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## Mexico's 2017 Educational Model of Secondary Education: A Review from the Lens of the Teaching of English in Tele-secondary schools

Aprendizajes Clave para la Educación Integral. Secretaría de Educación.  
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Secondary education in Mexico can be completed through various modalities, which include General, Technical, Tele-secondary, Community, and Open education for adults. All these options follow the same national curriculum in terms of content as established by the National Ministry of Education (*Secretaría de Educación Pública* [SEP], 2017a). The national model covers academic content, personal and social development, and curricular autonomy (SEP, 2017a). Each one of these is divided into sub-areas. For example, academic content includes three areas. One area is language and communication, which includes English Language Teaching (ELT; SEP, 2017b). With the

new model, various strategies have been put forward to support ELT in general, technical or tele-secondary schools. One of these strategies is the National English Program (SEP, 2011a, 2017b) which focuses on helping teachers in the development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes within the new ELT guiding principles of the national model. This program not only supports teachers in service, but also new teachers who are admitted to teach English in the national educational system (SEP, 2017c). Moreover, *el programa nacional de inglés* (PRONI) provides English teachers with ELT certifications and continuous ELT training (SEP, 2011b, 2011c, 2017b).



While the new model and national strategies set the bases for ELT in the Mexican secondary school system, each secondary modality has its own pedagogical guidelines depending on its educational nature. In this regard, there is a central difference for ELT between general/technical and tele-secondary modalities. General and technical schools have specialist teachers for each area of the curriculum. Thus, there, English is taught by specialists who are trained in ELT. These teachers have developed pedagogical knowledge for language teaching and are also expected to have sufficient linguistic competency to deliver the curriculum. ELT in tele-secondary education does not ascribe to the same condition. In tele-secondary teaching, there is a tele-teacher and a tele monitor (SEP, 2010). The tele-teacher is a subject specialist who conducts the lesson through recorded TV programs and is never in contact with the students. The tele-monitor, who is a generalist teacher, discusses, evaluates, and provides students with feedback on lessons delivered in television programs. Using the video-recorded lessons, the tele-monitor is expected to help students with all areas of

the curriculum in the classroom, and thereby, create the necessary conditions for significant learning.

The inclusion of ELT in the curriculum aims to help secondary school students develop cultural awareness and increase intercultural knowledge in basic education independently from the educational modality. This principle and the educational reforms and strategies are in line with the practice and professional development of English language teachers in general and technical schools. Nevertheless, their implementation seems disassociated with the particular needs of tele-secondaries and have provided little attention to the needs of tele-monitors for ELT development and training (Banks, 2017). To date, only a small handful of Mexican states have considered that telemonitors are generalist teachers who have their own particular needs in terms of language development, ELT training, and ELT materials (La Jornada, 2018a, 2018b). A growing number of studies have evidenced how these ELT curricular changes have hardly considered the conditions of tele-secondaries. In Tabasco, a recent official report of the Ministry



of Education shows that the PRONI program in Tabasco (Gobierno de Tabasco, 2017), disregarded tele-monitor teachers in terms of language training or language teacher education.

In these reforms, the tele-secondary school system appears to be left out, or at least, left behind. The implementation of the national curriculum and its strategies then raises questions for the teaching of ELT in tele-secondaries, although ELT has been included in this educational option since its very origin (SEP, 2010). Tele-monitors are not ELT specialists, but generalist teachers. A relevant question to be answered by policy makers is: Have generalist tele-monitors been considered in this program? Even though these language policies are good for general and technical schools, in the tele-secondary context, one might wonder how tele-monitors perceive

these policies. Most of these teachers completed some English courses in partial fulfilment of their university degrees but lack English language proficiency and ELT education. If one considers that they hold minimal knowledge of English and language teaching, one may question how they are adjusting their teaching to meet the expectations of the secondary-school reforms. How do these teachers plan their lessons in order to achieve curricular goals, under the educational model and student books? In terms of educational policies, it is important to consider that, while the generalist teacher has teaching autonomy and can decide on the moment to use the TV lessons and how to follow up on them, there is not much information concerning how state-sanctioned strategies could support tele-monitors who also need to meet the ELT demands of the secondary school curriculum with their learners.

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