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The screenshot shows the Oxford Academic website interface. At the top, the Oxford Academic logo is on the left, and 'University of Strathclyde' is on the right. Below this is a large orange banner with the 'ELT journal' logo. A navigation bar contains links for 'Issues', 'More Content', 'Submit', 'Purchase', 'Alerts', and 'About'. A search bar on the right contains the text 'All ELT Journal'. On the left side, there is a vertical 'Article Contents' menu with links to 'Abstract', 'Introduction', 'Conceptual framework', 'The study', 'Findings and discussion', 'Conclusion', and 'References'. The main content area features the article title 'Authenticity and motivation: a writing for publication experience' by Darío Luis Banegas, Grisel Roberts, Romina Colucci, and Betina Ana Sarsa. It includes the journal name 'ELT Journal', the article ID 'ccz056', the DOI link, and the publication date '20 December 2019'. Below the title are icons for 'PDF', 'Split View', 'Cite', 'Permissions', and 'Share'. The abstract text is partially visible, starting with 'Framed in exploratory action research, this article reports on an experience carried out at an initial English teacher education (IELTE) programme in Argentina. A group of four tutors noticed their student-teachers' demotivation to complete written coursework. On exploring this issue, it was found that lack of authenticity of audience in writing tasks acted as a demotivation factor. The tutors adapted their teaching practices to engage the student-teachers in a writing for publication project organized by an Argentinian teacher association in 2018. To understand the effects of this experience on the student-teachers' motivation, data were collected through individual interviews, in-class group discussions, pair-work tasks with the student-teachers, and through notes taken during tutors' meetings. Findings show that while authenticity of audience acted as a motivating factor with more advanced student-teachers, most student-teachers and tutors engaged in motivational synergy triggered by a change in tutors' teaching practices given the possibility of publishing.'

**Note: This is NOT the published version**

## Authenticity and motivation: A writing for publication experience

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Framed in exploratory action research, this article reports on an experience carried out at an initial English teacher education (IELTE) programme in Argentina. A group of four tutors noticed their student-teachers' demotivation to complete written coursework. On exploring this issue, it was found that lack of authenticity of audience in writing tasks acted as a demotivation factor. The tutors adapted their teaching practices to engage the student-teachers in a writing for publication project organized by an Argentinian teacher association in 2018. To understand the effects of this experience on the student-teachers' motivation, data were collected through individual interviews, in-class group discussions, pair-work tasks with the student-teachers, and through notes taken during tutors' meetings. Findings show that while authenticity of audience acted as a motivating factor with more advanced student-teachers, most student-teachers and tutors engaged in motivational synergy triggered by a change in tutors' teaching practices given the possibility of publishing.

## **Introduction**

The relationship between authenticity and motivation has received considerable attention in ELT (Roberts and Banegas 2018; Pinner 2016). Although authenticity as a source of motivation and communicative language learning is usually linked to materials and tasks (Gilmore 2019), Gilmore (2007) indicates that it can also relate to the language produced to construct a real message by a real writer/speaker for a real audience, which is understood as authenticity of audience. While the literature offers empirical studies about the impact of authenticity on motivation (Pinner 2016), there is a dearth of studies which examine authenticity of audience in initial English language teacher education (IELTE).

In the exploratory-action-research-based experience reported in this article, four teacher educators/tutors, the authors of this article, sought to boost a group of IELTE student-teachers' motivation by adding authenticity of audience to L2 writing tasks included in mandatory modules aimed at enhancing English language proficiency. To this effect, we engaged student-teachers in a writing-for-publication project in response to a teacher association initiative. Our study also seeks to respond to the underrepresentation of ELT studies set in Latin America in international journals.

## **Conceptual framework**

In our project about writing for publication as a space for combining motivation with authenticity of audience, we understand motivation as a complex, dynamic and unstable concept which refers to a person's drive to act, influenced by contextual factors, in a particular way. In language education, learner and teacher motivation are intertwined and influenced by the multifaceted context in which teaching and learning processes unfold (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011). Drawing on current theoretical perspectives on motivation (Lamb 2017), we concentrate on Ushioda's (2009) person-in-context relational view of motivation because it acts as a prism through which we can understand learners' and tutors' interests and selves in their own settings. In the case of student-teachers, they are transitioning from being language students to being language teachers, and therefore their identity exerts a powerful influence on their current learning practices.

In EFL settings where being a so-called non-native speaker lends itself to an equivocal deficit position, student-teachers may believe that their teaching efficacy and professional identity is dependent on their knowledge of English and English language proficiency (Amez and Dobboletta 2017; Pennington and Richards 2016). In such settings, according to Pinner (2016, 2018), motivation in L2 writing may be

enhanced if students are engaged in authentic writing tasks. He defines authenticity as a component which impacts on individual and social identity and may drive people to act in their interest in developing their language proficiency. In other words, authenticity is another source of motivation. Concerning English language learning, the author suggests that one important factor to consider when designing writing tasks is authenticity of audience, i.e. writing for a wider and genuine readership instead of writing for an imaginary friend or tutor. Writing for publication may be thus conceived as an authentic task which includes authenticity of audience.

In IELTE programmes, tutors may instil a sense of authenticity of audience by making students' texts available to a wider community. In this landscape, writing for publication may become a source of motivation to write; however, such motivation does not only affect students. The underlying assumption is that when learner and teacher motivations are aligned and feedback on each other, they generate a synergistic environment (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011) or, as Pinner (2019) puts it, motivational synergy. Motivational synergy drives, conversely, students to engage in learning, and on the other hand, it acts as a trigger for teachers to calibrate and energize their situated professional practices.

## **The study**

This experience took place during the March-November 2018 academic year at a four-year IELTE programme in southern Argentina. The programme consists of mandatory modules that prepare students to become EFL teachers for kindergarten, primary, and secondary education. Framed in exploratory action research (Smith and Rebolledo 2018), we analyzed the effects of engaging IELTE student-teachers in writing for publication to enhance their motivation to complete written coursework. In addition, we aimed at understanding the effects of the experience on our own motivation. In this section we describe the participants, details about data collection and analysis, and summarize the pedagogical intervention.

Concerning participants, Table 1 condenses pedagogical and background information of the 16 student-teachers and three tutors involved. A fourth tutor only acted as a facilitator in the EAR experience but did not teach any of the modules involved. Two clarifications are necessary. First, the limited student-teacher population responds to high drop-out rates due to economic and academic factors in Patagonia, a vast but underpopulated region in southern Argentina. Second, although Year 4 student-teachers also engaged in writing for publication

with a focus on book reviews, that experience became a complex interinstitutional project and therefore we decided not to include it in the present article.

**Table 1. Participants.**

	<b>Module</b>	<b>Tutor</b>	<b>Student-teachers</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	English Language and Interculturality 1	Grisel, six years in the programme, experienced in educational research and writing for publication.	12, aged 18-20, A2-B1 (CEFR)
<b>Year 2</b>	English Language and Interculturality 2	Betina, three years in the programme, no experience in writing for publication.	1, aged 22, B2 (CEFR)
<b>Year 3</b>	English Language and Interculturality 3	Romina, two years in the programme, no experience in writing for publication.	3, aged between 25-35, B2-C1 (CEFR)

Following the two macro stages of EAR (Smith and Rebolledo 2018), i.e. exploratory research and action research, we first identified the issue, i.e. student-teachers' demotivation to write due to lack of authenticity of audience in the writing tasks. We then planned and implemented the pedagogical intervention described in the Action Research section below. Last, we reflected on the experience and wrote this article to socialize the results with a wider audience. Data were collected through individual interviews, in-class group discussions and pair-work tasks. The content of the interviews and tasks was student-teachers' perceptions of writing tasks and teaching strategies for developing writing skills with a focus on motivation.

Furthermore, notes taken during tutors' meetings were included as data. We engaged in the process of transcribing interviews for thematic analysis. Emergent themes were the result of an iterative process in which data were analyzed, reanalyzed and discussed by all the co-authors of this article. We centred our attention on understanding the effects that the intervention had on student-teachers' motivation to write. However, the data also revealed positive effects on our motivation as teacher educators. In this sense the study illustrates Pinner's (2019) concept of motivational synergy.

## **Exploratory research**

Drawing on the sub-stages of exploratory research, plan to explore, explore, and analyze and reflect (Smith and Rebolledo 2018), between April-June 2018, we noted that the student-teachers enrolled in the programme often struggled with completing writing assignments. Thus, our first research question was: Why do our student-teachers struggle with writing tasks in IELTE? With the aim of clarifying

this situation, in June 2018 we collected data through a pair work task in which the 16 student-teachers had to record themselves using their mobile phones to answer this question: What do you think about the writing activities we do in the module? Thematic analysis yielded that the 16 student-teachers valued the possibility of systematic practice and the writing of different text types (e.g. informal letters, descriptions, reflective pieces, essays, and short stories). For example, one student-teacher said:

I like the fact that we have practice; almost every week we need to hand in a piece. We work in class and also at home, and I think it's important that we can practise regularly. (Yanina, Extract 1)

Notwithstanding, most student-teachers raised concerns about authenticity despite admitting the importance of writing different genres. Thirteen student-teachers mentioned lack of authenticity of audience as an issue (Extract 2 and 3):

I don't find it motivating to write a story, or an essay, as I don't know who I'm writing to. It's not like twitter where I kind of know that I'm writing to others and those others may react. Here it's all too artificial. (Renata, Extract 2)

I think the big problem is that *the reader* is only the tutor. We write for an imaginary friend but that *friend* ends up being the tutor and that's it. We are not writing for anyone who's a genuine interlocutor. (Martin, Extract 3)

In connection to the first research question, Extracts 2 and 3 illustrate that student-teachers struggled with the writing tasks as they found them demotivating due to lack of authenticity of audience. Therefore, our reflections led us to believe that student-teachers' demotivation to write in the context of IELTE could be mitigated if we could tackle lack of authenticity of audience, as discussed in Pinner (2016, 2018), in the writing tasks across the modules mentioned in Table 1. Considering the complexity of motivation in teaching and learning (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011) and connections with authenticity, we devised the pedagogical change.

## **Action research**

According to Smith and Rebolledo (2018), action research involves issue identification, reflections, planning to change, acting, observing and reflecting in parallel. In our plan to change, we agreed to respond to a call for submissions organized by APIZALS (In Spanish, Asociación de Profesores de Inglés de Zona Andina y Línea Sur), a regional English teachers association in southern Argentina. With the title 'Future Teachers Write!', APIZALS released a call for submission

targeted at student-teachers in IELTE programmes to produce an e-book which was then published in May 2019. Student-teachers could submit original descriptive, narrative, or argumentative texts in English on any topic, which had been written as part of their coursework. Participation in this call could be an answer to student-teachers' complaints about lack of authenticity in the writing tasks. Thus, a second research question was formulated: To what extent can writing for publication enhance student-teachers' motivation to write with an authentic audience in mind?

Each tutor worked with her group complying with the syllabus and IELTE curriculum already established by the institution. However, they agreed to work on developing student-teachers' writing skills and invite them to submit texts of their choice to APIZALS for potential publication in their e-book. In terms of genres, Year 1 worked with short descriptive passages (e.g. a childhood memory). Year 2 worked with narrative writing (e.g. a story triggered by a title, a photograph, or student-teachers' imagination). On the other hand, Year 3 wrote argumentative essays connected to tutor-prompted questions such as higher education and employability, or government policies for encouraging healthier lifestyles. The intervention took place between August and November 2018.

Drawing on Villas Boas (2018), process writing was selected as the writing approach to scaffold student-teachers' writing. In the process, student-teachers engaged in peer feedback as a way to increase collaboration and language awareness (Levi Altstaedter 2018). Also, a genre approach (Hyland 2007) was used to raise awareness on textual features of anecdotes, short stories and essays. To this effect, the tutors provided authentic sample texts from newspapers, blogs, or short story collections. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate a student-teacher's process with essay writing.

**Figure 1. Extract of Lucía's first draft.**



**"How can governments encourage people to take more exercise".**

It is often believed that people today do less exercise than in the past, <sup>how been</sup> because in recent years there are more and more people who prefer watching television to doing exercise. Governments' support can break this bad habit. Two possible and encouraging methods can be implemented, <sup>benefits</sup> providing people more information about the many benefits of being trained and offering free sports facilities.

The first method governments can implement is providing helpful information about people's habits and risk factors involved in the lack of exercise. A survey carried out by the National Survey of Risk Factors (NSRF) in 2013, demonstrated that 54.9 percent of people have poor levels of physical activity. Physical activity is essential not only for optimal weight, but also for physical and cognitive development. However, and according to the results obtained in the International Physical Activity Questionnaire (IPAQ), implemented by the NSRF, the 37.5 percent of population are not aware of how beneficial physical activity is for health <sup>health</sup> <sup>weight</sup> <sup>neither the consequences of the lack of exercise.</sup> In our country about 39000 deaths occur in people aged 40 to 70 <sup>years</sup> from causes associated with physical inactivity. In Argentina, sedentarism is the risk factor which has most grown in recent years. Therefore, a better education and assessment in the subject could be implemented in order to prevent life-threatening diseases such as the one mentioned above as well as obesity and heart diseases.

Another way to...

**Figure 2. Extract of Lucía's submission for publication.**

It is often believed that people today do less exercise than in the past because in recent years there are more and more people who prefer watching television to doing exercise. Governments' support can break this bad habit. Two possible and encouraging methods can be implemented: (1) providing people with more information about the many benefits of being trained, and (2) offering free sports facilities.

The first method governments can implement is providing helpful information about people's habits and risk factors involved in the lack of exercise. A survey carried out by the National Survey of Risk Factors (NSRF) in the USA in 2013, demonstrated that 54.9 % of people have poor levels of physical activity. Physical activity is essential not only for optimal weight, but also for physical and cognitive development. However, and according to the results obtained in the International Physical Activity Questionnaire (IPAQ), implemented by the NSRF, 37.5 % of US population are not aware of how beneficial physical activity is for health, and they do not even know the consequences of lack of exercise. In Argentina about 39,000 deaths occur in people aged between 40 and 70 from causes associated with physical inactivity. In our country, sedentarism is the risk factor which has grown the most in recent years. Therefore, a better education and assessment in the subject could be implemented in order to prevent life-threatening diseases such as the one mentioned above as well as obesity and heart diseases.

Data were collected at the end of each month to calibrate the course of action and reflect on the process. Individual interviews and in-class discussions on motivation were carried out with the student-teachers. The content of the individual interviews was understanding whether writing tasks with the potential of publication enhanced motivation. The content of the in-class discussions extended to other effects the project may have had on the student-teachers in connection to, for example, feedback. Notes from the tutors' meetings were also used to understand the process from our perspective. In addition, samples of student-teachers' drafts were scanned and saved for follow-up studies on English language proficiency. Nevertheless, this aspect exceeds the scope of the present article.

## **Findings and discussion**

With the aim of understanding student-teachers' demotivation to write, we first asked ourselves: Why do our student-teachers struggle with writing tasks in IELTS? Findings show that lack of authenticity of audience (Extracts 2 and 3) acted as a major obstacle. Therefore, we engaged our student-teachers in writing for



publication. This change in our practices led to a second research question: To what extent can writing for publication enhance student-teachers' motivation to write with an authentic audience in mind?

As a response to this second research question, thematic analysis of the interviews and meeting notes yielded two overarching themes around motivation and authenticity unified by writing for publication: (1) writing for publication as an activity containing different sources of motivation, and (2) writing for publication as a space for motivational synergy between student-teachers and tutors.

## **Writing for publication and motivation**

In our search for enhancing student-teachers' motivation through a writing for publication project, we identified three sources of motivation: (1) the task itself, (2) process writing and feedback as a unit, and (3) authenticity of audience. Two of these sources exerted a greater influence than anticipated, and authenticity of audience was restricted to Year 2 and 3 students.

Within the modules, writing as an activity proved to be motivating. According to 12 student-teachers, the writing task itself became a source of motivation because it was assessed as a learning opportunity to engage in an activity they would not do in their L1 or out of their own volition. However, these student-teachers also remarked that they felt motivated to complete the writing tasks because it was part of the assessed coursework needed to pass the modules. Drawing on Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), motivation emerged from the task itself in combination with the extrinsic reward of passing the module. For example, one student-teacher said:

I don't usually write outside the IELTE programme, but I enjoy writing because it's part of the module. And my motivation was to trying to write the best I could. Quality in the task itself acted as a major drive and I never thought of the publication side of the task. (Magui, Extract 4)

The task itself was also a source of motivation around three student-teachers who enjoyed writing both in Spanish and English since primary school. For instance, one of these three student-teachers said:

I liked this project because it was innovative. What made it so was the fact that we worked on it through a long period of time. I liked it because it helped me carry on writing as I do in Spanish. (Mauri, Extract Extract 5)

In this case, there was alignment between student-teachers' personal interests and the modules under scrutiny. Mauri's view supports Ushioda's (2009) call for

understanding learners as persons in their contexts beyond the classroom environment.

Together with the task itself, process writing as a teaching and learning strategy in tandem with feedback from tutor and peers proved to be another source of motivation. All the student-teachers assessed process writing as appealing because of its encouraging and constructive nature and 12 student-teachers in particular valued the possibility of generating ideas, pre-writing, drafting, and revising following feedback without losing sight of the final product (Villas Boas 2018). For example, Mauri said:

Seeing writing as a process was extremely helpful. There was time, constant feedback and support for going over our texts, improving them, refining our thinking too so that the piece for submission was the way we wanted it to be. (Mauri, Extract 6)

Concerning tutor feedback in particular, 11 student-teachers welcomed the combination of both oral and written feedback. Regarding the former, one student-teacher stressed:

I liked the tutor feedback because it was face to face. Sometimes, written feedback is not as clear as feedback which is oral. Corrections now are the result of conversations with the tutor and so they feel like agreements to improve. And that encouraged me because I could see that the tutor found potential in my writing. (Magui, Extract 7)

As for tutor written feedback, another student-teacher commented:

I was more interested in the process because the tutor's written feedback helped me improve my ideas. I mean, I started doing bibliographical research to support my claims which needed clarification. The feedback also helped me with coherence, cohesion, and grammar at the level of sentence structure. (Martin, Extract 8)

Concerning peer feedback, only seven student-teachers found it helpful in combination with tutor feedback. However, nine student-teachers acknowledged that peer feedback tended to be superficial for different reasons as illustrated in this extract:

Peer feedback is helpful but the thing is that when I gave feedback I didn't want to correct all mistakes, first because I wasn't certain they were mistakes and second because you don't want to hurt anyone or act as if you know it all

when it comes to writing, so I'd only correct spelling or a verb tense. (Yanina, Extract 9)

Following Levi-Altstaedter's (2018) study on peer feedback and language awareness, we found that peer feedback did not contribute to enhancing language awareness in the same way that tutor feedback did (Extract 8). This may be due to aspects related to identity, confidence, and English language proficiency among student-teachers (Extract 9).

Last, authenticity of audience acted as a drive only to the four student-teachers in Years 2 and 3. They agreed that the publication element in the overall process acted as a drive to complete the writing tasks effectively as there would be a genuine readership involved. For example, Lucía said:

The possibility of publishing my essay motivated me to improve it and be more focused, more aware of what I needed to do to make the essay interesting for a potential readership. Like you start thinking about who may read it so you write with that person in mind. (Lucia, Extract 10)

In contrast, the 12 student-teachers in Year 1 did not consider authenticity of audience a source of motivation. They completed the writing tasks but refrained from submitting any of their pieces. On this issue, Grisel, their tutor, explained:

None of the student-teachers wanted to send it for publication. They said the quality was not good enough and that it was bad that while some would send in an essay or a short story, they'd be sending a short description of something with basic sentences. Like their limited English was an obstacle they said. (Grisel, Extract 11).

It may be argued that authenticity of audience became a source of motivation only among student-teachers whose self-perception of English language proficiency was advanced or had completed more modules in the programme. In this regard, motivation triggered by authenticity of audience may be contingent on (self-perceived) proficiency levels (Pinner 2016).

## **Motivational synergy**

Drawing on Pinner (2019), motivational synergy emerged as a potent category in the analysis of both student-teachers' and tutors' views as they recognized the in-class motivational flow.

Fourteen student-teachers noted that the tutors were motivated and that the writing lessons had become engaging and attractive. For example, a student-teacher from Year 1 explained:

I think the tutor liked this project because she was more enthusiastic, like her attitude changed, she was more open, more dynamic, with more engaging materials, more feedback in class, or supporting our drafts in a more personalized manner even when we told her that we wouldn't submit anything for publication. (Eduardo, Extract 12)

In particular, four student-teachers, those from Years 2 and 3, believed that the observed increase in tutor motivation was due to student-teachers' own motivation in class. They reasoned that their own motivation in the project motivated the tutors to offer more quality teaching practices which, in turn, exerted a positive impact on student-teachers' motivation. For example, Magui explained:

The tutor changed, like she was happy about the idea that I could have my short story published, and so she was different, more eager to help, offering more extensive feedback and giving us more activities to practise writing in class. I think that motivated me to improve the quality of my drafts or hand in my different version on time. (Magui, Extract 13)

In a similar vein, a Year 3 student-teacher noted:

I wasn't that enthusiastic at the beginning, or wasn't so keen on the publishing side of the project, but the tutor was so keen on the idea of having our works published in the region that it drove me to be more responsive and responsible in class. In the end I enjoyed completing the writing tasks and improving my essays even when I ended up not submitting anything for publication. (Marcos, Extract 14)

Drawing on meetings notes, the three tutors agreed that seeing the student-teachers motivated increased their own motivation even when some of the student-teachers (e.g. Year 1) did not show interest in publishing their pieces. The following tutors' comments attest to this perception and confirm student-teachers' views:

This is such an interesting project! The students were usually eager and they'd discuss how readers may react and that inspired me to guide them more thoroughly. (Betiana, Extract 15)

I'm looking forward to seeing their essays published. Seeing them so much connected to the task makes me happy as I can see that what I teach them has more value now as other people will read their essays. (Romina, Extract 16)

In line with Ushioda's (2009) relational view of motivation and Pinner's (2018, 2019) imbricated concepts of authenticity of audience and motivational synergy involved in process writing, the student-teachers and the tutors created a conducive pedagogical space where learning to write became relevant and meaningful even when the possibility of publication, and by extension authenticity of audience, was not considered. Writing for publication not only transformed student-teachers' demotivation into motivation, but also synergistically motivated the tutors to transform and enhance their teaching practices by exploring process writing, peer feedback and a genre approach with a focus on genre awareness. This change in teaching practices motivated student-teachers to write regardless of publishing their pieces. While in this paper we have focused on motivational synergy, we plan to examine the impact of the project on the tutors' teaching practices and professional development in future publications.

## **Conclusion**

In this EAR-based study, we engaged in a writing-for-publication project to understand the effects between authenticity of audience and motivation in IELTE. Despite the small-scale nature of our exploratory action research experience, we have provided evidence that the project offered three sources of motivation: the task itself, process writing and feedback, and authenticity of audience only among the most advanced student-teachers. Drawing on the illustrative data included above, we conclude that while our main interest was enhancing student-teachers' motivation to write in English by incorporating authenticity of audience as a distinctive feature, the writing-for-publication project impacted on both student-teachers' and tutors' motivation in synergy not only for the authenticity of audience included, but above all for the teaching practices adopted. The project is going through a second iteration in 2019, thus, we plan to examine the impact of the project on the tutors' teaching practices and professional development in future publications. It should be added that the student-teachers who saw their book reviews published have encouraged those who did not engage in submitting to send in their pieces given the energizing effect of finding their own work in an online journal.

In terms of pedagogical implications, our experience is an invitation to engage IELTE student-teachers and tutors in writing-for-publication projects that energize teaching and learning as these projects offer new horizons from pre-service teacher education. There are IELTE programmes and teacher associations around

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the world with similar aims. Thus, with tutors' interest in reflecting and transforming their practices and institutional support, our project could be adapted and applied in other contexts beyond Argentina. It should be noted that the project did not entail any funding for us tutors or APIZALS as the process was self-initiated and the book was in PDF format published online using Dropbox.

In terms of research implications, future research should explore the effects of writing for publication on student-teachers' and even tutors' English language proficiency and other aspects such as identity or professional development. In addition, it would be helpful to carry out studies which explore the effects of experiences of this nature when student-teachers move into their first teaching posts.

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