization has to do with teachers who are able to adjust into intuition naturally. The second characterization is related to those teachers who are unable to

manifest intuition, and the third concerns teachers who have difficulties adjusting their intuition. The conclusions yielded that “intuition was viewed to help teachers to sense pupils’ needs, engage more easily and effortlessly with students, and prevent conflicts” (Sipman, 2019, p. 11).

Besides, the education professionals in this study concluded that teachers are using their intuition less, because the fields of education inhibit the use of intuition in teachers, and many of them even do not know what intuition means, they consider it as an intangible concept that cannot be measured.

The third study was done by Nuria Victoria Arteaga García, Mayuris Burgos Altamiranda and Yeimis Teresa Naranjo Vidal in 2018. This study took place in the department of Monteria, Colombia. The purpose of this research project was to understand the relationship between the pedagogical tact of the Pre-K teachers, with the socio-affective development of children in the educational institutions where the project was executed.

The first data collection method used was the direct observation of the examined context, permitting the description of the participants’ population routines, which performs as an essential component in the investigative process. It is worth mentioning that in this observation, one of the principal elements of educational reality was studied and conducted. The second data collection instrument used was the interactive technique called “silhouette”; applied to educators to know in-depth their thoughts and feelings towards the socio-affective problems that the investigated children present. Similarly, two interactive and participatory techniques to the students were used: “Colcha de retazos” and “Ruleta de la fantasía” with these techniques, the research group explored, detailed, and traced through questions essential information for the research interests.

The authors mentioned a triangulation done and applied in the research at the moment of analyzing the problem related to pedagogical tact in the socio affective development in early

childhood, where various methods were taken into account to recollect information, such as the observation and the interactive techniques, focused on the different actors of the investigative process, which allowed to confront the collected information and establish convergent points according to the proposed objectives. For these researchers the findings constitutes an analysis of the information collected among the teachers, and it was confirmed that the concepts most frequently expressed were self-knowledge, empathy, self-control, affectivity, and values, in the same way in the confrontation of the information collected through this technique, it was possible to establish that teachers consider the "formation of personality" in their students as an essential element in their work, from cognitive development and training in values. Teachers and students also agreed that the school must be an enjoyable space, where it must be achieved an agreeable environment through the engaging didactics resources application.

The systematization, confrontation, and analysis of the collected information through the interactive techniques applied to the teachers and students permitted to define the analytical categories of the current research, and their subcategories related as follows. Categories: personality formation, teacher's role, and the school as a pleasant space. Subcategories: values, cognitive development, level of instruction, didactic strategies, physical resources, and school space adaptation. The findings establish that the formation of the child's personality should be oriented towards the enhancement of cognitive aspects and behavioral features that will define his performance as a social subject.

The aforementioned studies enabled me to understand the importance of illustrating what I want to achieve in my own study in terms of methods and techniques. The study that is more like my project is, "The role of intuition in pedagogical tact: Educator views" by (Sipman, et al., 2019)

because they have developed a very structured thesis, and they have displayed a series of traits that may help me to elucidate those aspects on pedagogical tact in-depth.

6. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This section contains the key concept that will guide the theoretical component of the present study: Pedagogical Tact, Empathy, Intuition, EFL, and Symbolic Interactionism.

Muth, 1967 mentioned that pedagogical tact is related to the “binding nature of language and the avoidance of injury to the child” (p.23). It reflects a profound understanding of what would be a teacher, a source of instruction based on tact. Besides, Muth has asserted that pedagogical tact implies rapid decisions and results. All these thoughts about pedagogical tact derive from a person who wants the best for those who are being educated. Manen, 1995 declared that “pedagogical tact is a format of knowledge that is essentially normative, personal and intuitive” (Using, 2018). It means that knowledge is instruction, and goes forward, because teachers require a sense of sensitivity and intuition in teaching.

Pedagogical tact has some nuances in terms of meaning and use, it can be compared with empathy, as a term used in respect and caring treatment of the other. “The pedagogical tact is included in the academic discourse and is more themed than empathy” (Using, 2018, p. 64).

As Muth (1962) has stated, “Pedagogical tact is an expression of prudence and sensibility towards the others, especially towards students” (p. 64). As the foregoing, tact implies empathy towards others, includes respect and careful treatment for students. Also, Pedagogical tact comforts when in the classroom students’ do not allow openness with teachers. Personally speaking, after reflecting upon this term, I understood that the core of pedagogical tact resides in intuition, and

empathy seen as a fundamental aspect of teaching. Therefore, empathy and tact cannot separate one from another, dwelling as aspects of humanism.

Empathy is a concept debated and analyzed because it makes part of non-discursive knowledge, which induces to think that could be implicit, a knowledge acquired through reflection. Different theorists such as Max Van Manen and Jakob Muth (1962 – 1991) have mentioned pedagogical tact and empathy as faces of the same coin. Consequently, empathy has similarities with pedagogical tact because both are essential in the other's treatment. Discretion and respect are part of empathy. These concepts are intertwined and closely related.

Intuition is the ability to be aware and act in those moments that it requires and implies dexterity, quickness in actions, and appropriateness. Besides, the teacher who uses intuition performs instantly in educational contexts; that says, teachers are obliged to act positively in situations with no planning (Garcia et al., 2018).

“Studies of teacher pedagogical performance have suggested that intuition plays an important role” (Sipman, 2019, p. 5). Intuition and pedagogical tact are entwined to make that intuition appear as reasonably quality to foster. This attribute takes place without the use of reason mediated by the interaction of teachers and students' and can be developed but not learned by theories or by a textbook. It appears when a situation needs prompt intervention.

Symbolic interactionism is a sociological theory in which converges the social understanding mediated by a fluid interaction among human beings. Likewise, it is appropriate to consider the symbolic interactionism coined by Mead (1934/1962) as a starting point between the student and the teacher construction. Interactionism is necessary for educational settings because it helps the teacher to understand the learner as a person with an emotional and sensitive background. It is an interpretation and decoding of those aspects that could affect the students'

performance. Moreover, it is a way to approximate students through the use of empathetic communication. Besides, a striking feature to take into consideration is that in the acquisition of second languages, exaggerated anxiety does not provide enough understanding, and therefore is going to produce undesirable classroom tension triggering unsuccessful performance in learners. At an early age, children feel the urge to communicate in their target language, the language of their parents and it is at that moment when emotional interactions start to emerge. It is interesting that communication and motivation are interrelated processes in children. Also, because children feel the unavoidable desire to talk to those persons that surround them, and then, communication is manifested as a growing interest. According to Jeremy Harmer, “there are three characteristics that need to be present during language acquisition: exposure to it, motivation to communicate with it and opportunities to use it” (Harmer, 2007, p. 47).

As cited above, motivation is a process that is fitting with good classroom performance and has to do with a great social environment, one that is supported at home. Other theorist, such as Stephen Krashen, points out that learning and acquisition are quite different at the moment of learning a second language, but he highlights that anxiety situations, low self-esteem, and self-confidence seem to influence second language acquisition (Nosidlak, 2015).

EFL or English as a Foreign Language is an acronym that describes when a person is learning so that they can use the language when traveling or connecting with other persons (Harmer, 2007). This term is adopted to depict the study of English by non-native speakers in countries where English is not the principal language, it cannot be confused with ESL, English as Second Language, which is the learning of English in a predominantly English-speaking country. As Jeremy Harmer declares, “The use of English for international communication, especially with

the Internet, means that many EFL students are in effect living in a global target language community” (Harmer, 2007, p. 12).

7. METHODOLOGY

7.1 Methodological approach

The methodology used in this research project is qualitative. Qualitative research has its effect more in words and dwells in social characteristics more than in something quantifiable, and it has its real relevance in human experience (Bryman, 2012, p. 380). Hence, qualitative research helped me to have proximity to the students’ and teachers’ experiences towards the analysis of the role of pedagogical tact in the ESL classes. Also, it permitted to take into consideration the students’ perceptions in terms of pedagogical tact, as a broad topic in the relation between teachers and learners in the ESL classes, and this is perhaps the most significant approach to undertaking in this analysis.

The process utilized in this section took into consideration the answers from a group of twenty-three students from tenth grade in a private institution from Rionegro, Antioquia. All of them answered a Likert scale to describe the presence of empathy within teacher student relationships. For this purpose, a study case method was adopted as a combination of theory and practice, it referred to a situation or a specific case. The results yielded through the application employed cannot be generalized, given its specificity and particularity. Therefore, its findings only apply to this situation. The case selected in attention to the closeness and proximity that the researcher has with the institution, to whom has added the current sanitary situation that has forced the investigative process to the circumstances. So, the nature of the institution and the quality of the students that access it exposed the particularities of the object of this research project makes it

a sui generis object, which characterizes a case of study. At this point, do not be simplified nor extended the analysis of the case study and similar situations; findings can indeed yield evidence to advance in other types of projects (Bryman, 2012).

The methodological approach used in this research project mostly has to do with the interpretation and understanding of discourses, taking into account the meaning, message, and perspective of the authors. Phillips and Brown (1993) have described three different moments of analysis: The social-historical moment, which includes an examination of the creator of the text, and the context in which the material is conducted. The formal moment, where analysis takes place, thus like the essential and conventional aspects of the text, and a third moment called the interpretation-reinterpretation moment which contains the interpretation of the findings of the previous two moments; in other words, the three moments are synthesized (Bryman, 2012).

7.2 Participants

This section will provide a description of the institution where this research took place. It is a private institution located in Rionegro, Antioquia. It offers educative service to students from Pre- K until 11th grade. The students' stratum is average, which means that their socioeconomical openness is medium. The infrastructure of the institution permits the adequate development of various activities proposed by teachers, both inside and outside classrooms. Besides, connectivity works as a tool to carry out didactic exercises.

The participants of the project were 10th graders from one of the three groups that comprise this level. There were 17 men and 6 women. This group was chosen purposefully given the time availability and closeness to the institution since I was doing my practicum at this school. This class is multilevel, which implies that there are beginners and students who outperform the

expectations for the level. Besides, the English teacher from that class participated in the project, answering various questions related to empathy displayed from pedagogical tact.

7.3 Data collection methods

There are multiple data collection techniques concerning the qualitative approach because in the qualitative approach the researcher will understand the participants' perceptions, views, and thoughts about a determined topic. As follows, the techniques and methods to collect data used in this research will be explained.

7.4 Interviews

The project understands the interview as a qualitative method to gather information. Data collection involves visiting a research place and conducting an interview in which the participant talks willingly, without the use of specific questions where is implemented a structured interview (Creswell, 2014). Besides, interviews mean that the examiner manages face-to-face with participants. Interviews are designed to elicit examinations and opinions from the participants.

The interview applied in this research project is semi-structured, and it's centered on exploring teacher's perceptions towards pedagogical tact. Five open-ended questions were administered to the English teacher. (See annex A) Given the circumstances in which the research took place, the interview was done through virtual means (Microsoft Teams).

7.5 Likert scale

During interviews, participants are presented with a combination of questions to which the same possible responses are attached. This strategy called Likert scaling is an approach to attitude measurement (Bryman, 2012, p. 224). The constituents of a Likert scale are often considered as items rather than as interrogations since strongly speaking, respondents are not being questioned

but are presented with statements to which they are asked to demonstrate their levels of agreement. The majority of Likert scales comprise five values of agreement and disagreement, such as Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, and strongly disagree. The Likert scale included ten statements attached at the end of this work (See annex B). The instrument carried out permitted to have a whole dimension of the data because it was necessary to describe the repercussion of empathy within teacher student relationships.

7.6 English class observation

Since the nature of classes requires teachers to help students when necessary, the use of class observation as a method of collecting valuable evidence emerges as a need. Three remote classes were observed and all the information was registered using a checklist to maintain high reliability. Bryman (2012) states that journals are an essential form of reporting findings, and my case, since the research topic deals with interactions, it was essential to depict the target aspects to be observed in terms of non-verbal communication (See annex C). The use of a checklist allowed me to focus on the target information I needed to observe to answer my research question and omit information that, although relevant in the class, may not contribute to this purpose.

7.7 Ethical considerations

Informed consent was designed to request both instances of the parents' and the institution's authorization. Besides, students had the opportunity to take part in the process willingly, and they were informed about it. The data collected functioned as a piece of absolute confidential information, and the results stayed anonymous. Furthermore, incentives for the interviewed participants were omitted, just in the case the answers were affected in any way. Also, an ethical treatment in the process of collecting data must be a fact in terms of showing favoritism that includes rewards for some participants. As well, sharing confidential and secret information

with other people is forbidden, and it must be a violation of participants' rights. It is pertinent to remark that disclosing information that could harm the participants should be avoided. Creswell (2014) pointed out that "as an ethical procedure the communication with each participant must be clear, straightforward, and appropriate in language" (p. 133).

8. RESULTS

This section will disclose the findings that emerged after analyzing the collected data. The information will be presented discriminating the findings in each data collection instrument and then a triangulation among instruments, literature review and the theory in the topic will be depicted.

Likert scale.

The group of statements provided from 1 to 10 previously prepared to understand, analyze and describe the feelings that young students had around empathy and emphasizing it towards the learning process of each one of the students. The teacher in charge is a person the students can trust in any circumstance. The explanation below demonstrates this relevant feature. The majority of the learners' answers have depicted that the English teacher shows them empathy in the classroom and in the teacher student relationships. It is relevant to point out that aspects of nonverbal communication displayed in the search for this quality have confirmed its presence in the classroom.

As previously mentioned, the teacher is a person students can count on when speaking to them, making it suitable for interaction in classes. Explanations to questions 1 to 10 will be displayed as follows: for question one, *I consider empathy (the ability to understand and share the feelings of another) is relevant in the relationship with my teacher*, the students' answers exposed similarities. For instance, 52.2% showed that students agreed, considering empathy as important in the relationship with the teacher. Besides, 34, 8% of the students strongly agreed with this category, which signifies that empathy is present in the classroom.

I consider empathy (the ability to understand and share the feelings of another) is important in the relationship with my teacher.
23 respuestas

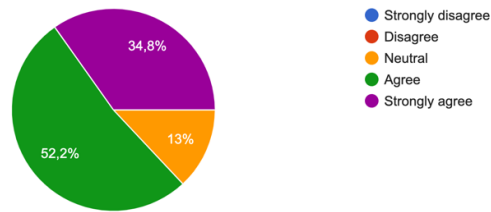


Figure 1. Likert scale. Statement 1.

Statement 2, *my teacher's tone of voice reflects his/her mood towards me*, showed a significant percentage that implies that the teacher's voice has a good mood towards her students, being 65.2%, a higher result of agreed students, also explaining the tone of voice as an aspect of non-verbal communication present in the classroom.

Statement number 3 also suggested that the students agreed in *teacher's eye contact* when speaking to classmates, reflection interest and respect for each one of the members of the class. Besides, the section of the figure 43,5% agreed with the fact that the teacher's eye contact when speaking is a relevant aspect detached from the figure.

My teacher makes eye contact when speaking to my classmates or me.
23 respuestas

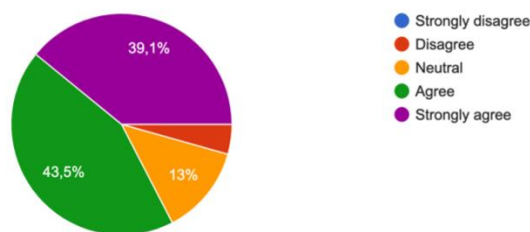


Figure 3. Likert scale. Statement 3.

The statement number 4, *my teacher is a person I can count on when I have some difficulty in the classroom* exposed a similarity of percentage in two different values, 39.1% of the students

demonstrated that they strongly agreed with this declaration, taking into account the aspect that the teacher is a person they trust when difficulties are present in the classroom. On the other hand, 21.7% had a neutral position, which means that they do not have disagreed or agreed with none of the options shown in the scale.

Empathy has high importance and, therefore, a repercussion as the Likert scale may show certain statements that clarify and enable a positive classroom atmosphere where students feel free to express their opinions, doubts, and even disagreements. So, this instrument centered on this quality also portrayed the classroom relationships between students and the teacher. So, the number 5 statement: *When I talk to my teacher about something I do not understand, he/she helps me and listen to me* is considerably relevant around its result, because the interviewed students strongly agreed with the fact a teacher is a communicative person that assists them and is also a good listener. 82.6% of students who answered are strongly agreed that the teacher helps and listens to them when they do not understand something. Also, 17,4% agreed with the statement, providing once again that the teacher brings together all the qualities beforehand mentioned.

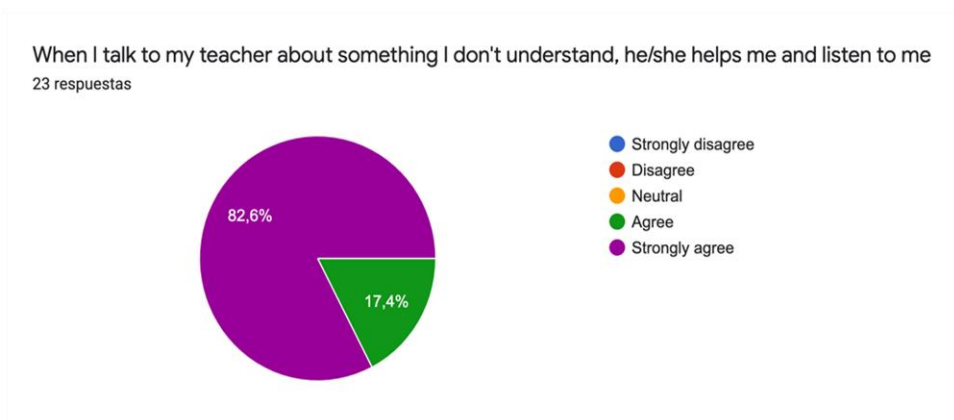


Figure 5. Likert scale. Statement 5.

Statements 6 and 7 inquired about how the empathy established by the teacher is essential in students' learning processes and students' perspectives towards the teacher's energy or mood regarding each one of the students interviewed. Statement number 6 has 52,2% implying that they strongly agreed in believing that the empathy established by the teacher is crucial for their learning process. 82,6% strongly agreed because are listened to and helped by their teacher when they do not understand something.

As a second result, statement number 6 yielded that 34,8% of the questioned students support the agreed value scale, and only 13% have a neutral position. In addition, figure 7 of the Likert scale shows the energy that the teacher imprints in theirs, increasing their learning with 43,5% strongly agree, and 17,4% neutral, even though a neutral feeling may signify that students have a impartial point of view. It's necessary to mention that only one student disagreed in this category, implying that his learning has no impact according to her teacher's mood.

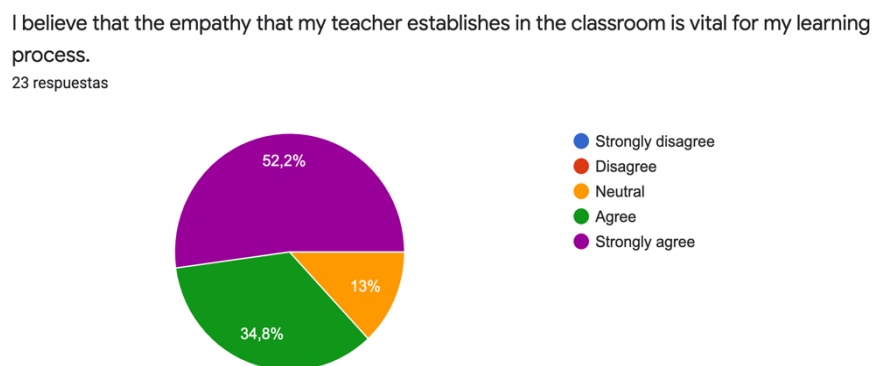


Figure 6. Likert scale. Statement 6.

My teacher motivates me in my learning process.
23 respuestas

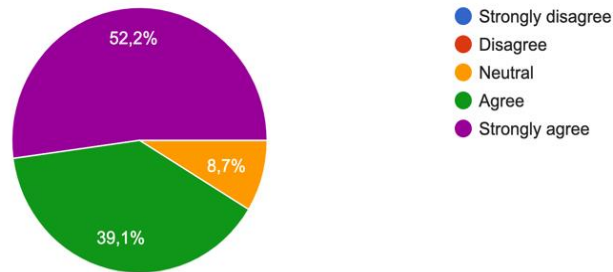


Figure 8. Likert scale. Statement 8.

In figure 8, *the teacher motivates every student in his/her learning process*, and the figure provides 52,2% as the highest rate demonstrating that the teacher is a motivation figure in the learning process of every student. Similarly, it can be inferred that in the classroom motivation as a constituent of empathy is necessary for English class.

Items 9 and 10 inquired: *communication and patience it's vital in learning processes and contribute to improving empathy in the classroom environment*. A good teacher communicates empathy towards them, but it expresses patience in his/her explanations. The 9 figure shows 43,5% agreed with the statement, and they consider that good communication with their teacher is vital for their learning process. Also, they believe good communication with their teacher is vital for their learning process because communication increases knowledge and enables that expressed messages to be understood correctly. The 10 figure indicates 60,9% of the students strongly agreed when they do not understand something, the teacher is patient explaining them again.

To conclude, the Likert scale demonstrated that the ability to feel and describe empathy in the classroom is an essential component in teacher student relationships. Furthermore, it is

observable that the educational process goes hand in hand with the teacher's concern and interest in promoting empathy in the learning process.

Teacher's interview

The semi-structured interview was composed of five different questions concerning empathy and nonverbal communication, respectively. The target participant was an English teacher of tenth grade, who better knows how empathy develops in the classroom. Inquiring in English teacher's answers concerning empathy and nonverbal communication as part of the pedagogical tact research project, it is appropriate to state that the teacher provided what the interviewer needs to seek out, describing the presence of empathy towards teacher student relationships as the objective proposed.

The interviewed teacher considers that nonverbal communication in the classroom is entirely relevant because "it is not what you say to your students but how you say it. Also, because 90% percent derived from our body language and, 10% are related to what one says to them" (The teacher interviewed). Besides, she firmly considers that emphasizing the message with our body language is as pivotal as the message in itself; she highlights that sometimes students' facial expressions can manifest anxiety or stress, which are other factors to bring up in terms of body language importance.

When the teacher was questioned about the nonverbal messages expressed in the relationship between teachers and students, she did identify the verbal communication and their messages as codes in the classroom and the confidence displayed with them. Similarly, the teacher points out the relationship concerning proximity, maintaining the same level with the students, and no longer focusing on his/her desk because the closeness with them is an essential aspect in

nonverbal communication. Moreover, the teacher asserted that laughter as a feature of nonverbal communication is vital in the classroom because it permits another atmosphere, and the vibe always turns out comfortable.

Although this topic permits a variety of interpretations, the teacher focuses her attention in questions of this type because they involve a profound understanding of body language and its effects on classroom management, and of course, in the development of the classes. Thus, the third question posed a self-consideration around a warm and friendly relationship with her students. She explained that the class ambiance is better when the teacher cares for them, and vice versa; she resolutely emphasizes that they tend to make jokes in the classroom and problems in classroom management have rarely emerged.

The questions posed have presented a teacher that is a great communicator in the use of glances, tone of voice, hands movement, demonstrating that she cared about them, because as she stated, “I tend to use exaggeration to emphasize the message”. (The teacher interviewed). Additionally, she detailed that jumping, moving around the classroom are ways to guarantee that the elements within the nonverbal communication are adapted to have an empathetic relationship with the students (The teacher interviewed).

On the other hand, the tone of voice that she uses with her students in the classroom is high because she speaks up but she does not shout because shouting is a disrespectful feature in nonverbal communication messages. So, the teacher admits that when the students tend to speak in unison, she starts to whisper or move their lips to make them know that something is happening, and they need to pay attention. The teacher has declared that the aspect associated with proximity is determinant since she does not enter the classroom expecting to teach a class but to help them learn and adapt it to their circumstances, in her opinion, that is empathy.

In conclusion, the empathy within teacher student relationships is noticeable in the classroom where this interview took place. The teacher interrogated showed various features of a person that is concerned for her students' learning and understanding, making her aware of their necessities.

Class observation

Checklist were the third instrument utilized in class observations to diagnose the role of nonverbal communication in teacher-student relationships. It was necessary to include different features between statements and, a question was analyzed other relevant aspects carefully during each of the classes. The characteristics of the nonverbal communication for every section, serving as analysis. They were the following: the tone of the voice, answering a couple of questions, and posing a statement: Does the teacher have a tone of voice that is understandable for the students? Does the teacher have an intelligible speech in the classroom? And does the teacher shows respectful communication in every class.

It was examined the teacher's facial expressions, body movements, posture, and gestures; collecting some of the most relevant information required a careful treatment of the data. The classes witnessed took place on different dates during which it is analyzed and observed the teacher's hands movement when speaking and explaining to the students. These observations led me to conclude various items explained as follows: the teacher is a person who encourages her students to participate actively using the target language and has a respectful speech during virtual classes.

The teacher demonstrates her interest towards her students through her face expressions which include some grins, having complete control of her verbal expressions during the entire class. In virtual classes, at times, it is difficult to have a certainty of each aspect occurring because

through this modality, there were various features hard to describe, for example, proximity is noticeable in in-person classes.

Third, the body movement and posture during the classes were appropriate because her posture denotes security and control of the topic. So, her students are willing to be adapted to the meeting. It was recognizable how her classroom management in one observed virtual class had repercussions on her students' performance: all the students understood her dissertations with complete clarity, and her students were attentive.

Fourth, the teacher emphasizes through her gestures, moving her hands properly and expressing with her eyes and glances what they had to do.

To conclude, the three remote classes observed during this time highlighted the importance of nonverbal communication has in a classroom. Also, to determine an aspect such as proximity was challenging because this nonverbal communication trait is not conclusive and tends to be perceived in an in-person environment.

9. DISCUSSION

This research project answered the question posed at the beginning of this study: What is the role of pedagogical tact in a tenth-grade ESL class in a private-school context? The function has established a connection based on empathy as something obtained in this study the relationship between students and teachers within a theoretical perspective called symbolic interactionism. According to this theory, interactions between individuals constitute an exchange of different aspects or elements of culture. In this case, an exchange of knowledge. This study focuses essentially on the following categories: Empathy, Symbolic interactionism, and Pedagogical tact.

Empathy

This present study addressed empathy as the core of pedagogical tact displayed in teacher-student relationships. Also, in this research study, the data collected yielded that empathy seen as a quality in relationships can help teachers better understand their students. The interviewed teacher considers that having an empathetic relationship includes moving around the classroom, and jumping reflects that connection with them.

In addition, the teacher and students' answers revealed that empathy is essential in the understanding of the feelings of others, and “she manifested that the class atmosphere is better when the teacher cares for them” (The teacher interviewed). So, establishing a contrast with the results I obtained and one of the three studies previously examined presented that empathy between the teacher and the students permit create trust and security spaces towards the present situations in the classroom and diverse learning settings, enabling the socialization process (Garcia et al., 2018).

Symbolic Interactionism

This research project approaches symbolic interactionism. Moreover, literature provided ideas around this theory of social communication endorsed by George Herbert Mead, explained as a situation where at least two persons have mutual social activity mediated verbal and nonverbal communication (Emilia Aho, 2010). Symbolic interactionism is also a theory of social communication, not a teaching practice. This category principally focused on facial expressions, glances or eye contact, proximity, and the tone of voice. Contrasting with the information gathered and what I perceived as being in that setting clarifies the use of nonverbal communication that the teacher displays in each class. It is remarkable for both in-person and remote meetings.

Another noteworthy result associated with body language messages took place in one of the instruments administered to the students, and the results were positive. Also, what this category yielded is dissimilar to other findings exposed in the studies previously examined. For instance, other teachers acted upon their personality, raising their voices as noise increased, and the teacher studied not. She performs upon immediacy and tries to have an adequate tone of voice when explaining and teaching.

Some limitations stand mention. First, more information should have been collected since the findings obtained in the interview are based merely on one teacher's answers. Moreover, I may have missed other aspects on the role of pedagogical tact in a tenth-grade ESL class in a private-school context. Although it was not difficult to find willing participation from tenth-grade students, it would be better to have had the opportunity to have discovered more participants. I firmly consider this study as a relevant and pertinent topic, and further attention and investigation are required. Pedagogical tact could signify a standing achievement in future projects because of its

importance in classroom management, student teacher relationships, empathy, and socio-affective relationships.

Pedagogical tact

The following category in this study and where the others included taking part in this research project being the core that represents what was sought and responding to the research question posed at initial: What is the role of pedagogical tact in a tenth-grade ESL class at a private school context? Find out an answer was arduous since pedagogical tact is a consolidated concept but less studied in our context. Even so, it was advantageous to analyze the data that shown what was that role in that specific classroom context. It is proper to say that the pedagogical tact role is heading for through empathy by gestures, glances, and nonverbal messages transmitted in the classroom. The pedagogical tact concept compared with preceding studies acquired through practice and viewed as the ability to make possible teaching, eluding complex situations in the classroom, for instance, anxiety, stress, or any other circumstance that emerges in a class but not necessarily something to be concerned.

Second, it has noted that there were similarities in theory and results because the instruments to collect information designed thinking about the role of pedagogical tact and what intended to found. So, comparing the results in one of the studies that examined pedagogical tact that occurs among teachers of educational institutions, according to their considerations, they say: patience, motivation, affection, empathy, and dynamism, each word, make part of the pedagogical practice of teachers (Garcia et al., 2018).

10. CONCLUSIONS

This study sought to address pedagogical tact and its role in an ESL private school context. So, it is precise to highlight the purpose that pedagogical tact had in this project, and the data gathered provided relevant information to determine its role in the classroom. The pedagogical tact was not the only aspect observed. Empathy like the ability connected to the other's perceptions and feelings that fuel this research project, thus as nonverbal communication seen as a language that permits teachers to demonstrate interest, concern, appropriateness in the classroom.

When analyzing the role of pedagogical tact in tenth-grade students as participants interpreted their feelings differently. Moreover, I perceived the relationship that the teacher has with them in the classroom. The teacher's attitude propitiated a warm connection with her students, making that role were clearer. Also, the teacher was concerned about her students' needs, repeating when someone does not understand. I observed in diverse classes that she recognized their achievements encourage them to use the language.

Diagnosing the function of nonverbal communication in teacher student relationships is not an easy task because one needs to determine various aspects of nonverbal communication as proximity, the tone of voice, gestures, glances, and posture. Besides, a feature such as proximity is perceptible in-person classes because it admits being at the same level as the student. Physical closeness requires moving around a classroom, and Microsoft Teams (or such videoconferencing platforms) do not permit this closeness. A checklist was created in favor to enable those remote interactions. But as mentioned above, it is complicated to examined in-depth relationships, because the component of proximity is difficult to interpret.

Exploring the teacher and students' perceptions towards pedagogical tact included designing three instruments to collect information and knowing the population to sift carefully

through the principal aspects. Inquire in this topic implies an effort because pedagogical tact is not an explicit characteristic of teaching and learning. The theory, in general, helped me to find a light to understand the path I headed.

Following the findings of every method and their meaning, each result concluded that the objectives posed at the beginning of the proposal, were conclusive, permitting me to recognize that nonverbal communication and empathy were associated with the students' perceptions towards pedagogical tact.

To sum up, future investigations towards pedagogical tact are remarkable to consider since this area of pedagogy is vital in teacher and student relationships. Also, it is necessary because interactions in the classroom mediated by non-verbal communication, which is part of the language and mastering those messages may signify progress in classroom relationships. A limitation in this study was the pandemic circumstances that blocked observations, in-person classes, things such as proximity is hard to interpret in virtuality. Another is lacking studies carried out in our country, finding only one conducted in the department of Monteria, Colombia, showing that this topic needs studied in-depth.

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ANNEXES

Annex A

Teacher's semi- structured interview

Semi-structured interview	
<p>This interview is part of the data collection methods of a research project that intends to: Analyze the role of pedagogical tact in a tenth grade in an ESL class in a private-school context.</p> <p>The target participant in this study is an English teacher from tenth graders.</p> <p>This interview seeks to: Describe the presence of empathy within teacher-student relationships. Explore teacher student perceptions towards pedagogical tact.</p> <p>Object: Empathy</p> <p>Measuring indicators: Non-verbal communication</p>	
QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
How important do you think nonverbal communication is in the classroom?	
How are nonverbal messages expressed in the relationship between teachers and students?	
Do you consider that the relationship with your students is warm and friendly? How can you evidence it?	
How do you use non-verbal communication elements such as tone of voice, glances, proximity in the classroom / relationship with students?	
How do you better show empathy towards your students?	

Annex B

Likert scale for tenth graders' students

My teacher makes eye contact when speaking to my classmates or me. *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

My teacher is a person I can count on when I have some difficulty in the classroom *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

When I talk to my teacher about something I don't understand, he/she helps me and listen to me *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

I believe that the empathy that my teacher establishes in the classroom is vital for my learning process. *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

My teacher's mood or energy has an impact in my learning *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

My teacher motivates me in my learning process. *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

A good communication with my teacher is essential for my learning process. *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

When I don't understand something, my teacher is patient in explaining again. *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Annex C

Class Observation Checklist of non-verbal communication

CHECKLIST OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION	
Date:	Class:
Topic:	Time:
<p>• Proximity: Yes / no</p>	
The teacher shows physical closeness to each student in the classroom.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
The teacher is willing to answer questions according to the students' level.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
The teacher moves around the classroom, looking at the student's necessities.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments _____ _____ _____ _____	
<p>• Tone of the voice Yes / no</p>	
Does the teacher have a tone of voice that is understandable for the students?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Does the teacher have an intelligible speech in the classroom?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
The teacher shows a respectful speech in every class.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments _____ _____ _____ _____	
<p>• Facial expressions Yes / no</p>	
The teacher's facial expressions demonstrate interest towards the students.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
The teacher shows disgust while teaching to the students.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
The teacher controls his/her facial expressions when talking to the students.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
The teacher makes eye contact when addressing the students.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Comments _____

• **Body movement and posture**

Yes / no

The teacher has positive or negative posture signals.

The teacher crosses his/her arms while teaching.

The teacher has authority, and he/she manages the use of positive signals in the classroom.

Comments _____

• **Gestures**

Yes / no

The teacher emphasizes through his/her gestures what he says

There is a tune between gestures and verbal expressions

The teacher has expressive gestures such as glances, grins, or hand movements.

Comments _____

Annex D

Consent Form



Consent form for participation in a Research Interview

Pedagogical Tact

Objective: To analyze the role of pedagogical tact in a tenth grade in an ESL class in a private-school context.

I agree to participate in a Research project led by Natalia Calle Arango from La Universidad Católica de Oriente (UCO) in Rionegro, Antioquia. The purpose of this document is to specify the terms of my participation in the project through being interviewed.

1. The purpose of this Research interview is to explore teacher's perceptions related to pedagogical tact in the classroom. I will use this interview as a data collection method which means that I will examine your information by analyzing those things that are relevant in terms of teacher student relationships. This consent form seeks your permission to collect the information for this Research study. Under any circumstance, I won't reveal your information.
2. My participation as an interviewee in this project is voluntary. There is no explicit or implicit coercion to participate.
3. Participation involves being interviewed by **Natalia Calle Arango** from La Universidad Católica de Oriente (UCO) The interview will last approximately 1 hour; I allow the researcher(s) to take written notes during the interview. Moreover, I may allow the recording by the Teams platform.
4. I have the right not to answer any of the questions. If I feel uncomfortable in any way during the interview session, I have the right to withdraw from the interview.
5. I have been given the explicit guarantees that, the researcher won't identify me by name or function in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain on a secret.
6. I have read and understood the points and statements of this form. I voluntarily agree to participate in this research interview.
7. I have been given a copy of this consent form co-signed by the interviewer
8. If you have any questions about the research, feel free to contact the researcher Natalia Calle at nataliacallearango@gmail.com.

Participant's Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date