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The pedagogy of love: a register of precarised English teachers in Chile

Abstract: In this contribution, I will look at the imbrication of language, labour and affective capitalism in the exemplary context of a Chilean private university, as part of a larger sociolinguistic ethnography project that seeks to examine processes of precarisation in university teachers. I argue that the affective-discursive practices used by three English Language teachers, which they called the pedagogy of love, constitute a register. This register is one of the many available to women and men, which they can manage, negotiate, manipulate and capitalise on. I show in this article the way teachers enact, align with and detach from the register to make sense of their professional identities and navigate a precarious higher education market, and how the university benefits from it to regulate teachers' labour and students' expectations and eventually, obtain financial stability.

Keywords: affective capitalism; ethnography; pedagogy of love; register; sociolinguistics

1 Introduction

As part of the quality assurance system adopted by higher education institutions in Chile in the late 1990s, academics are evaluated by their work in terms of teaching, researching and public engagement. In terms of teaching, the university where I conducted fieldwork in Chile in 2019 and 2020, and where I followed a group of English language teachers at the Department of Foreign Languages (henceforth DFL), implemented a three-part teacher evaluation system that took place at the end of each term in order to ensure a standard quality of their practices. This quality translated into being attentive to the students' needs. The first part of the system comprised written and oral feedback provided by the in-line manager, usually the head of department or director of programme, after class observations. The second part was an online survey given to students to evaluate their teachers,

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and the third was the teachers' self-evaluation through an online survey. After this, a special committee composed of different academic and administrative staff gathered to analyse the data collected and to define which teachers continued working the following term, which needed to have some guidance (which translated into the socialisation of the students' profile and needs, provided by senior academic staff), and which of them could not continue to be employed and had to be fired. I attended many of those meetings, and a great deal of attention was given to the students' comments in the surveys, especially to those which referred to the teachers' affective-discursive practices (Wetherell 2012), such as "I liked the teacher, she was close and patient, it didn't matter she had to repeat things a hundred times, she was always willing to explain things to us" or "this teacher had no empathy, it would be good if the university pays attention to our needs and hires teachers who could put themselves in the students' shoes" or "empathetic and loving, the teacher always listened to us and made us part of each of our classmates' problems." All English teachers at the Department (fifteen women and three men) were aware of this evaluation and the importance of students' comments. Therefore, they were very conscious about their practices, changing, adapting and transforming their language, bodies and emotions, their ways of being, according to what the university had established as good practices. Teachers mockingly referred to this mode of being as the 'pedagogy of love', as these practices had to be, in their view, deliberately enacted in order to keep their jobs; they knew that if they received negative comments at the end of the term, their positions could be at risk.

In this article I argue that what teachers called the pedagogy of love constitutes a 'register' (Agha 2004), a socially typified way of communicating to which they can align with and detach from in different contexts and with various consequences. This register, I claim, is the essential communicative aspect to perform their job as teachers, usually considered as care work. In what Karppi et al. (2016) refer to as 'affective capitalism', a system "where capacities to affect and become affected are transformed into assets, goods, services, and material strategies" (9), the register can be managed (controlled and assessed), negotiated and manipulated, and eventually exchanged by other resources in the market. By looking at the enactment of the pedagogy of love in the context of university education, labour and English in Chile, and its enactment by three English language teachers, two female, Lucía and Alicia, and one male teacher, Ignacio, at a private university, I point to the complex ways and circumstances under which the register is produced, distributed, and taken up by these actors. I show how it allows these teachers to make sense of their professional identities to navigate a precarious higher education market, and how the university benefits from it to regulate

teachers' labour and students' expectations and, eventually, access to resources from the state and ultimate financial stability.

This article unfolds as follows: first, I present an overview of data collection and selection. Second, I provide a brief account of affective capitalism, care work and love, and the pedagogy of love as a register, as well as processes of enregisterment inscribed within a larger historical division of labour that has as its current endpoint the feminisation of the English language teaching profession. I continue by providing a description of the university where I did my fieldwork, introducing my participants Lucía, Ignacio and Alicia, how they became English language teachers and how they were socialised into the pedagogy of love. Next, I document how the pedagogy of love is enregistered and entextualised, how participants align with and detach from the register in different situations, its imbrication with English as a form of hope labour (Allan 2019), and finally, how it is perceived by these teachers as an emblem (Agha 2004) of their professional identities.

2 Data and setting

As part of an ongoing sociolinguistic ethnography project that seeks to examine processes of precarisation in female language teachers who work in higher education, this article draws on ethnographic data collected during 2019 and 2020 at a private university in Chile, which includes observation of teaching practices, formal and informal training (among peers), meetings, semi-structured interviews, conversations registered in the form of field notes and collection of documents such as teachers' evaluations. At this point, it is important to acknowledge three important facts. First, I worked at this university for 10 years as an English teacher. This granted me access to the institution and participants and enabled me to gather data which would have been difficult to obtain otherwise, such as detailed accounts of my participants' trajectories. Second, even though my research looks at university teachers, I regard these teachers as belonging to a precarised middle-class. As I will explain later, these teachers' low socioeconomic backgrounds marked their trajectory in a highly stratified higher education system and in precarious labour conditions. This structural fragility contrasts with the traditional Western European concept of the middle-class as an advantaged group (Leyton and Rojas 2017). Finally, I look at teachers of English. I present the pedagogy of love as a re-inscribed power practice in current Chilean university education which deems English a condition of possibility for the future of both students and these teachers.

3 Affective capitalism, care labour and the pedagogy of love as a register

3.1 Affective capitalism

As Karppi et al. (2016) recognise, the interconnections between affect and capitalism have been analysed in various ways. My point of departure is the tensions between the Marxist notions of immaterial labour and affective labour as developed by Hardt and Negri (2000, 2004, 2009) and the drawbacks and benefits of these concepts for critical feminist theory (Oksala 2016), as the teaching profession has historically been feminised in Chile (Gonzalez 2011) and other countries in Latin America such as Brazil (see Costa Ataide and Leitão Nunes 2016) and Colombia (Montoya 2013). More importantly, most burden of care work falls unevenly on (racialised and classed) women.

Immaterial labour refers to the intellectual, immaterial, and communicative labour power in the production of surplus value which has replaced the labour power of factory workers. It includes labour that produces non-physical objects such as codes, ideas, knowledge, subjectivities, social relations, and defines a specific type of workers such as artists and designers (Hardt and Negri 2000). Affective labour developed from immaterial labour, and they define it as "labour that produces or manipulates affects such as a feeling of ease, well-being, satisfaction, excitement, or passion" (Hardt and Negri 2004: 108). Simply put, Hardt and Negri claim that immaterial labour collapses the categories of productive and unproductive, as well as the categories of material production and social reproduction. As categories converge, distinctions disappear. A consequence of this is that women's affective labour, waged and unwaged, becomes productive of social life and all women can become agents of change against capitalism; they too become part of the 'multitude', which by lack of specificity ends up being white and masculine (Federici 2020; Oksala 2016). A conflicting outcome of this impossibility of distinguishing between dualisms such as productive and unproductive, and considering biopolitical production as ubiquitous in capitalism is that, according to Oksala (2016), we engage in forms of living which fall outside the sphere of economic production, and which are organised by diverse and often competing patterns and rules, such as care and solidarity.

Oksala (2016) suggests that sharp distinctions of different types of affective labour, which are blurred in Hardt and Negri's analysis, should be kept in order to reconfigure labour. These types are taken from traditional Marxist analyses and include: reproductive work such as care work that is not commodified (child rearing at home, looking after the family, etc.), commodified

(gendered, classed and racialised) care work or reproductive work (day care providers, private nursing homes, etc.), waged and unwaged labour that produces affects and not necessarily labour power (work to obtain profit for specific companies and that requires face-to-face contact), and finally, labour that produces affects, but does not require personal contact (as in the case of the entertainment industry). Oksala (2016) claims that it is only by differentiating these types of affective labour – and the different political consequences, power relations and form of exploitation involved in each – that we can build effective feminist politics and make progress in three important feminist political projects: better work, moral limits of the market, the recognition of the specific role of women's reproductive labour in capitalism.

3.2 Care work and love

It is important to make a note about the term 'love' as it has been highly contested and debated by scholars in various disciplines. Drawing on the work done in what has been broadly called love studies (Gunnarson et al. 2018), Lynch (2007, 2022) distinguishes between love labour and other types of care work that are necessary to maintain and sustain life. According to her, love labouring is "affectively-driven and involves at different times and to different degrees, emotional work, mental work, cognitive skills and physical work." (2007: 550). Lynch (2022) identifies three sites where care work is performed. First, in the form of love labour, in primary care relations with family and friends, in secondary care labour (in the larger community and professional settings), and solidarity work (the political expression of care). She suggests that love labour is different from care labouring such as professional care, community care and solidarity in two fundamental aspects. First, love labour is inalienable since it cannot be stolen, taken by force or removed, people need love and to be loved by others, even in their absence. Second, love labour is non-substitutable; it cannot be substituted or commodified. For example, when a friend needs to see me, I cannot arrange another person to see her in my place. I could eventually pay someone to meet her, as in other types of care work, but that would inevitably change the elementary mutuality, responsiveness, attentiveness, and commitment of the relationship. This conceptualisation of love goes in line with popular ideas of love in education, in particular those based on the work of Paulo Freire and bell hooks. Freire, one of the most-cited authors in critical pedagogies and emancipatory practices in education, wrote, "Love is an act of courage, not fear … a commitment to others … [and] to the cause of liberation" (1996 [1970]: 78). Even though Freire never defined love, he claims that it is a requirement for dialogue, central to his pedagogical project which could not be

possible if we did not love people and the world. He claimed that in this love, teachers could root their work to transform the oppressive ideologies and practices present in education. On the other hand, bell hooks, in her book *All About Love* (2018), refers to love and its components care, affection, recognition, respect, commitment and open and honest communication as an action, as a participatory emotion with transformative power, and therefore as a political act.

Although I claim that the pedagogy of love is a form of communicating that can be used to perform different types of care work, in this contribution I will specifically show how teachers enact the pedagogy of love in the context of professional care (teaching) labour which has the main purpose of nurturing the students' needs based on institutional (the university) and socio-historic (the supposed caring role of teachers) demands.

3.3 A register of female teachers

According to Agha (2004), a register is a socially typified way of communicating. He explains that it links speech repertoires, which includes language features such as prosody or collocations and non-linguistic features, to images of personhood, to relationships between interlocutors, and to the conduct of social practices and values. The process of assembling this model is known as enregisterment – i.e. the construction, expansion, and transformation of registers (Gal 2018). This process involves the historical agency in that registers are "assembled and taken up in specific historical contexts" (Gal 2018: 5); in other words, they are historical formations (Agha 2004). Nevertheless, Gal (2018) claims that they are also agentive interpretations in that individuals can align themselves to specific type of personhoods by enacting the register that has been ideologically associated with them, for example the speech of the upper class, the use of scientific jargon or the expression of specific identities.

As a register, the pedagogy of love comprises a series of affective-discursive practices including the deployment of socially perceived positive and feminine traits such as generosity, nurturance, sweetness, kindness and empathy, the use of specific linguistic forms such as titles to address the students (Miss and Mr), patterns of intonation and vocabulary items, politeness strategies, and projected qualia (Gal 2013) such as a soft tone of voice – mirroring what Lakoff (2004 [1975]) identified as "woman's language", i.e. the pervasive ideologies constructed around the way women should speak (and behave) and that reflect their lower social positioning with regards to men (Bucholtz 2004). This register has been associated with women, specifically teachers, via ideological work (Irvine and Gal 2019) – i.e. it has been culturally and socially produced, circulated and consumed.

These characteristics are considered "feminine", as they represent what a woman (as mother, wife and housewife) would do in order to comply with their supposed caring roles in society. However, according to Federici (2020), the association of female bodies with these traits is the result of the sexual division of labour that originated from the struggles of the European medieval proletariat against feudal power and the development of capitalism as a response to those struggles. This division defined women as mothers, wives, daughters and widows hiding their status as workers and establishing their labour, at home and elsewhere, as a natural resource (Federici 2014). In this way, housework and care work became an "act of love" (Federici 2020: 13). All the affective-discursive practices associated with housework and care work came to be recognised as distinct of female bodies, i.e. they became enregistered, and as such part of the socially hierarchised organisation of bodies. This social organisation of course, by way of contrast, considers masculine registers as objective, rational and desirable in the job market, while feminine constructions are socially valued as long as they coincide with hegemonic views on womanhood: within the private space of the house and family and whenever this role can be extended, for example in a classroom, as a teacher. It is not surprising, then, that the pedagogy of love has historically been associated, and regarded as a covert requirement, with the teaching profession, or at least a condition to be considered a good teacher.

In the context of affective capitalism, "women's language" or "feminine" traits become a form of enregistered voice (Agha 2005) that entails stereotypical figures of personhood that may change over time, and which are revealed and acted on in instantiations of entextualisation and are therefore not mere replications but can also be reindexicalised (Gal 2018). Through entextualisation processes, Agha (2004) claims that enregistered voices become fragments which may or may not be consistent with the stereotypic value recognised as the register, since registers are subject to uptake and ratification in interaction through role alignments (Agha 2005). This is why the pedagogy of love, originally associated with love labour performed by female bodies, can be exchanged for other resources in the job market, and it is not only women but also men who can capitalise on them. This commercialisation of the "feminine" has been particularly intense in the service sector, for example, in call centers, restaurants, shops, housekeeping, nursing and certainly in teaching, where the stylisation and scripting of bodies and language become techniques to regulate labour and subjectivities (See for example Cameron 2000; Del Percio and Wong 2020; Dowling 2007; Federici 2020; Hoschchild 2012 [1983]; Lorente 2017; Wu and Del Percio 2019) for example, analyse the behavioural templates that female workers at a Starbucks Cafe in London are asked to align with, erasing the classed histories of their bodies, while Del Percio and Wong (2020), claim that the use of specific registers transform subjects into desirable

workers creating compliance for precarity and inequality. Building on this work, I will show how the three participants of this study align with and detach from the pedagogy of love in teacher-student interactions, as well as teacher-teacher and teacher-researcher interactions, in order to navigate precarious working conditions, allowing the university to keep a financial stability.

4 The Metropolitan University

The private university, which I will call Metropolitan University (MU), where I collected data and where Lucía, Ignacio and Alicia studied and now work, is one of the 29 institutions created under the Ley Orgánica Constitucional de la Enseñanza (LOCE), the last law passed by Pinochet's dictatorship and later reinforced by successive democratic governments. In order to regulate the growing market in higher education, a new quality assurance system was established in 2006. This system defined the processes of (1) licensing of the institutions through The National Education Council (CNED) and (2) institutional and degree programmes accreditation through the National Accreditation Council (CNA), which evaluates an institution's performance in achieving its stated mission. Many low-performing private universities, which were created during this period, solely required students to have sat for the PSU regardless of the score obtained. In contrast, in high-performance private and public universities, students needed to score a minimum of 450 out of 850 points. Students wishing to enter the low-performing universities also had to have the necessary financial resources to pay for their tuition, usually by going into debt. According to Arango et al. (2016), it is usually the group of students from municipal secondary schools and low socioeconomic backgrounds who, when able to access higher education, enrol in this type of university, while students who come from private secondary schools and who have privileged socioeconomic backgrounds tend to enrol in the high-performance, public and private universities.

The MU established itself as a non-selective institution, i.e., any student who had sat for the PSU and had the financial means could enter. These entry criteria, added to the low tuition fees, allowed students from traditionally marginalised sectors of the population access to higher education, thus obliging the university to set up a number of strategies to manage what the institution called the *perfil de ingreso de los estudiantes* 'entry profile of the students': the set of knowledge, skills and abilities of students who were perceived as having low educational, social, and economic capital that undermined their possibilities to perform well, and who therefore needed special support during their trajectory at the university in order to avoid dropping out. This vulnerability was at the core of many of the institution's

practices, which were used to assess the emotional needs of students and to foster positive emotions. These practices included socialisation of new staff members into the entry profile of students by senior staff and specifically designed educational and communicative techniques which were aimed at increasing the student's self-esteem and confidence. According to Lucía, Alicia and Ignacio the socialisation into the entry profile of the students happened once teachers were hired, in a meeting conducted by academic and administrative staff before classes started and reinforced continuously by their in-line manager, something I could actually observe in the teachers' room when both teachers and the Head of the Department discussed their daily activities.

This was particularly intense during the preparation for accreditation processes (the last one in 2018), when teachers were trained on how to manage the entry profile of the students and how to show evidence of such management on the days the external accreditation committee visited the institution. This capacity to manage the supposed low status of the students was directly linked to the financial stability of the university, which depended not only on the students' fees, but also on a complex system of loans and scholarships for students and research grants provided by the state. If the university were to be unable to show, during the accreditation processes, that the entry profile of the students had become what they had stated as the *perfil de egreso de los estudiantes,* 'graduating profile of the students' i.e., the set of knowledge, skills and abilities students are supposed to acquire in their academic trajectory, and how they arrived at this, it would put at risk years of accreditation (universities can obtain between two and seven years of accreditation) and could lead to a subsequent loss of resources from the state, or no accreditation, and so to the eventual closure of the institution.

It was part of the job of heads of departments and directors of schools to make the students feel good at university in order to keep them on track and avoid dropouts, and this required ensuring that teachers treated them with kindness and respect. During meetings with other staff members such as teachers and directors of the faculties of engineering and law, I noticed these practices were also expected and reproduced by other members of the university and were not particular to these teachers of English at this department. However, in the case of the teachers of English at the Department of Foreign Languages, one of the most salient features is that most of them were women (fifteen out of eighteen). Second, all of them were trained as teachers and, for the great majority, this was their only job; therefore they were considered low-ranked by other academics as they were simply required to teach, compared to other academics who had to comply with other requirements at the time such as having a PhD or publications. In the case of the engineering faculty, for example, most of the staff were men, and for most of them, teaching was a secondary activity; they worked for companies or had their own businesses.

Therefore, they could easily leave university looking for better opportunities. On the other hand, teachers needed to navigate an unstable job market, where the possibilities of having a permanent contract were scarce. Finally, all academic staff were required to reinforce the students' self-esteem and instil positive, hopeful imageries about their future. However, teachers at the DFL did this through the promise of English, that is to say, through the idea that by learning English, they will get access to better job opportunities, better salaries and the possibility of climbing up the social ladder.

5 Becoming teachers at the MU: enacting the pedagogy of love

Lucía, Alicia and Ignacio are themselves representative of what the university has called the profile of the students. The three of them graduated as teachers of English and were later hired as such. Lucía and Alicia have always lived in the same working-class, *flaite* neighbourhoods, as they call them, where they attended poor, low-performance schools. *Flaite* is a slang word used to define poor urban youth, as well as objects and places related to them. It is also popularly linked with vulgar habits and crime. "Many of the people I used to hang out with were or are in jail," Lucía said once while talking to Alicia and me about her family and friends. She said she attended the worst school in the area where she lived, "even worse than Alicia's school. Those who were expelled from Alicia's school ended up in my school, so imagine." Ignacio has lived in the same low middle-class neighbourhood all his life, he had the chance to attend a good public school but as he said, he was not a brilliant student, which for him, translated into not having good marks. Ignacio has an older sister who is a teacher of English and admits that he became a teacher because of her. The three teachers said they liked English at school, they listened to music in English, had good teachers, and felt it was not going to be difficult for them to study it. Most importantly, they all thought English would open doors to secure employment and a chance to climb the social ladder.

When Alicia, Lucia and Ignacio finished secondary school, they took the PSU but obtained low scores and could not enrol in a prestigious public or private university. Therefore, their families supported them financially to enrol in the English teacher education programme (ETEP) at the MU, which at that time had the lowest fees in the market. Lucía and Ignacio entered in 2008, when the institution had just been accredited for two years in its first accreditation process in 2007, and Alicia in 2010, when the institution received a further three-year accreditation. Lucía and Ignacio started to work as English tutors in the DFL in 2012, giving

tutorials to students who had low scores in English. They were both in their fourth year of the ETEP. All students from the ETEP had to do an initial unpaid internship at the DFL for one semester. The purpose of this internship was to polish these pre-service teachers' teaching and communication skills (how to communicate with students and staff) before sending them to their compulsory internships in schools. If pre-service teachers performed well in the schools, the university could start building its reputation and ensure positions for future pre-service teachers and, eventually, jobs for graduate teachers at a time when internship agreements with schools were still limited. If, during the internship in the Department, pre-service teachers were evaluated well by their mentoring teacher, they could go through a selection process to be hired as paid tutors for the following academic period. This is what happened to Lucía and Ignacio in 2012 and later to Alicia, who was offered the same job in 2015, when she graduated. Work as tutors was done by students or recent graduates and it was one of the strategies the university implemented to manage the profiles, as it was believed that students could look up to their tutors as examples of success. Despite being poorly paid, the position of the tutor was highly valued among students as this represented an opportunity to build their CVs and eventually start an academic career, which, according to Lucía, Ignacio and Alicia, had social prestige, as well as financial benefits.

It was in their positions as tutors that Lucía, Ignacio and Alicia first became aware of what they called the pedagogy of love, as they were trained specifically by their mentoring teachers, the teachers of the Department, on how to enact it during their internships in order to deal with their students. They described in different conversations how they had learnt from different teachers to perform specific tasks. For example, what to say and how: e.g. "show interest", "don't ever get mad", "be kind", "tell them you can help"; if a student performed badly in a test: "tell them it's not the end of the world", "say you're sorry", "say it will be easier next term"; if a student failed a course: "ask them if they are doing well or if they need any support"; if a student thought English was not relevant for their lives: "English is now a requirement for all types of jobs", "if I could learn it, then you also can"; if a student had problems at home, and so on. Once Lucía, Ignacio and Alicia started to work officially as teachers at the Department, these practices were reinforced, primarily in the university training programme through the entry profile of the students, and built up by the Head of the Department, who mixed with the teachers during breaks and lunchtime in the teachers' common room and commented on the difficulties teachers encounter in their interaction with students. Finally, this was consolidated by the colleagues who advised new teachers on their daily routines.

5.1 The pedagogy of love as enregistered and entextualised voice

In one of Alicia's classes, English 1 for Engineering students, one student complained (in Spanish) with frustration, "Ahh Miss, I don't understand a thing. I don't like English." Alicia asked with a smile on her face, "What is it that you don't understand?" "Everything!" replied the student. "Well, I'll explain this again," she said as she made some drawings on the board and then explained how to use some and any at a slower pace with more examples. "Mister José, is it a bit clearer now?" (Mister and Miss are used in their English forms, even when teachers speak Spanish), she asked with the same smile on her face. "I think so, but I always get it wrong in tests," said the student. "Well then, we need to do more exercises if that is OK with you. Come to the teachers' room when we finish the class." He replied "OK. Miss, I love you." All students laughed. She laughed too and continued with the class. At the end of another class, one girl waited for her, "Miss, I never studied English at school, it was difficult, and the teacher was really bad so I'm sorry in advance if I'm a bit slow, it's difficult for me." Alicia asked with a smile, "What's your name?". The obstetrics student responded, "Fernanda." So, Alicia explained, in which I perceived as a really soft tone of voice, stereotypically attributed to mothers, "Miss Fernanda, don't worry, you can take tutorials with us and there are online resources available. You can always ask me if you need any help." "Really?" asked the student, looking a bit incredulous. "Of course, that's why we are here," said Alicia. The student breathed a sigh of relief. "Thank you miss and by the way, I really enjoyed your class," said the student smiling at Alicia. "Thank you, Miss Fernanda. Have a nice day," said Alicia waving her hand. "You too." Replied the student waving back to her. The student left and Alicia walked towards me and said, "I don't know why students think we are here only to fuck them up." We both laughed.

In a manner resonant of the stylisation and standardisation of "women's language" in service workers' speech (Cameron 2000), Alicia's exchanges with her students show a number of communicative practices which are said to stereotypically index feminine speech, in particular that of the motherly figure. This idealised and morally marked figure serves the teachers – and the university – to regulate the students' bodies and minds and guide them in their way to comply with what they stated as the graduating profile of the students. First of all, she employed a perceptibly calm and soft tone of voice, which was intended to show care and attention to the students' needs. Then, the use of titles such as "Mister" and "Miss" that, in this context, are used not to show distance, but to show respect. They also serve to anchor the situation in the context of learning English. Alicia

was also willing to help the students whenever they needed and as many times as they wanted, and she smiled and showed a good sense of humour at all times. These qualities were reproduced in all the classes that I observed: she was caring, and students reciprocated her respect by treating her kindly. In fact, she has been recognised four times with the Excellence Teaching Award that the university gives every term based on students' evaluations.

As for Ignacio, I observed several of his classes with students of journalism and engineering. I was interested in seeing how he enacted the register especially because he too has been awarded the Excellence Teaching Award several times, and one term, he even received the highest evaluation across all academics at the university. I was also interested in these students because I had interviewed the Director of Journalism and he had told me he believed it was important for the students to learn English although he was aware of the difficulties, "these students are limited by their social backgrounds, they don't have any connections, networks, a network of friends, that circle in the end is constituted by their *teachers*."

This was an English VIII class, for the journalism programme. Ignacio had asked them to sit in pairs because they were going to practice for an oral examination. Students had known each other since they started their studies, so they seemed to be very comfortable working in pairs. Once Ignacio made sure instructions and questions about the activity were clear, he spent some minutes listening to each pair of students and providing feedback: "Try not to use *for example,* use something like *to illustrate, namely."* Students laughed as they practiced and they corrected each other "You don't say schoolgarden to say *Jardin infantil*, it's kindergarten." Ignacio sometimes stopped and provided feedback for the whole class "Don't speak just because you have to, SAY something, work on accuracy." Students listened attentively. Sometimes students got distracted and switched to Spanish, but they regulated themselves "ya, focus, focus. *Practiquemos"* ('Let's practice'). Ignacio continued providing personalised feedback: "Mr. Fernando, try to be more natural, don't look for a specific word get out of there talking." After a while, Ignacio changed the questions and repeated the cycle. He did all of this in exactly the same way Lucia and Alicia had done it, namely by using the perceived soft tone of voice, using titles to address students, by being kind and gentle to provide feedback and by always smiling. Students seemed to be working on their tasks and actually having a good time while doing it. At some point, one student turned back to me and asked "Miss, how do you say *antebrazo* in English?" I was a bit surprised when she addressed me. I was sitting at the back of the room, observing and taking notes. "Forearm," I said. She smiled at me and said, "Thank you Miss." "You're welcome," I replied. I thought they felt so comfortable in the classroom that they were even willing to interact with someone they did not know (they only knew I was also a teacher, and I was conducting some kind of research).

Feminist scholars have highlighted the fact that there is no such thing as women's language, and what women use is one of the many registers they have at their disposal and that invoke a specific type of persona: the kind mother devoted to her children, in this case, her students. I had the opportunity to observe Lucía's classes during 2019. She used the formal *usted* ('you'), and the title "Miss" and "Mister", as did Alicia, to address her students, the same kind of tone of voice as Alicia, avoiding the expletives and slang she normally used, for example, when speaking to her colleagues in the teachers' room. She also dressed in a womanly way, as one of her male colleagues pointed out once: she wore dresses, high heels and makeup for her classes. Unlike Alicia, Lucía had the ability to tell off students without them getting mad or offended or complaining to the directors. Once, I observed the way she was lecturing one student; she had caught him cheating on a test. They were standing outside one of the classrooms; I was sitting on a bench nearby. "You see Mister? I told you to pay attention to the class, you were always doing other things. And now, I caught you red-handed with this cheat sheet. What do you want me to do?" said Lucía looking at the piece of paper she had confiscated. "I don't know Miss, I'm sorry," said the student, looking at the floor. "You know this means a 1 [minimum score in the Chilean grading system], right?" asked Lucía. "Yes, Miss. I swear I haven't had time to study, I work during the weekends, you know that. Is there any way I can make-up that mark?" asked the student. "I won't give you any special test, you can improve the mark by taking the make-up test at the end of the term but that includes all the contents seen in class during the term," said Lucía with severity but at the same time, very calmly. "OK Miss, I'll try to pay more attention," said the student. "OK, off you go!" said Lucía as she indicated the way out of the corridor to the student.

This shows first of all, how Lucía aligned her register to perform a particular teacher identity, so as to appear caring but also disciplining, drawing on her own notions of motherhood. Lucía expressed many times that, when in the classroom, she transformed herself into her alter ego "Soa Lucía". Soa is an abbreviation for señora ('Mrs'), a woman, usually married, who is very "ladylike", as she put it. As "Soa Lucía", she saw herself becoming the generous, caring but, in her case, also disciplining mother.

5.2 Aligning with and detaching from the pedagogy of love

The three interactions above show how the three teachers aligned with the pedagogy of love to perform their identities as teachers. However, outside student-teacher interactions, teachers tended to detach from it. Furthermore, Lucia admittedly rejected the traits of the ladylike woman associated with the pedagogy

of love since, in her view, they were a sign of weakness in her identity as a woman. Therefore, she switched to the strong *flaite*, 'badass' woman, using swear words and linguistics form that could be perceived as inappropriate in a teacher-student interaction. This was clear when after the conversation with the student who had cheated, she came to me while lighting up a cigarette and said, "These morons think I'm stupid! I know all the possible ways to cheat, I've tried them all." We laughed together. "I feel sorry for him though; you know, this guy is the one that takes care of his little sister because his mother doesn't exist? The bitch prefers to go from cock to cock instead of raising her children."

There were instances where Lucia also detached herself from the register inside the classroom, as the following situation shows. I was again observing one class, she was explaining the project students needed to work on using the application Instagram. The project involved group work (four students per group), but students resisted the idea of working with certain classmates. "Miss, can I work on my own?" asked one student. "Miss, can we be five?" asked another one. Lucía looked at them, grabbed her head with both hands, looked at the ceiling taking a deep breath and said, "Ah Jebús!" (A reference to the Simpsons which then became a meme) "What am I going to do with you? Are you at school? I think you are too old to complain about this kind of thing." She said, using a funny voice as some students laughed. "Ahhh but Miss, I always end up doing the work of everyone else!" said one student while his classmates mocked him. "Uuu the zebra with more stripes," replied another student. Lucía added, "the dog with more fleas," All the students laugh. Lucía's detachment from the register, switching to a jocular voice, causes incongruences that, in turn, provoke the students to roar with laughter as they saw their university teacher expressing herself in the casual language of the street.

This alignment with/detachment from the pedagogy of love became more evident when spending time in the teachers' common room, where I observed and participated in teachers' conversations. Everyone was conscious of the type of affective-discursive practices they needed to perform in particular situations. The pedagogy of love, or fragments of it, is used by the teachers to manage different situations with the students, and other people within the university, as I noticed during my fieldwork. One time I was in the teachers' room, talking to Alicia, Lucía, Ignacio and other teachers, when one teacher, Noelia, entered the room visibly distressed. "What happened," asked Alicia while drinking a cup of tea. "Do you know this student, Luis Cáceres?" asked Noelía. "Ahhhh Luisito!" exclaimed Alicia; she knew the student well, "What has Mr. Cáceres done now?" Noelia told the story, "I gave them the results of the test, and he got really upset because he got a bad mark, he took the test and threw it into the bin. I told him off because of his childish behaviour, he was a university student now, he was not supposed to do those things. It was a lack of respect for his classmates and for me." Alicia asked,

"And what did he say?" Noelia replied with resignation, "Nothing, he grabbed his things and left the classroom slamming the door. One of his classmates told me I shouldn't worry; he was like this all the time." Alicia laughed and said, "Yes, he is like that all the time. But next time you give him a bad result, you wait until the end of the class, you call him last and say, "Mr. Cáceres, are you OK? You are usually very responsible and participative; is there anything I can do for you? You will see that it works like magic, he has even apologised to me." She laughed again. Lucía, who was also there listening to the conversation, added, "we all know Luisito won't learn any English here, but it's important he finishes his degree and good-bye, one less problem for us. If you get upset, he will get more upset and complain about you with the Director of the programme, and then she'll come here complaining because we have mistreated one of her babies. Don't take it seriously." Lucía did not seem to care if the student learnt or not. What mattered to her was to make him feel calm so he could finish his studies without English being in his way and avoid complaints from the Director of the Programme.

Alicia and Lucía's use of the enregistered voice, as in "Luisito", shows how the diminutive suffix *-ito*, which would be normally used to show closeness and affection, is recontextualised in this conversation among colleagues as disdain or scorn. We see the same situation when using the title in "Mr. Cáceres" in a context where clearly, there was no need to show respect or fix it as part of the English class. On the other hand, Alicia performs the voice for Noelia when she says, "Mr. Cáceres, are you OK? You are usually very responsible and participative; is there anything I can do for you?" as an example of what Noelia is supposed to do, but then, when she laughs and says, "You will see that it works like magic, he has even apologised to me," she is showing Noelia how she can enact and manipulate the register. The last intervention by Lucía shows how the socialising of the register occurs, how they use it strategically to manage the students, and the consequences it has in securing their own positions at the university.

For Lucía, Ignacio and Alicia, teaching English and enacting the pedagogy of love enables them to transform their personhoods in a way that is emblematic of the professional identities they wish to project, and just as for the professional and gendered enregisterment of doctors and lawyers (Agha 2004), they are able to capitalise upon it, albeit in a limited way.

5.3 English and the pedagogy of love: teachers as hope workers

The demands of the current economic system push both private and public institutions to compete in order to receive students and, therefore, more economic

resources by training the professionals the market needs. In this context, according to Matus (2015), the role of the internationalisation programmes within each university, and supported by national and international organisations, has been fundamental. As a result, universities have created and developed different initiatives in order to foster learning and the teaching of foreign languages, English in particular, under the premise that it is the language that opens the doors to the world, the one that allows international mobility, and which can help students to improve access to better job opportunities (Rumbley et al. 2012). Following this trend, the MU created an Internationalisation programme 2016–2020 which included the reinforcement of English language learning, the only language which is compulsorily learnt by the students of all undergraduate programmes.

For students who come from economically deprived social backgrounds, English at university becomes a condition for the possibility of social mobility, and this ideal is portrayed by Lucía, Ignacio and Alicia's own teaching personae. The three of them recognised they had studied English because they liked it and because they thought it would be a "key to open doors". At the same time, both English and higher education have opened the doors for Lucía, Ignacio and Alicia. They were recognised as university professionals, the first ones in their families in the cases of Lucía and Alicia, and their job as English university teachers is perceived as prestigious by their friends and families, while also possibly overlooking the fact that it took them years to pass from tutors to teachers and from zero-hour contracts to permanent contracts. These teachers' loved ones are also unaware that they are seen and treated by other academics at the university as "just English teachers", so demeaning their role in relation to the activity of other academics, such as engineers or lawyers. Their families are also uninformed about the fact that English is considered to be less important than other subjects, and secondary in relation to the disciplinary knowledge the students are supposed to learn in their respective academic programmes, even as it is still an essential skill that will, supposedly, allow them to project themselves into the future. Regardless of this backside knowledge, Chilean English teachers like Lucía, Ignacio and Alicia have become fundamental in instilling, proposing and negotiating specific ideas or imaginaries for their students. As part of love labouring, they orient students' sayings and doings into particular modes of being for the future with a sense of optimism. In other words, students learn to hope in this promised future by observing teachers such as Lucía, Ignacio and Alicia as living proof that, somehow, they have made it thanks to their education and their English as the following vignettes will show.

In one class, Alicia was talking to first-year students of obstetrics about the importance of learning English. She spent some time explaining to the students how their social origins did not matter, rather the effort they put in, and that she felt

very proud of being a graduate of the MU. The students looked at her with incredulity, "Miss, did you really study here?" Alicia replied with the same (soft) tone of voice she used in all her classes, "Yes, my dear, so don't let anybody tell you that this university is bad or that you won't secure a good job in the future. I'm living proof that that's not true." Another student questioned her, "But Miss, you learned English at school." But Alicia replied, "No, I didn't, I only learnt the verb 'to be', if anything, at school. Everything I know, I learnt it here at the university, in the same seats that you are on now."

In this way, Alicia explicitly and consciously turned herself into an example the students could look up to, as a concrete image they could model themselves on. Lucía performed the same type of practices. When students resisted working in groups, Lucía drew on her own experience as a student: "I had to write my dissertation with three classmates, I hated everyone and we had a lot of fights … ", she started telling the students. "Miss, you studied here?" asked one student with the same incredulity that I had seen in others. "Of course, but it was only writing that dissertation that I learnt that I needed to work with other people, otherwise I wasn't going to graduate. We worked together, we wrote together and here I am, look at me now, loving teamwork with my colleagues. Do you think we work alone? Each of us, locked down in an office? To start with, we don't have any office," said Lucía. Teachers at the department shared one room and that was the space they used to work, have lunch, or have a cup of coffee and talk. "Poverty!" exclaimed one student, implying they knew university conditions were far from ideal. Lucía continued, "We have a teachers' room so we must share. This is something you need to learn for your future." Students listened to Lucía in silence until one of them suggested her to organise the groups. Drawing attention to her experience of teamwork as a student and then as a teacher of English at the university, Lucía was able to present herself as someone whose life had changed for the better; an example for the students to follow and, maybe, build their own path to success, while simultaneously invisibilising the poor material conditions that were associated with her work.

According to Narotsky and Besnier (2014), hope constitutes a central element on the possibilities of imagining the future, particularly when there is a partial or total lack of material resources. Therefore, teaching becomes a form of hope labour (Allan 2019), in that teachers become fundamental in instilling, proposing and negotiating specific (positive) ideas or imaginaries of what it could mean for the students' future to learn English, especially in terms of accessing better job opportunities once they graduate and more generally in terms of social mobility. Defined in this way, hope labour becomes part of the pedagogy of love, and therefore part of love labour.

This form of hope labour was also present in a conversation with Ignacio, while having a cup of coffee during a break. He claimed those students who never had English at school, in general, come from vocational schools, and if they had English as a school subject, they never paid attention, or it was badly taught by the teachers. "You need to captivate the students, make them love English, you know what I mean? And how do we do that? By showing them, with clear examples, that English is essential nowadays, not only for the job market but also for their lives". He continued by explaining that he tells them his own story, that he was a graduate from the MU, but some students just don't believe him or look at him with distrust. "That's why you need to motivate them, you show them it is possible, that is something they can also get, a reachable goal, and you do it by showing that you care for their future. I think that there is a switch, they start to think differently when you say these things".

The idea that a language such as English can trigger upward social mobility and social inclusion has long been studied and, as many scholars (See Block 2017; Park 2011; Pujolar 2019) have pointed out, the promise of social mobility has always been determined by the position of individuals within the social space, and therefore it is hierarchised and stratified. These teachers are trapped in precarious working and living conditions which jeopardise their own conditions of possibility.

Once they graduated from the MU, Lucia, Alicia and Ignacio completed their masters' degrees with the expectations of being hired as full-time teachers. However, they were continuously offered courses under zero-hour contracts. Zero-hour contracts give no access to health insurance, a pension scheme, holidays or seniority, and most of the English teachers in the department (16 out of 18) at the time of data collection were hired under this scheme. In 2016, Lucía was officially hired as a teacher of English at a moment when the university needed to comply with the quota for hired academics for the next accreditation process, so it was strategically decided to put her under a full-time permanent contract (44 h a week, of which 22 were teaching). That was the year she had her son. In 2018, Alicia also became pregnant and gave birth to her own son. In order to avoid legal claims for having a pregnant teacher working under a zero-hour contract, the university put her under a permanent contract, but as a part-time teacher (22 h a week, 12 of them teaching). Ignacio has not been able to secure a permanent contract, which is a requirement for accessing other resources such as credits, mortgages, etc. However, as he does not have children or further responsibilities, he always provides full-time availability. He has always been extremely well evaluated by his students because, according to them, "he cares". For these two reasons, he is usually assigned an enormous number of teaching hours, to the point that he is the best-paid teacher of the Department and probably one of the best-paid at the university. Given this advantageous situation, he is rather comfortable with having a zero-

hour contract and even has a second job, under a zero-hour contract, at one of the best public universities in the country. From that experience, he admits that the social and cultural capital of the students is different, but when it comes to English, Ignacio claims the level is just the same. He has to perform the same routine he performs at the MU; he needs to captivate the students and has to show that English is indeed a key to open doors. He also feels students at this prestigious institution are left on their own, that there is no support. "If a student fails, he/she fails, there's nothing to do, unlike the MU, where students have a lot of opportunities, and we all care about them."

As we can see, the promise does not necessarily allow the teachers to project a better future for themselves, but it allows them to manage the academic and personal development of the students and the way they can imagine their future within and outside the institution, that is to say, it allows them to manage hope. Using this technique, teachers become reproducers and collaborators in the circulation, naturalisation and legitimisation of the idea of English as key for success, they become 'hope workers' by using their own bodies as vectors of hope, re-orienting the horizon of spatial and temporal expectations of their students and themselves.

5.4 The pedagogy of love as an emblem of professional identity

Lucía and Alicia are very proud of being able to use the register of the pedagogy of love, since it indexes their professional identity. The three of them also firmly believe that a teacher who is not able to employ the pedagogy of love is not really a teacher, or simply does not know how to be one. This becomes clear when they justify their workload and low wage by commenting on their vocation, "maybe we don't earn as much as a lawyer or an engineer, but our work is more important because we train people, and by the end of the day, we receive their love and appreciation, that's what matters to us and what makes us happy." This becomes of greater relevance when these teachers need to navigate the transformation of their workplace as the MU is transitioning to become a four- or five-year accredited university.

Accreditation of institutions and programmes and their position in national and international rankings have resulted in a race to attract good students and academics and therefore, funding. Academics with better qualifications, with experience abroad as well as master and doctoral level degrees from prestigious national and/or international universities, began to take the place of less-credentialed teachers in all areas of the university, including the DFL. These new

academics competed with teachers such as Lucía, Ignacio and Alicia, who believed that these new teachers saw themselves as superior to them as a result of their qualifications and looked down on them for being graduates of the university.

According to Lucía, however, every new teacher who arrived committed the same mistake: "They come here with all their shit from a fucking Oxford university and the two first weeks of classes they want to run away; they complain that the students don't know a thing, that they are a bag of lazy and ignorant idiots and they end up arguing with them. And you know, maybe they are idiots and everything they say they are but then, what are you doing here? Why are you a teacher? Why didn't you study, I don't know engineering or any of that shit? I know how the students feel, remember when I was a student? I was also there. And then all for what? They always come to us asking for advice. The students love us because we treat them with respect, we are always the best-evaluated academic unit." Indeed, all new teachers received bad comments from the students at the end of their first term, even though they received the same training that the rest of the teachers received, namely, the socialisation into the entry student profile, specific teaching techniques and emotional work.

Ignacio was even harder in his comments towards the role of the teacher of English. "I am a teacher by being close to the students, but at the same time, demanding, because they will be part of the social change for their families. If we are going to learn English, then let's put our 100% into that so that, in the future, you have enough skills to perform well in your job, also putting your 100%". He complained that many teachers at the MU do not care about the well-being of the students, "We are working with people, you can and you must be able to stop what you are doing to talk to one student who is struggling, to ask him/her how he/she is doing, to put yourself in a more parental role, but many teachers just don't give a damn, and they dare to call themselves teachers."

6 Conclusion

As I have shown in this article, the pedagogy of love is a crucial communicative aspect of the job Lucía, Ignacio and Alicia need to perform, as teachers, at this university in the context of affective capitalism. In their view, the enactment of the pedagogy of love helps the students to feel supported at university, to feel good about learning English and to project a different, positive future that allows them to climb the social ladder, especially since they come from non-advantageous social positions.

Therefore, it is mostly the students and, above all, the university who benefit from the enactment of the register. Students benefit because they feel comfortable with their teachers and see them as support in their academic trajectories as their comments in different evaluations I observe suggest. This prevents them from dropping out and to reach the "graduating profile" the university has established for them. In turn, it is through these teachers' labour that the university is able to regulate the student population coming from traditionally marginalised sectors and who are the basis of its economic stability. This regulation works through several practices. First, through socialisation into the profile of the students, through training to all new teachers provided formally by the university and in-line managers, and informally through peer interactions. Second, this is further observed through assessment procedures that include self-evaluation and evaluation by in-line managers and students that end up in the continuation of these teachers at the university or, eventually, their dismissal.

For the teachers, the ability to align with and detach from the register becomes a powerful tool that allows them to make sense of the precarious and exploitative working conditions (heavy workload, casual contracts, devaluation) under which they operate. They can manage the pedagogy of love either to regulate students' expectations or to conform to the norms established by the university and, therefore, keep their jobs and even become positively recognised as "good teachers".

It is important to notice that the space for teachers to resist and fight oppressive working conditions is limited. First, because there is no union which may eventually protect them, the university has overtly and covertly stated that they will not allow unionised workers even though this is formally illegal in the country. Based on my personal knowledge, the few teachers who have tried to form a union have been quickly fired. Second, positions for teachers of English at universities are not readily available, especially when the requirements become more and more demanding and teaching at schools is seen by these teachers as a setback as it is not well-paid. Besides this, the three teachers think their degree from the MU is not as valuable as a degree from a more prestigious university and, therefore, could not apply to prestigious schools either. Lucía and Alicia think this job is the best they can have, and they are not willing to take the risk of changing jobs, at least at this moment when their kids are still small, and love becomes a justification for this acceptance. "A teacher of English is what I am, I love it, even when I know I will never be rich. I have the love of my students and that's enough." Ignacio works from a better position than his female colleagues as he manages to make use of resources to be mobile, both in terms of moving jobs and moving places. For example, in the many conversations in the teachers' room, he talked about the things he has been able to do, such as renting a flat of his own, buying a

car and travelling, while Lucía and Alicia are confined to the task of raising their kids and taking care of the home once they finish their work. They have never travelled abroad and still live in their parents' houses.

A further analysis will look at how these gendered experiences reflect the naturalisation of so-called 'feminine' features in women's lower social positioning with regards to men, and how the pedagogy of love is used to (re)produce ideas which help maintain teachers, and particularly female teachers, in subaltern positions.

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