



Preparación percibida para la docencia en estudiantes de formación docente de una universidad ecuatoriana

Perceived teaching readiness among teacher education students at an ecuadorian university

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RESUMEN

Esta investigación analiza el nivel de preparación percibida para la docencia entre estudiantes de quinto y sexto semestre de la carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros (PINE) de la Universidad Estatal del Sur de Manabí (UNESUM). Mediante un enfoque cuantitativo, se aplicó una encuesta con 15 ítems tipo Likert a 104 estudiantes. Los resultados revelan un nivel moderado-alto de preparación percibida ($M = 3.68$). Los futuros docentes muestran mayor confianza en su motivación para el aprendizaje continuo, la motivación de sus estudiantes y el uso de herramientas digitales. Sin embargo, reportan menor preparación en el dominio del inglés oral (speaking y listening) y en la experiencia práctica en el aula. El estudio identifica fortalezas en aspectos afectivos y áreas de mejora en competencias lingüísticas y prácticas. Estos hallazgos resaltan la necesidad de fortalecer la formación práctica y oral dentro del currículo de PINE para mejorar la preparación de futuros docentes de inglés en contextos ecuatorianos.

Palabras clave: Preparación percibida, Autoeficacia docente, Formación docente, Inglés como lengua extranjera, PINE, UNESUM.

ABSTRACT

This study examines the perceived readiness for teaching among fifth- and sixth-semester students of the National and Foreign Language Pedagogy (PINE) program at the Universidad Estatal del Sur de Manabí (UNESUM). Using a quantitative approach, a survey with 15 Likert-scale items was administered to 104 students. Results indicate a moderate to high level of perceived readiness ($M = 3.68$). Future teachers showed greater confidence in their motivation for continuous learning, motivating students, and integrating digital tools. However, they reported lower preparedness in oral English proficiency (speaking and listening) and practical classroom experience. The study identifies strengths in affective aspects and areas for improvement in linguistic and practical competencies. These findings highlight the need to strengthen practical training and oral skills within the PINE curriculum to better prepare future English teachers in Ecuadorian contexts.

Keywords: Perceived readiness, Teacher self-efficacy, Teacher education, English as a Foreign Language, PINE, UNESUM.



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Introduction

The preparation of future teachers has gained increasing attention in recent decades as educational systems worldwide face new demands and challenges. Teacher education programs play a fundamental role in equipping preservice teachers with the knowledge, skills, and confidence necessary to succeed in the classroom. In this context, perceived readiness for teaching—understood as preservice teachers’ beliefs about their preparedness to perform teaching tasks effectively—has emerged as a critical factor influencing professional development, retention, and instructional quality (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001; Bandura, 1997).

Research consistently shows that high levels of teaching self-efficacy and perceived readiness are associated with greater persistence, better classroom management, and improved student outcomes (Täschner et al., 2025; García-Lázaro et al., 2022). However, many preservice teachers, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programs, report significant gaps between theoretical preparation and the practical realities they will face (Faez & Valeo, 2012; Burgin & Daniel, 2023). These discrepancies are often more pronounced in contexts characterized by limited resources, blended learning modalities, and multilingual educational demands, such as those found in Ecuadorian higher education institutions.

In Latin America, and particularly in Ecuador, teacher training programs face unique challenges, including the integration of digital tools, adaptation to hybrid learning environments, and the need to prepare educators for culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms (Guerrero Rodríguez & Moreira Baquerizo, 2025; Quijije Véliz et al., 2025). At the Universidad Estatal del Sur de Manabí (UNESUM), the Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros (PINE) program prepares future English teachers through courses such as Methodology and Didactics, primarily tar-

geting students in the fifth and sixth semesters. These students represent the bridge between academic formation and professional practice, yet limited research has explored their perceived readiness to teach EFL in real educational settings.

Previous studies have examined self-efficacy beliefs among preservice teachers in technology integration (Caner & Aydın, 2021; Matsumura & Tatsuyama, 2024), online teaching readiness (Paetsch & Franz, 2025; Jin, 2023), and culturally responsive practices (Siwatu, 2007). While valuable, most of this literature originates from Global North contexts or focuses on in-service teachers. There remains a need for context-specific research addressing the realities of regional Ecuadorian universities, where students often balance academic demands with limited practicum opportunities and diverse linguistic backgrounds (Burgin & Daniel, 2023; Guerrero Rodríguez & Moreira Baquerizo, 2025).

The present study explores the perceived readiness for teaching among teacher education students at an Ecuadorian university. Specifically, it examines the self-perceived preparedness of fifth- and sixth-semester students in the PINE program at UNESUM. Adopting a quantitative approach, the research aims to identify levels of perceived readiness, associated factors, and areas requiring greater attention in the curriculum. By focusing on this population, the study seeks to provide valuable insights that can inform curriculum improvement, pedagogical practices, and institutional support mechanisms. Ultimately, understanding preservice teachers’ perceived readiness constitutes an essential step toward strengthening teacher education programs and enhancing the quality of English language teaching in Ecuadorian educational contexts.

Perceived Readiness and Teaching Self-Efficacy in Preservice EFL Teacher Education

Teacher self-efficacy and perceived readiness for teaching represent central

constructs in teacher education research. Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as individuals' beliefs in their capabilities to organize and execute the actions required to produce given attainments. In the teaching context, Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) conceptualized teacher efficacy as a judgment of one's capabilities to bring about desired outcomes in student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. These beliefs strongly influence preservice teachers' motivation, persistence, and professional development (Täschner et al., 2025).

Empirical studies have consistently shown that higher levels of perceived readiness and self-efficacy correlate with positive outcomes during the practicum and early career stages. García-Lázaro et al. (2022) found that preservice teachers with stronger self-efficacy reported greater well-being and satisfaction during their teaching practice. Similarly, Devi et al. (2023) demonstrated that self-efficacy, teaching practice, and teacher readiness are interconnected, with teacher interest playing a mediating role. In the specific domain of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Faez and Valeo (2012) revealed that novice teachers often perceive gaps between their university preparation and the actual demands of classroom teaching, particularly regarding pedagogical and linguistic competencies.

Technology integration has become a key dimension of teaching readiness in contemporary teacher education. Caner and Aydın (2021) reported that preservice teachers generally hold positive self-efficacy beliefs regarding technology integration, although implementation in real contexts remains challenging. More recently, Matsumura and Tatsuyama (2024) showed that exposure to English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) approaches in multilingual settings can enhance preservice EFL teachers' self-efficacy. Likewise, Paetsch and Franz (2025) identified distinct profiles of early-career teachers' readiness for online teaching, highlighting

the importance of digital competencies in hybrid educational environments. Jin (2023) documented the experiences of preservice teachers during emergency remote teaching amid COVID-19, underscoring both opportunities and persistent challenges in online pedagogy.

In Latin American and Ecuadorian contexts, research highlights specific realities that shape teacher preparation. Burgin and Daniel (2023) explored future teachers' readiness to teach EFL in multilingual contexts in Ecuador, identifying significant concerns regarding linguistic diversity and practical preparation. Guerrero Rodríguez and Moreira Baquerizo (2025) examined Ecuadorian EFL teachers' experiences fostering students' speaking skills, revealing persistent challenges such as limited resources, time constraints, and traditional methodological approaches. Local studies at UNESUM further contextualize these issues. Quijije Véliz et al. (2025) analyzed artificial intelligence as a didactic resource in university teacher training in Ecuador, while Cedeño Rengifo et al. (2025) investigated student engagement in English grammar learning, both emphasizing the need for innovative, student-centered strategies.

Psychometric tools such as the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) have proven reliable across cultural contexts. Duffin et al. (2012) confirmed the factor structure of the TSES with beginning preservice teachers, while Salas-Rodríguez et al. (2021) and Gálvez-Nieto et al. (2023) provided evidence of its validity in Spanish-speaking samples, supporting its use in Latin American teacher education research. Siwatu (2007) expanded the construct by examining culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy, an especially relevant dimension for Ecuador's bilingual and multilingual educational settings.

Despite growing international literature, there remains a need for studies focused on advanced preservice EFL students in regional Ecuadorian universities. Most existing research ei-

ther originates from Global North contexts or addresses in-service teachers, leaving a gap regarding the perceived readiness of students in programs such as PINE at UNESUM, who are nearing professional practice while navigating blended learning environments and specific curricular demands.

The present study addresses this gap by examining the perceived readiness for teaching among fifth- and sixth-semester students in the PINE program at the Universidad Estatal del Sur de Manabí. By doing so, it aims to contribute both to local curriculum improvement and to the broader understanding of teacher preparation in similar Latin American contexts.

Method

The present research followed a strictly quantitative approach. The study employed a non-experimental, cross-sectional, and descriptive design. The main objective was to determine the level of perceived readiness for teaching among preservice English language teachers.

The participants consisted of 104 students from the fifth and sixth semesters of the National and Foreign Language Pedagogy (PINE) program at the Universidad Estatal del Sur de Manabí (UNESUM). A non-probabilistic convenience sampling technique was used, given the researchers' direct access to the students enrolled in the Methodology and Didactics course. Data collection took place during the academic period 2026.

Data were collected through a structured online questionnaire specifically designed for this study. The instrument consisted of 15 items on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree), addressing key dimensions of teaching readiness: lesson planning, classroom management, pedagogical adaptation, linguistic competencies, integration of digital tools (including Wayground), evaluation practices, student motivation, and professional development. The questionnaire also included two open-ended questions aimed at identifying students' perceived strengths and areas needing improvement. The items were adapted from validated scales such as the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001; Salas-Rodríguez et al., 2021).

The survey was administered via Google Forms. All participants received clear information about the study's purpose and voluntarily provided informed consent. Anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed. The data collection process lasted two weeks.

For data analysis, descriptive statistics were calculated, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations for each item. The open-ended responses were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify the main strengths and areas for improvement reported by the students. All analyses were performed using Microsoft Excel.

Table 1. Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Participants (N = 104)

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Semester	5th Semester	68	65.4
	6th Semester	36	34.6
Age	18 - 25 years	45	43.3
	26 - 30 years	26	25.0
	31 - 35 years	19	18.3
	36 - 45 years	12	11.5
	More than 45 years	2	1.9
Gender	Female	84	80.8

	Male	20	19.2
Formal Teaching Practices	Yes	43	41.3
	No	61	58.7
Previous Experience Teaching English	Yes	32	30.8
	No	72	69.2

Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Table 2.

Students' Perceived Readiness for Teaching (N = 104)

Question	Statement (summary)	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
Q1	I feel prepared to plan effective English lessons aligned with learning objectives.	28% (29)	42% (44)	18% (19)	8% (8)	4% (4)	3.48
Q2	I feel capable of managing the classroom, discipline, and creating a positive learning environment.	35% (36)	45% (47)	12% (12)	6% (6)	2% (3)	3.72
Q3	I feel prepared to adapt my lessons to students' needs and different English levels.	32% (33)	44% (46)	15% (16)	7% (7)	2% (2)	3.65
Q4	I am confident in teaching grammar and vocabulary clearly and effectively.	30% (31)	41% (43)	19% (20)	8% (8)	2% (2)	3.58
Q5	I feel prepared to develop students' oral skills (listening and speaking).	25% (26)	38% (39)	22% (23)	10% (10)	5% (6)	3.42
Q6	I can effectively integrate digital tools (Wayground, Kahoot, Canva, Padlet, etc.).	38% (40)	46% (48)	10% (10)	5% (5)	1% (1)	3.84
Q7	I am prepared to face challenges in blended learning environments.	34% (35)	43% (45)	14% (15)	6% (6)	3% (3)	3.71
Q8	I am confident in assessing students' learning fairly and formatively.	36% (37)	44% (46)	13% (13)	5% (5)	2% (3)	3.76
Q9	I feel prepared to promote self-assessment and peer-assessment.	32% (33)	42% (44)	16% (17)	7% (7)	3% (3)	3.68
Q10	I can motivate students with low motivation or anxiety toward English.	42% (44)	45% (47)	8% (8)	4% (4)	1% (1)	3.95
Q11	I am confident in my English proficiency (oral and written) to teach effectively.	22% (23)	35% (36)	25% (26)	12% (12)	6% (7)	3.35
Q12	I feel capable of designing student-centered activities.	33% (34)	44% (46)	14% (15)	6% (6)	3% (3)	3.69
Q13	I am prepared to handle unexpected situations during classes.	30% (31)	43% (45)	17% (18)	7% (7)	3% (3)	3.62
Q14	I believe I can make a significant contribution to my future students' learning.	40% (42)	44% (46)	10% (10)	4% (4)	2% (2)	3.92
Q15	I am motivated and prepared to continue learning and improving as a teacher.	52% (54)	38% (39)	7% (7)	2% (2)	1% (2)	4.25

Note: Data derived from a survey applied to 5th and 6th semester PINE students. Percentages and frequencies are presented for each response category using a five-point Likert scale.

Table 3.
Main Themes from Open-Ended Questions (N = 104)

Question	Main Themes	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Examples
Strengths as future English teachers	Patience & Empathy	48	46.2	“Patience, empathy, and creativity”
	Responsibility & Commitment	35	33.7	“Responsibility and continuous learning”
	Creativity & Motivation	22	21.2	“Creating dynamic activities”
Areas needing more preparation	Speaking & Listening skills	62	59.6	“Speaking and listening”, “Fluency and pronunciation”
	Practical classroom experience	41	39.4	“More real teaching practice”
	Lesson planning & Classroom management	28	26.9	“Planning and managing the classroom”
	Technological tools & Methodologies	19	18.3	“Better use of digital tools”

Note: *Categories are not mutually exclusive; participants could mention multiple themes.*

Results

The quantitative analysis of the 15-item survey reveals a moderate to high level of perceived readiness for teaching among the participants. Data indicates that students of the PINE program perceive themselves as moderately prepared to face the challenges of English language teaching. A significant majority of the respondents recognize their strengths in areas related to motivation and professional development. Specifically, 90% of the students agree or strongly agree that they are motivated and prepared to continue learning and improving as teachers after graduation (Q15). Furthermore, 87% of the group highlights their ability to motivate students who show low motivation or anxiety toward English learning (Q10). Such findings align with the importance of self-efficacy beliefs in teacher education (Bandura, 1997; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001).

The results suggest that digital competencies and classroom management play a positive role in students’ perceived readi-

ness. Seventy-eight percent of the participants (Q6) consider that they can effectively integrate digital tools such as Wayground, Kahoot, Canva or Padlet in their classes. Additionally, 80% of the sample (Q2) indicates confidence in managing the classroom and creating a positive learning environment. These dynamic aspects improve their sense of preparedness compared to more traditional competencies. High scores in these areas aid in developing a stronger professional identity (Caner & Aydın, 2021; Matsumura & Tatsuyama, 2024).

The affective and motivational dimension shows encouraging results. Eighty-four percent of the respondents (Q14) feel that they will be able to contribute significantly to their future students’ learning. Such a positive outlook provides a sense of security during the final stages of their training (García-Lázaro et al., 2022). Regarding professional growth, 85% of the group (Q15) values the importance of continuous learning. Jumaat et al. (2024) and Täschner et al. (2025) emphasize that high levels of self-efficacy co-

relate with greater commitment and better teaching performance.

Finally, the data supports the need to strengthen certain areas of the curriculum. The lowest scores were observed in confidence in English language proficiency ($M = 3.35$) and the development of students' oral skills ($M = 3.42$). According to Faez and Valeo (2012) and Burgin and Daniel (2023), these gaps between perceived preparation and real classroom demands are common in EFL preservice teachers. The current evidence mirrors the evolving needs of the PINE program. These findings suggest that while students demonstrate a solid foundation, targeted actions in linguistic proficiency and practical experience are essential to improve their readiness for the teaching profession.

Discussion

The findings of the present study reveal a moderate to high level of perceived readiness for teaching among PINE students. One of the most notable results is the strong motivation expressed by participants to continue their professional development after graduation. This outcome is consistent with the theoretical framework proposed by Bandura (1997) and recent meta-analytic evidence from Täschner et al. (2025), which highlight self-efficacy as a key predictor of long-term commitment in the teaching profession. Furthermore, the high percentage of students who believe they can motivate learners facing low motivation or anxiety reinforces the ideas of García-Lázaro et al. (2022), suggesting that a positive self-perception contributes to building confidence for future classroom challenges.

With respect to digital competencies, students reported feeling relatively confident in integrating tools such as Wayground, Kahoot, and Canva into their lessons. These results align with previous studies by Caner and Aydin (2021) and Matsumura and Tatsuyama (2024), which emphasize the role of technology in strengthening teaching self-efficacy. Similarly, participants showed positive attitudes

toward blended learning environments, supporting the observations of Paetsch and Franz (2025) and Jin (2023). Nevertheless, as noted by Burgin and Daniel (2023), important gaps remain between theoretical training and the practical realities faced by EFL teachers in Ecuadorian contexts. This highlights the need to expand opportunities for hands-on teaching experience.

The affective dimension also yielded encouraging results. Most students expressed confidence in their potential to make a meaningful contribution to their future students' learning. This positive outlook supports the findings of Devi et al. (2023) and Salas-Rodríguez et al. (2021) regarding the importance of self-efficacy in Latin American teacher education programs. When preservice teachers feel emotionally prepared, they tend to approach their professional role with greater engagement. Local studies such as Guerrero Rodríguez and Moreira Baquerizo (2025) further confirm that these emotional factors play a decisive role in successful EFL teaching in our region.

Finally, students' clear identification of areas requiring improvement points to the need for curricular adjustments. Participants consistently mentioned the necessity of strengthening oral skills (particularly speaking and listening), acquiring more practical classroom experience, and enhancing lesson planning and classroom management. These concerns echo the observations of Faez and Valeo (2012) and Quijije Véliz et al. (2025). While much of the existing literature discusses general aspects of teacher readiness, this study provides specific evidence of the current needs of advanced PINE students at UNESUM. As suggested by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) and local research at UNESUM, addressing these identified gaps through targeted interventions represents a crucial step toward improving teacher preparation in our context.

Conclusion

The study shows that PINE students at UNESUM demonstrate a moderate to high level

of perceived readiness for teaching. Participants value their motivation for continuous learning and their ability to motivate students, but they face important challenges in oral language proficiency (speaking and listening) and practical classroom experience (Faez & Valeo, 2012; Burgin & Daniel, 2023).

The study has limitations. The sample was obtained through convenience sampling at a single university, which restricts the generalizability of the results. In addition, the cross-sectional design only captured perceptions at one moment and did not measure actual teaching performance.

Interactive, practical, and technology-supported approaches seem to improve students' confidence and readiness. More flexible, student-centered strategies and increased teaching practice opportunities are needed to bridge the gap between theory and real classroom demands. These findings call for improvements in the PINE curriculum and teaching practices. Further research is recommended with larger samples and longitudinal designs to verify these results and evaluate the impact of curricular changes.

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