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COMITÉ DE PRÁCTICA PEDAGÓGICA



A PERSONAL LEADERSHIP STATEMENT

NATALIA LUNA SENA

DALILA GUZMAN AVILES



UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PROGRAMME

DIPLOMA COURSE

Lifelong Professional Development: Empowering Foreign Language Teachers

MONTERÍA - CÓRDOBA

2022



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A PERSONAL LEADERSHIP STATEMENT

NATALIA LUNA SENA

DALILA GUZMAN AVILES

Statement submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
English Teaching Program

MENTOR

PEDRO P. AGUAS CASTILLO, PhD

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OUR LEADERSHIP PROFILE



As teacher leaders, we see ourselves as figures who inspire, empower, motivate and lead in any context of both our professional and personal lives. We describe ourselves as confident, innovative, and optimistic people. We know how to work as a team to achieve our dreams and reach success, but we are also ready to face and overcome adversity. Our greatest strengths are high empathy, the ability to analyze and solve problems, and clear strategic thinking. We motivate each other to give our best and work hard. We are empowered leaders working to build a better society.

“Leadership is the power to empower others, and the ability to achieve success by motivating others to lead in order to transform vision into reality.”

Luna Natalia & Guzman Dalila, Personal Leadership Statement.



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Abstract

Leadership through the years has shown strong growth, as well as its great importance for the development of strategies and skills for teachers in the educational community. Therefore, it is of great importance that leadership be developed and given due importance in educational and administrative processes to achieve the objectives set. This personal statement is aimed to describe processes of teacher development, such as empowerment of future teacher leaders, strategies, learning collaborative work, and developing skills of authentic leaders. As a result, in this paper, we will explain the main concepts of definition and explanation of leadership, assumptions, contributions to future schools, and our conclusions. Hence, this plan is constructed not only, to illustrate to teachers what leadership is but also to guide and train them so that they are able to empower themselves and train others on how to be teacher leaders.

Keywords: *Leadership, collaborative work, teacher leaders, empowerment, professional development.*





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INTRODUCTION

Leadership is the ability to use power efficiently and responsibly and seeks to face challenges by building commitment and awareness (Prestiadi, Gunawan, and Sumarsono, 2020). According to Gandolfi & Stone (2016), leadership is a deliberate method through which a leader guides a set of people within an organization to a generally known future state that differs from the current one. Leadership seeks significant changes that reflect the shared purposes between leaders and followers “by building networks of positive relationships” (Daft, 2008, p. 357). It is relevant to comprehend the need to explore and understand leadership from different perspectives. There are different types of leadership: educational leadership, teacher leadership, student leadership, senior leadership, transactional leadership, moral leadership, transformational leadership, and authentic leadership. During the development of this chapter, we will focus on teacher leadership.

Certainly, for us leadership is needed in all aspects that are present in our lives. Therefore, in the education field where we are in; we constructed our definition of this phenomenon based on our process of future teacher leaders. Leadership is a concept that through the years has been complex to explain and for us leadership is the power of guiding and being guided by other people. Thus, leadership requires the leader to have certain social features such as being an influencing person and being an expert in his/her field to achieve the objectives that were set; it means that leadership. According to Merideth, (2006, p. 2)

“leadership is not something bestowed upon a teacher to rise above one’s role but should





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be considered a necessary step in fulfilling that role in the classroom as a model learner, effective teacher, and participant in continuous school improvement''. Leadership in education builds learning with a positive influence and sharing a vision of the future involving all members of a learning team, considering that leadership is the process of persuasion that induces a group to pursue its objectives supported by a leader who exercises an assertive impact on his followers (Gardner, 2000).





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OUR ASSUMPTIONS

A teacher leader has the power to significantly impact the educational and personal lives of students. Consequently, in the educational field, it is necessary that teacher leaders can develop leadership skills that reflect an improvement in the performance of those who are under their guidance. Therefore, the people in charge of leading educational processes play a very important role because they should be able to make assertive changes that seek the effectiveness and quality of these processes. Prestiadi, et al. (2020, p. 120) have stated, "Educational leadership is the ability to create the most effective changes in group behavior". Beyond everything that educational leadership implies, the main and significant interest lies in how leaders put their leadership assumptions into action to conduct educational processes.

To understand how these assumptions are used in educational processes, it is important to keep in mind that leaders, based on different conceptions of what leadership is, apply the most appropriate way for the educational context. According to the assumptions of Daft (2008), leadership transcends the internal qualities of a leader and not a set of skills. For this reason, from a genuine passion for learning and teaching, a teacher leader seeks to lead not only their students to academic success but also to personal success. When a leadership group is part of an educational community, relationships are built that help each of the members of this community learn from each other. In addition, "to foster positive





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school climate and establish good relationships among teachers through which collaborative learning could take place.” (Liu, 2021, p. 2)

We believe that both the relationships that are built around the educational and leadership processes are the key to achieving the common goal desired. We assume that for leadership to occur there must be assertive communication, real leaders do not give orders or impose, rather, they guide and lead through the connections or links created from collaborative work. Leadership also means challenges that can test the stability of the work environment and the quality of productivity. During our training processes as leaders, we have been able to put into practice and demonstrate collaborative work when challenges arise. In this way, it is easier to follow up on the fulfillment of our team learning objectives planned at the beginning of our journey in the process of becoming educational leaders. Once again, we agree with Daft (2021,) when he describes the importance of collaborative work in terms of the qualities of a leader and relationships:

Leaders need the traits of ethics, honesty, and integrity to rebuild trusting and productive relationships. People today are wary of authority and the deceptive use of power, and they are hungry for leaders who hold high standards and reinforce them through everyday actions. (p. 37)

As teacher leaders, it is important to be innovative and collaborative at the same time to meet the demands that these new generations and society bring with them. That is



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why it is important to give our followers opportunities where they can learn and practice being innovative and collaborative. However, this situation would be best given in an environment where each other helps each other grow and improve. And to Daft (2008, p.10), “[t]he moves to empowerment also ties directly into new ways of working that emphasize collaboration over competition and conflict.” This means that it is necessary for a safe space where future teacher leaders and followers find new ways of working together in willing to reach common goals.

After analyzing and understanding how collaborative work has influenced the leadership learning process in our path, we need to understand the different perceptions that other people have about how this collaborative work operates. As a result, we can practice our leadership skills by knowing deeply how “the followers” act. Having all this information would allow us to facilitate our work, and reach our shared goals by enhancing all types of abilities that we have and go beyond our expectations.

We agree with Daft (2008, p.10) when he exposes contends that “compromise and sharing are recognized as signs of strength, not weakness.” This means that we as future teacher leaders need to teach and learn to share our knowledge by working in a collaborative environment where the meaning of “collaborative work” represents an ability and not a difficulty. Therefore, it is important to ask ourselves as future teacher leaders the next three questions:

- Who do I want to be as a future leader?



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- Am I empowering myself to empower others?
- What are those difficulties that might appear in my way as a future teacher leader?

Considering the previous questions, we present them as Self-assessment and evaluation of our work as future educational leaders. To improve our leadership skills and build better communication, as future leaders we want the people around us, that is, those who receive guidance to become our assessors.





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LEADERSHIP EMPOWERMENT & IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Hakimi & Konczak, et al. (2000, p. 4) define leadership empowerment as an "enabling process, rather than a delegating process and it is conceptualized as the ability of leaders to delegate authority, encourage problem-solving and decision-making, developing skills and coaching of followers". This statement allows us to discover and understand the importance of leadership empowerment in education as leading teachers since it goes beyond teaching. This process also implies demonstrating that we are capable of recognizing and exalting the abilities and capacities of each individual, and in addition to empowering those around us, the effectiveness of leadership also implies working consciously to achieve common objectives that promote collective improvement. Therefore, for leadership empowerment to be effective in schools, teacher leaders should be moderators of behaviors and skills that inspire their followers to also be agents of change in society, and builders of consciousness.

The act of empowering others requires us to allow others to give their best in what they are doing. According to Draft, (2008, p.242), "leaders can meet the higher motivational needs of subordinates to shift power down from the top of the organizational hierarchy and share it with subordinates." Empowering teachers to be leaders, and in our case to be teacher leaders in teaching a foreign language can be challenging but with the correct guidance, and through this diploma course, we are able now to say that we have the ability and the necessary skills to self-empower and empower others around us. Our





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prospective plan as future teacher leaders are not only to empower students but also to empower teachers, administrative staff, parents, and everyone around us. Furthermore, our work as future teacher leaders intend to support and lead changes not only in planning lessons but also in creating curriculum, coordinating processes beyond the expected, improving and enriching the work environment, and in the future changing the current educational field.



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CONCLUSIONS

Finally, as teacher leaders of foreign languages, we agree that it is essential to continue empowering others to bring out the best of themselves not only in their area of work but also in their daily lives. We believe that the success behind leadership lies in learning to know yourself as a person and as a professional, and also to know the people around us, their abilities, and weaknesses to turn them into better versions of themselves. The success of leadership plans depends on carrying out effective and agile changes influenced by a leader who works towards organizational development. Thus, the factor of motivation and inspiration will influence each individual to feel considered and enticed to work for the sake of achieving excellence.

True innovation lies in making students aware and involved in their training process; therefore, the schools that manage to promote educational innovation as an integration process will be those that achieve success. To ensure that the quality and innovation of foreign languages in education are present in schools, the management, and application of strategies that ensure the learning and practice of a foreign language in real contexts are also necessary. Through our leadership roles, we are aware of the relevance of our role as leader-teachers, and that we can influence the way foreign language education is taught. Consequently, we are more certain than ever that our actions as leaders contribute to inspiring and influencing others to achieve the ability to transform reality.





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