



# Chilean Pre-Service and Novice EFL Teachers' Metaphoric Representations About Assessment in English Language Learning and Teaching

Representaciones metafóricas sobre la evaluación en  
el aprendizaje y la enseñanza del inglés que poseen  
estudiantes de pedagogía y profesores noveles chilenos

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## Abstract

The general objective of this research is to reveal the Chilean pre-service and novice EFL teachers' metaphoric representations about assessment in English language learning and teaching. Due to the object of study's subjective characteristics, the qualitative methodology was considered. The participants of this research were, first of all, 64 pre-service EFL teachers, who were carrying out the professional practicum course in three Chilean universities. Likewise, 50 novice EFL teachers were invited to contribute to this study. The two groups of participants were originally from southern and central Chile. A questionnaire of metaphoric representations focused on assessment in English language learning and teaching was used to collect data. The results of this study indicate that the metaphoric representations held by both groups of participants perceive English language learning assessment from a process and product-oriented vision. Regarding the differences between these representations, the pre-service EFL teachers' responses have a greater inclination towards a product-oriented assessment. On the other hand, the novice EFL teachers emphasize the need to consider the learners' diversity within assessment. The analysis of metaphoric representations, in undergraduate language teacher education, can be a beneficial tool to promote reflection on pedagogical and disciplinary competencies, particularly on those linked to the assessment of English language receptive and productive skills.

**Keywords:** metaphorical representations, educational assessment, language education, EFL, pre-service teacher education, in-service teacher training

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## Resumen

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El objetivo general de esta investigación es revelar las representaciones metafóricas sobre la evaluación que poseen estudiantes de pedagogía y profesores noveles de inglés chilenos. Debido a las características subjetivas del objeto de estudio, se consideró la metodología cualitativa. Los participantes de esta investigación fueron 64 estudiantes de pedagogía en inglés de tres universidades chilenas y 50 profesores noveles de inglés. Estos dos grupos eran originarios de las zonas sur y centro sur de Chile. Para recolectar información, se utilizó un cuestionario de representaciones metafóricas con foco en la evaluación en el aprendizaje y la enseñanza del inglés. Los resultados señalan que las representaciones metafóricas que poseen ambos grupos de participantes relacionan la evaluación de la lengua inglesa con una visión procesual y una visión de producto. Respecto de las diferencias entre estas representaciones, las respuestas de los estudiantes de pedagogía en inglés resaltan, principalmente, la evaluación desde una visión de producto. Por otro lado, los profesores noveles de inglés enfatizan la necesidad de considerar la diversidad de los aprendices dentro de la evaluación. El análisis de representaciones metafóricas en la formación inicial de profesores de inglés puede ser una herramienta beneficiosa para favorecer la reflexión sobre la competencia de evaluación enmarcada en las habilidades de comprensión y producción de la lengua inglesa.

**Palabras clave:** representaciones metafóricas, evaluación educacional, enseñanza de idiomas, inglés como lengua extranjera, formación inicial de docentes, formación de profesores en ejercicio

## Introduction

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Both pre-service and in-service teachers develop notions or knowledge about assessment by witnessing how it was implemented during their schooling or professional training (Mak, 2011; Viáfara González, 2008). This can have either favorable or unfavorable influences on the design and implementation of their evaluative practices.

Eliciting metaphorical representations can help pre-service or in-service teachers to communicate their knowledge about assessment. This involves asking individuals to use oral or written discourse to express how they represent this dimension of teaching by comparing it with another element (Kavanoz, 2016; Yesilbursa, 2012). International studies using analysis of metaphorical representations have established that pre-service and in-service teachers of English perceive the process of teaching and learning English from a traditional perspective, which centers on the use and reproduction of linguistic patterns, and a communicative perspective, which prioritizes the development of language skills (Poom-Valickis et al., 2012; Sahinkarakas, 2012; Simsek, 2014). Research carried out in the Chilean context has also produced equivalent findings (Fariás & Véliz, 2019; Maldonado et al., 2020). In this framework, traditional representations, which influence evaluative practices, do not contribute substantially to English language learning. Therefore, it is important to help pre-service teachers and in-service teachers to be aware of these subjective ideas so individuals can reformulate them.

In a 2021 study, De Laurentiis Brandão argues that the identification of metaphorical representations is a formative tool because it facilitates teacher reflection; an empirical tool, because it enables the subjects to narrate their experiences, and an analytical tool, because it provides a snapshot of the professional development of individuals. Therefore, in Chile, the analysis of metaphorical representations could help future English teachers to improve their disciplinary knowledge of assessment, since only 56.8% of them demonstrate correct knowledge

of this disciplinary skill, according to a ministerial diagnostic report (Ministry of Education, 2020a). This could also be a useful tool for in-service teachers who have shown poor results on evaluative knowledge and practices in a national teacher performance assessment (Ministry of Education, 2020b).

Accordingly, the general objective of this study is to reveal the metaphorical representations that Chilean pre-service and novice English teachers have about assessment.

## **Theoretical Framework**

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### **Assessment in the English language teaching-learning process**

Educational assessment is intended to identify whether students are achieving learning objectives by collecting evidence of their performance (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). This didactic process can be carried out in three ways depending on the moment at which it is implemented: diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment. The first type involves collecting information on students' prior knowledge at the beginning of the process in order to design educational planning. Formative assessment, or assessment for learning, is associated with collecting information during the pedagogical process through classroom activities and feedback, in order to help students achieve learning objectives (Fawzi & Alldabous, 2019; Katz, 2014). The third type is summative assessment or assessment of learning, which involves collecting information to determine whether students achieved the learning objectives at the conclusion of the pedagogical process, assigning a grade focused on the product of learning (Ismail, 2017; Fulcher & Davidson, 2007).

Assessment can also be authentic or traditional. Authentic (or alternative) assessment involves performance tasks that entail the development of receptive skills (reading comprehension, listening comprehension) and productive skills (oral expression, written expression) by students in order to solve problems of everyday life (Farrell & Jacobs, 2010; Huang & Jiang, 2021). This type of assessment is in-process and learner-centered. Traditional assessment is generally focused on identifying the achievement of learning objectives framed in linguistic content, such as grammar and vocabulary (Giraldo, 2021). This type of assessment is usually implemented by means of a test based on memorization.

In English language teaching and learning, based on a communicative logic, assessment is focused on recognizing the achievement of learning objectives associated with language skills (Richards, 2015). On one hand, assessment of receptive skills involves either open or closed performance tasks that are centered on reading or listening to texts (Katz, 2014). On the other hand, assessment of productive skills includes open-ended tasks that involve speaking or writing, which are complemented with instruments such as assessment scales or rubrics with performance criteria and indicators (González, 2021).

### **Metaphorical representations of assessment in English language teaching and learning**

Metaphorical representations are associated with social representations and involve subjective ideas or knowledge about certain areas of experience (Wan & Low, 2015). This knowledge is expressed by using metaphors, which demonstrate one's own interpretation of reality by establishing an analogy between two elements (Salinas Barrios, 2021; Zhao et al., 2010). This is based on the subjects' previous experiences or perspectives. It has also been established that metaphorical representations tend to be culturally assumed and shared (Kövecses, 2010).

The above is related to conceptual metaphors. This is an area of cognitive linguistics that perceives the use of language as a form of eliciting patterns of knowledge (Evans & Green, 2006). From this perspective, language enables us to recognize the cognitive system, which is comprised of perceptions about the nature, structure, and organization of thoughts and ideas.

National and international studies have examined the metaphorical representations of prospective and in-service teachers about the process of English language teaching and learning (Alarcón et al., 2014; Kavanoz, 2016; Simsek, 2014). The participants in these studies express metaphors that are, on the one hand, framed within a traditional proposal where the teacher is seen as a source of information or as an authority, while the student assumes the position as the passive receiver of content. On the other hand, this research identifies metaphors that are centered on an innovative proposal, where the teacher is perceived as a facilitating agent who promotes the cognitive and affective conditions that enable the learner to actively construct his or her knowledge.

With regard to English language assessment, the results of the research indicate that the representations or knowledge of pre-service and in-service teachers of the language tend to be of the traditional type (focused on the acquisition of linguistic knowledge) and of the innovative or communicative type (with an emphasis on linguistic skills) (Giraldo & Murcia, 2019; Mak, 2011; Muñoz et al., 2012).

## Methodology

This research uses a qualitative case study. The authors selected this type of research because metaphorical representations involve the subjective knowledge of the participants and are manifested through discourse (Gibbs, 2012). This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

What metaphorical representations do Chilean pre-service teachers have about the concept of English language assessment and the role of the teacher in the assessment of that language?

What metaphorical representations do Chilean novice teachers have about the concept of English language assessment and the role of the teacher in the assessment of that language?

## Participants

This study involved two groups of participants. The first was composed of 64 English language teaching students, who were in their 10th semester of university training and carrying out their final pedagogical practice in secondary schools in face-to-face format. They were students from three Chilean universities, all of which belong to the Council of Rectors of Chilean Universities (CRUCH)<sup>1</sup> and located in the southern and south-central areas of the country. The English teaching program lasted 10 academic semesters at all three institutions.

The second group included 50 novice English language teachers with professional experience ranging from one to five years. These individuals had graduated from the same universities where the first group was studying.

Two groups of participants were studied in order to identify whether their metaphorical representations were similar or if they varied depending on the extent of their professional experience. These findings enable teacher training programs to determine the impact of their educational processes in order to establish possible improvements.

All of the participants confirmed their voluntary collaboration by signing a letter of informed consent, which stated that the data collected in this study would be confidential and the protection of their identities would be ensured.

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1. The group of Chilean universities that were founded prior to the 1980s.

## Data collection instrument

The researchers used a questionnaire of metaphorical representations, which was based on an instrument used in another study (Alarcón et al., 2014). This asked participants to refer to concepts associated with English language assessment and the role of the English teacher in assessment. They were requested to write their answers by using a metaphorical logic, and explaining their choices.

This instrument was administered remotely. When the informants confirmed their participation, the instrument was sent to them via e-mail. Afterwards, they returned their answers the same way.

## Data analysis technique

In order to analyze the collected information, the researchers used the qualitative content analysis technique. Using ATLAS.ti software (version 8), the authors proceeded to code and categorize the participants' written responses in order to create conceptual networks that illustrated the findings.

## Analysis of Results

Table 1 shows a summary of the results that includes the categories and subcategories identified from the content analysis of the participants' written discourse.

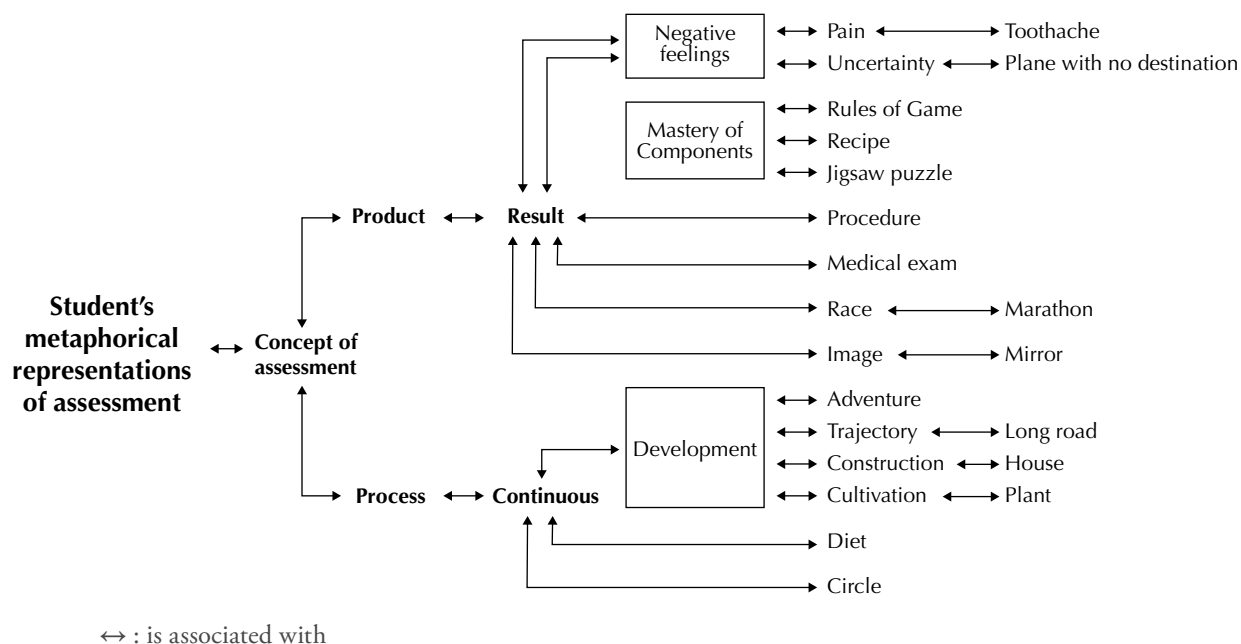
Table 1

*Summary of results*

Categories	Subcategories and codes
Metaphorical representations of Chilean pre-service English teachers about assessment	Concept of assessment Process Product
	Role of the teacher Facilitator Assessor
Metaphorical representations of Chilean novice English teachers about assessment.	Concept of assessment Process Product
	Role of the teacher Facilitator Assessor

*Source: prepared by the authors.*

## Metaphorical representations of Chilean pre-service English language teachers about assessment



↔ : is associated with

Figure 1. *Conceptual network associated with metaphorical representations of pre-service English language teachers about the concept of assessment*

Source: prepared by the authors.

### Concept of assessment

#### *Process*

English language teaching students formulate metaphorical representations about the concept of assessment based on a view of a process (Figure 1), arguing that this aspect of teaching should be developed over a prolonged period of time, since it has a continuous nature. In this context, they propose the metaphor of a circle, because assessment “has a beginning, but it should be a constant process without an established end point.” Other informants relate this construct to following a diet, because “by continuously monitoring what is eaten, improvements are observed. What is important is not only the final result, but also the process.”

The student teachers' metaphorical representations of the concept of English language assessment as a developmental process allude to the cultivation of a plant. This conception is demonstrated in the following response: “Assessment is like a plant because it needs to be watered constantly to produce fruit, just like students need to learn the language through progressive work.”

The metaphorical representations of student teachers that are centered on a process of development are also related to the construction of a house because, according to the respondents, assessment “is an extensive process that needs to be meticulously studied, planned, and executed, taking into account the characteristics of the environment, with all the stages of construction being relevant.”

The respondents also use metaphorical representations of a process that perceive assessment as a journey involving traveling *a long road*. This perspective is exemplified in the following comment: "It is like a long road, where students have to be guided. In order for them to overcome the obstacles, they have to recognize their weaknesses, being helped to learn from them in order to move forward."

Another metaphorical representation of process expressed by the student teachers refers to adventure. They state that assessment involves challenges over time, specifying that "it allows one to explore the learning process of the students, helping them and making the right didactic decisions."

### **Product**

Student teachers also have metaphorical representations about the concept of assessment that are aligned with a perspective of a product (Figure 1). They state that assessment is carried out to demonstrate the result of learning, at a single moment and in a limited time, being similar to a picture. In this respect, the participants indicate that assessment is like a mirror, because "it allows the learner to see him/herself, perceiving his/her state of learning."

From this perspective of a product, assessment is equated to a race where the focus is the final result and which resembles a marathon since, according to the respondents, "to participate you have to prepare for a while and know everything necessary to obtain adequate results."

The participants also state that English language assessment, as a product, is similar to a medical examination, because "it is applied to a person to diagnose and identify his/her deficiencies. Based on the results, measures are taken to improve the patients with a treatment."

In addition, the product-oriented representations expressed by these participants relate assessment to a procedure of formality, since "the only thing that interests the students is that the assessment ends quickly. They aren't concerned about the process or learning. Their priority is the grade."

Another relevant characteristic of the pre-service teachers' product-oriented representations is that they link assessment with demonstration of the mastery of components of the English language. They suggest the metaphor of a jigsaw puzzle, declaring that "it is necessary to recognize various pieces and elements that will demonstrate how much a student has learned. The more elements that are observed, the better the result."

The participants' product-oriented representations that focus on the mastery of English language components also liken assessment to a recipe, stating, "We need the right ingredients to achieve our goal. They have to be of quality if we want to obtain a good result."

Among the metaphorical product-oriented representations framed within the domain of components, the student teachers relate assessment to the rules of a game, saying that "each step of the assessment is like a game, commenting that "each step of the assessment is like a game of chess. It has to be played carefully to achieve the objective."

On the other hand, the student teachers' metaphorical product-oriented representations associate assessment with negative feelings such as uncertainty because of insecurity about the outcome. This is equated with boarding a plane with no destination, because "when an English assessment is applied, despite feeling that it was carefully prepared, we don't know what the results will be, whether they will be positive or negative."

Another negative feeling linked with assessment as a product involves pain. Some participants refer to a toothache because "the English tests make you feel the same panic that you have before visiting the dentist. Then you realize it wasn't as bad as you thought."

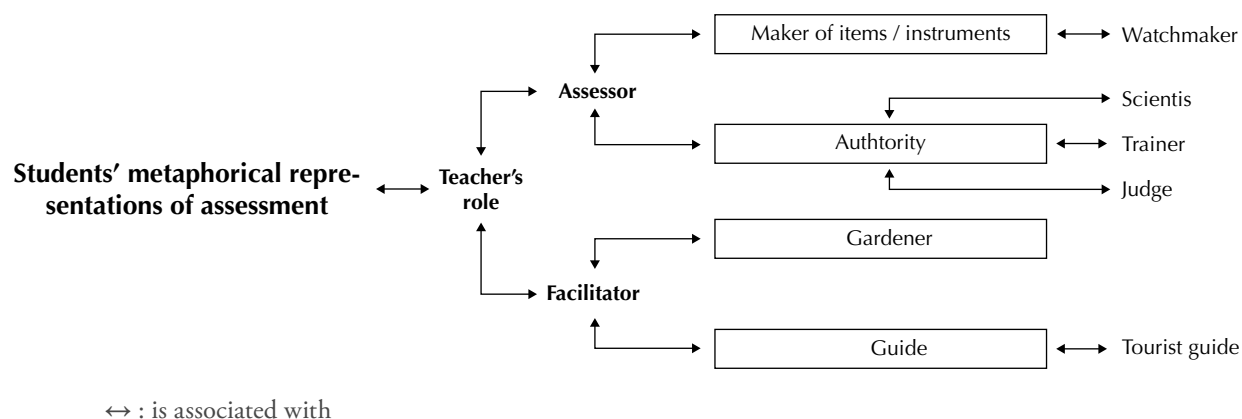


Figure 2. Conceptual network associated with metaphorical representations of pre-service English language teachers about the role of the teacher

Source: prepared by the authors.

## Role of the teacher

### Facilitator

The category of metaphorical representations of that Chilean pre-service English language teachers have about assessment also allows us to identify the subcategory of the teacher's role (Figure 2). The informants create metaphors that refer to the responsibilities of the English teacher in assessment. They recognize their role as a facilitator, mentioning the metaphor of a guide. This view is illustrated in the following excerpt from a response, which refers to the metaphor of a tour guide: "The main role of the English teacher is to guide and provide tools to students so that they can learn and use a new language."

The student teachers' metaphorical representations about the teacher's role in assessment as a facilitator also include the metaphor of a gardener, due to the concern about the needs of a living being for development, stating that "the gardener must decide whether the plant needs more water, more sun, or more fertilizer, acting accordingly, just like an evaluator who attends to the needs of their students would do."

### Assessor

On the other hand, metaphorical representations of the teacher's role in the assessment of these participants are likened to their role as an assessor. This role involves identifying and making judgments about the level of achievement of learners, a task that is carried out by an authority. Therefore, the participants create metaphors referring to the actions of a judge, stating that "the teacher is responsible for the judgment. In addition, he/she has to ensure compliance with the objectives, which, in this case, are similar to laws."

Metaphorical representations of the teacher's role as an authority in assessment are associated with the metaphor of a trainer, a perspective that is shown in the following excerpt: "At the moment of assessing, the student will not only reflect their own knowledge, but also the techniques taught by their trainer, just like a player facing a match, which is the assessment."

Another pre-service teachers' metaphorical representations of the teacher's role as an authority in assessment is related to the figure of a scientist, as shown in the following response: "As teachers, we follow a theory, so we plan a series of experiments, tests, or evaluations. When we seek to test the thesis [to prove that students learned], we have to verify whether our theory is correct or not."



Among the metaphorical representations of the teacher's role as an assessor during evaluations, the student teachers also mention their responsibility as a maker of items/instruments. Some of the participants mention the metaphor of a watchmaker, since "the assessor must carefully prepare each item of the assessment so that it works properly."

### Metaphorical representations of Chilean novice English language teachers about assessment

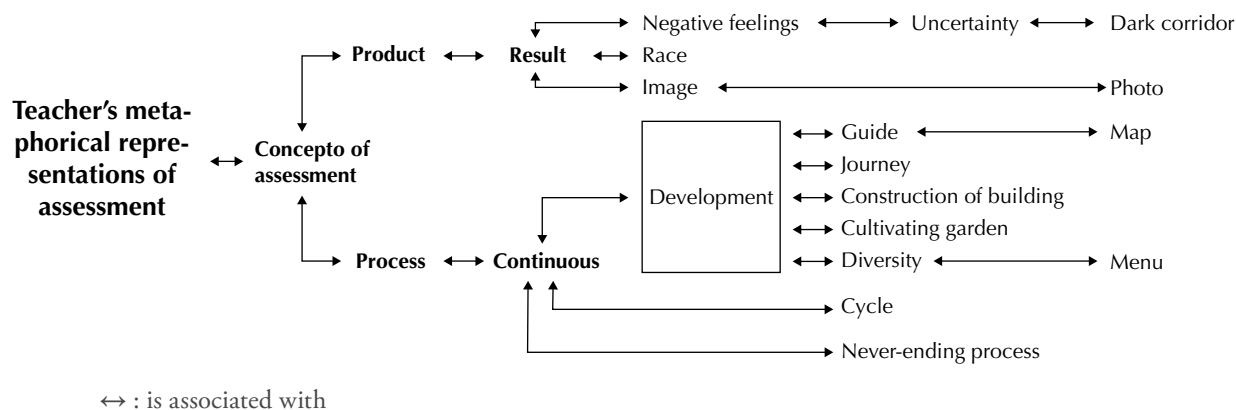


Figure 3. Conceptual network associated with metaphorical representations of novice English language teachers about the concept of assessment

Source: prepared by the authors.

## Concept of assessment

### Process

The metaphorical representations of novice English language teachers perceive the concept of assessment as a process (Figure 3). They create metaphors that suggest the continuous nature of this didactic dimension, which is carried out as a never-ending, uninterrupted process, because "it has to be constant in time, consecutively reflecting the student's progress." They also use the metaphor of a cycle, because the assessment "allows the knowledge of the subject to advance and to seek alternatives, constantly, to overcome weaknesses and strengthen skills, allowing the achievement of the communicative skills of the language."

Within the view of a process and the continuity of assessment, the teachers also express metaphorical representations that emphasize development. They state that this didactic dimension should consider diversity, being subject to modifications in its design and implementation, in addition to being based on the needs and particularities of the learners. This is equated with a menu, because the assessment "can be modified according to the needs of the diners, without neglecting its objective, which is to nourish [learn]."

In the context of the metaphorical representations of a process and continuity, the teachers also use the metaphor of cultivating a garden, which is expressed in the following response: "First, we have the land with nothing. Over time, we prepare the soil and sow the seed. We water and take care of the garden, having to wait. When it blooms and we have beautiful flowers, it's because we've done our work well."

The novice teachers' metaphorical representations of a process are also related to the construction of a building, because this and the assessment provide a solid foundation for progress in accordance with a proposed objective. They state that "assessment is like the concrete that supports each student and the construction of the building relies on it."

When providing metaphorical representations of process regarding assessment, the teachers also refer to a journey. They state that both elements require time to determine the state of progress of a situation or performance. As one of the respondents puts it: “On each trip, you assess the process and the student in their different skills. It’s a process where you observe their strengths and weaknesses over time.”

Among the metaphorical representations of a process, the teachers also use the metaphor of guide. They declare that assessment should provide guidance to students about learning like a map, a concept illustrated as follows: “We know the starting point and observe where we want to go in the process. Using formative assessment, the students and the teacher become aware of the changes that need to be made to respond to the learning needs.”

### Product

Meanwhile, the English teachers’ metaphorical representations of the concept of assessment are oriented towards a view of a product (Figure 3). According to some participants, assessing learning exclusively considers the assessment of a result. In this respect, the teachers state that assessment is like a picture, since both involve observable elements, being carried out at only one moment at the culmination of an event. Therefore, some participants associate assessment with a photograph, arguing the following: “Just like when I take a photograph, with assessment I can obtain an immediate picture of my reality with respect to my knowledge.”

Following the logic of a product, teachers also relate the concept of assessment to a degree course, because its focus is on demonstrating the final result regarding student learning, as the following response shows: “The student has to prepare and make an effort to overcome the obstacles of time, body, and mind in order to reach the goal, which, in this case, would be to take the exam.”

Linked to the concept of assessment as a product where the focus is the result, the teachers describe metaphorical representations that express the negative feeling of uncertainty. This is related to the insecurity that both students and teachers may feel about the reliable identification of learning. Some informants use the metaphor of walking down a dark corridor, because “despite providing the respective knowledge, different circumstances may mean that we are uncertain about the achievement of student results.”

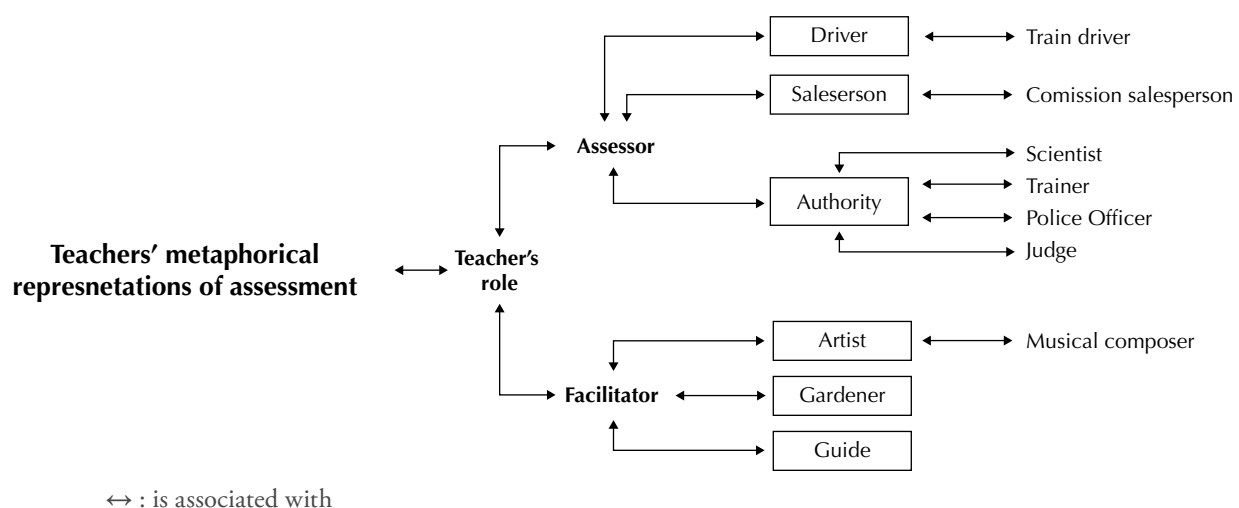


Figure 4. Conceptual network associated with metaphorical representations of novice English language teachers about the role of the teacher

Source: Prepared by the authors.

## Role of the teacher

### *Facilitator*

The novice teachers' metaphorical representations include the role of the teacher when carrying out assessment, considering the function of a facilitator (Figure 4). They use the metaphor of a guide during the process, because they "motivate, provide feedback and support until the learner achieves his/her knowledge in a meaningful and permanent way, encouraging reflection and self-growth."

Representations of the teacher's role as a facilitator in assessment are also likened to the work of a gardener. The teachers state that they have to safeguard and care for the growth of a being over an extended period of time, as shown in the following excerpt: "The gardener constantly has to be watering, pruning, fertilizing their plants (students). Insofar as they do that, they must assess whether the amounts of water are correct, whether the pruning or the light is sufficient."

The teachers also relate the role of facilitator in assessment to the work of an artist, due to the creativity used to create a detailed work of art. Some participants state that, in assessment, both the English language teacher and the music composer "must accurately combine structure, harmony, instrumentation, sound, and expression to create a true piece of art."

### *Assessor*

Some teachers' metaphorical representations about the role of the teacher in evaluation are also linked to the performance of an assessor (Figure 4). This includes making judgments about the level of achievement with respect to students' learning, quantifying their performances, a role that is implemented by an authority. Some participants use the metaphor of the teacher as a judge, because "once the cases are presented, the judge must objectively decide about a certain situation." Similarly, other informants perceive the teacher as a police officer, since both of them "supervise in accordance with the regulations."

In addition, as part of the role of the teacher as an assessor and authority in assessment, the teachers also refer to the role of a trainer, because "they are those who can see how far the athlete is from performing at their best and obtaining an optimal result."

These participants' representations concerning the role of the teacher as an assessor and authority in assessment are also related to the figure of a scientist. The teachers point out that this role is typical of a specialist in an area, adding that "they correctly use the scientific method when constructing and applying a test to prove a hypothesis. They present the results to the community."

These metaphorical representations of the teacher's role in assessment are also likened to the role of a salesperson, because of the judgments that both have to make regarding results. Some of the participants use commissioned the salesperson metaphor, manifesting that "it doesn't matter about their efforts to attract new and more members. Companies always judge their performance using standard assessments. The teacher is also subject to the result of numbers and grades, regardless of the impact of their teaching."

These participants metaphorical representations of the teacher's role as an assessor in evaluation are also compared to the functions of a driver. This task involves actively steering, playing a central role. The participants refer to the metaphor of a train driver, because "the teacher is the driver of the locomotive, operating it within the established times. The students are the wagons that follow the locomotive. The goal is to reach the final station, to fulfill the purpose."

## Discussion of Results

Both pre-service and novice teachers of English perceive assessment from a processual perspective, stating that, in order to be effective, it should be carried out over a prolonged period of time. These representations are framed within the context of assessment for learning or formative assessment, whose purpose is to collect information about the students' performance during the pedagogical process through activities that help them achieve the learning objectives (Katz, 2014). Some studies have established that English teachers and students carrying out their professional practicums show positive perceptions about formative assessment, as it is useful to reveal the areas of knowledge in which learners experience difficulties (Fawzi & Alldabous, 2019; Nimehchisalem & Mat Hussin, 2018). Also, according to the results of one study, regardless of how many years of experience they have, English teachers are aware of the positive effects of formative assessment practices on the progress of students (Sahinkarakas, 2012).

From a processual perspective, both groups of participants use metaphors about the role of the teacher as a facilitator in assessment, such as being a guide or gardener, which imply supporting students in the educational process, helping them to overcome their learning weaknesses. It appears to be positive that the participants attribute these responsibilities to the teacher, as this demonstrates a logic that prioritizes the active role of students in the construction of their learning (Farrell, 2016).

On the other hand, both groups of participants mention metaphorical representations about English language assessment in relation to a product perspective, which on evidencing the result of learning, by creating metaphors of a picture race. These representations are also linked to the metaphors suggested for the teacher's role in assessment as an assessor who carries out functions similar to those of a judge, a trainer, or a scientist.

The conceptualizations described in the paragraph above are related to summative or assessment of learning, whose objective is to collect evidence to determine the achievement of learners at the end of an academic program (Fulcher & Davidson, 2007). The focus of these practices is exclusively on the final result, with written tests as instruments and the quantitative measurement of student performance predominating (Ismail, 2017). It has been suggested that the excessive use of these forms of assessment may not favor educational processes, because they only consider an end product, encouraging the teacher to teach to a test without identifying students' progress (Nimehchisalem & Mat Hussin, 2018). These representations could depend on the language assessment literacy of the participants, which comprises the knowledge and skills required to design, develop, and assess different types of evaluative practices (Fulcher, 2012). Therefore is essential to maximize the instances of professional development and actualization in this area, based on the needs of different kinds of educational contexts (Coombe et al., 2020).

Within the framework of product-oriented metaphorical representations, the participants refer to negative feelings such as uncertainty. This could be linked to anxiety about tests that is often manifested when learners perceive any form of assessment as threatening (Spielberger & Vagg, 1995). This condition may affect language learning, because learners—especially those at lower levels—will try to avoid situations that negatively affect their self-esteem (Xiaoping, 2015).

Nevertheless, the results show certain differences in the metaphorical representations of English assessment among both groups of participants. For the most part, the pre-service teachers emphasize that assessment involves the mastery of components: they mention metaphors such as puzzles or rules of a game that, in the case of assessment in English language learning, would mean testing of linguistic content, such as grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation. Similarly, the pre-service teachers state that one of the teacher's roles in assessment is to act as a developer of items/instruments, which focuses on summative or test-based assessment of learning. These types of representations are based on traditional assessment, which does not significantly foster the development of language skills (Huang & Yiang, 2011).

These representations could originate from the traditional pedagogical beliefs of future teachers which, in turn, may guide their practical knowledge. The construction of these beliefs about assessment could be due to previous experiences as trainees in the stages of education, by witnessing the evaluative practices of primary, secondary, or tertiary education teachers (Özmen, 2012; Mak, 2011). In this vein, research by De Laurentiis Brandão (2021) and Kavanoz (2016) suggests the relevance of helping English language pedagogy students to identify their metaphorical representations and the beliefs that form them, in order to transform them through reflection. This will enable them to be aware of those representations that do not substantially contribute to teaching and learning processes.

Furthermore, considering a processual perspective of assessment, it seems interesting to note that novice English teachers suggest metaphors in the context of the need to respond to the diversity of learners, which differs from what is proposed by pre-service teachers, who do not mention this aspect. This difference may be due to the fact that in-service teachers are constantly challenged to teach and assess the learning of students who have different ways of learning or special educational needs. It is therefore essential for initial teacher training to emphasize working with diversity and the inclusion of students by promoting, for example, the development of curricular adaptations to facilitate the learning of all students. This could involve the three principles of universal design for learning (UDL), which focus on different forms of content representation, different forms of action and expression, and different forms of participation/motivation (Hall et al., 2012).

## Conclusions

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The results show that both pre-service and novice teachers of English express metaphorical representations of assessment that are oriented towards a perspective of a process and product. The latter do not contribute substantially to the learning of language skills. Therefore, it is necessary for future teachers to construct representations focused on assessment for learning, which have a communicative nature. In this vein, the representations of student teachers should be monitored during their undergraduate professional preparation, helping them to reconfigure their knowledge and practices before completing their studies.

In order to achieve this, it is recommended that teacher training programs prepare future language teachers by taking into account the benefits of authentic assessment. This involves having learners demonstrate their performance by means of tasks that are associated with everyday life, focusing on the four language skills from a functional and communicative perspective.

It is also suggested that pedagogy programs, in the university subjects of practice and didactics, encourage future English teachers to reflect on how they design and implement assessment. This should be done so that they question their traditional representations and performances, reconsidering them on the basis of ideas and knowledge of a more constructivist and communicative nature, which can be carried out by analyzing metaphorical constructions. Therefore, constantly motivating student teachers to reflect on their practices can help them to prolong this form of development throughout their professional practice.

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