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{ **METHODOLOGICAL UNCERTAINTIES OF RESEARCH IN ELT EDUCATION I** }

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Énfasis

Methodological Uncertainties of

Research in ELT Education I

UNIVERSIDAD DISTRITAL
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Énfasis

Libros de los énfasis del Doctorado

Interinstitucional en Educación

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UD
Editorial

Este libro fue sometido a un proceso de evaluación por pares.

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Prólogo

El lugar de enunciación en la mirada analítica: reflexividad, cuestionamiento y decolonialidad

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Desde que la perspectiva decolonial diera sus primeros pasos, con el encuentro entre Immanuel Wallerstein y Aníbal Quijano a inicios de la década de los años noventa (Castro-Gómez y Grosfoguel, 2007), se han multiplicado los esfuerzos académicos por decolonizar la producción del conocimiento científico a partir de constatar su función en la expansión y reproducción del orden colonial basado en la jerarquización racial de los grupos humanos.

De acuerdo con la reflexión descolonial, la racionalidad científica como única y superior modalidad para producir conocimiento tuvo como condición de posibilidad al *ego conquiro* (Dussel, 1992) y se caracteriza por el carácter provincial (eurocéntrico) del trabajo científico, reduciéndolo a dispositivo que promueve la universalización de la concepción ontológica occidental (Wallerstein, 1996; Chakrabarty, 2008). En tanto sustento epistémico y geopolítico del proyecto civilizatorio de la modernidad occidental, la racionalidad científica ha sido cómplice de los procesos genocidas y epistemicidas de Occidente (Grosfoguel, 2013). Finalmente, para la perspectiva decolonial, de seguirse organizando la vida en la tierra acorde a ella, la humanidad está en riesgo de extinguir todas las formas de vida conocidas (Blaser, 2017).

Junto al desalentador escenario descrito, la decolonialidad se propone construir un horizonte de sentido liberador que abrigue esperanzas para la humanidad, con base en trascender la oscuridad del proyecto moderno,

descentrar a Occidente como modelo de vida, y desmontar a la racionalidad científica como única modalidad válida para producir conocimiento. Como horizonte de sentido, esta perspectiva propone la *transmodernidad*, que traducida en términos del lenguaje zapatista consiste en construir un mundo donde otros mundos sean posibles (Dussel, 2000 y 2005)[1]. Para hacer posible este *pluriverso* en el mundo, donde las soluciones a los problemas de la modernidad se puedan buscar en su afuera (Escobar, 2004), es fundamental configurar una mirada académica que entreteja la reflexión científica con aquellas cosmovisiones, ontologías y epistemologías que el proyecto moderno buscó eliminar, invisibilizar y/o estigmatizar a partir de 1492. Esta articulación de la razón y su afuera ha dado lugar a una plétora de propuestas, entre las que destacan *diálogo de saberes* (Santos, 2010, 2009), *zonas de contacto* (Pratt, 1991, 2010), *pensamiento fronterizo,* (Mignolo, 2002) e *interculturalidad radical* (Walsh, 2008).

Todas estas apuestas por construir puentes entre la razón y otras formas de saber se proponen superar las dualidades del legado cartesiano y la concepción teleológica del tiempo de Newton (Wallerstein 1996). En este ejercicio, la reflexividad sobre el lugar de enunciación del investigador es un paso fundamental para resquebrajar las estructuras jerárquicas que condicionan la relación con los sujetos en observación con los que, de acuerdo con la perspectiva decolonial, para trascender la relación sujeto-objeto se deben establecer relaciones heterárquicas.

En este marco se inscriben los textos de este libro. Sus autores, en distinto grado de profundidad y logro, hacen un riguroso ejercicio de búsqueda y *hacer venir* (inventar) los intersticios del espacio institucional en el que realizan sus prácticas pedagógicas de modo que viabilicen una reflexión sobre las narrativas y subjetividades que contaminen la racionalidad colonial que comporta la enseñanza del inglés en Colombia. Sin duda, este libro inaugura una lectura transgresora por el hecho de, por una parte, repensar el proceso formativo del idioma inglés en tanto dispositivo colonial que normaliza la cosmovisión occidental como proyecto de vida posible y deseable en el Sur Global; y, por otra parte, al indagar en sus pliegues la existencia de contraconductas que escapan al disciplinamiento cognitivo que los programas formativos buscan instalar entre su comunidad a partir de iluminar aquellas

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1   Es de destacar que, incluso pensadores desencantados del proyecto descolonial tales como Santiago Castro-Gómez (2019), perseveren en la idea liberadora de la transmodernidad como horizonte de sentido de la humanidad, como posibilidad que amplíe las posibilidades de la vida humana y no humana.

derivas subjetivas y emocionales que muestran la emergencia de pensamientos, saberes y lecturas que corroen o, al menos, desestabilizan la pretendida normalidad colonizadora de su ejercicio profesional pedagógico.

La complejidad de la apuesta y el espacio formativo del idioma inglés, comportan un desafío a destacar de este proyecto editorial que marca el inicio de un ejercicio investigativo inscrito en las casi tres décadas de aportes a la crítica sobre la configuración histórica y geopolítica de las realidades sociales. Ello es muestra del creciente éxito de la reflexión decolonial que, en este tiempo, ha logrado instalar sus propuestas en programas formativos, foros y publicaciones académicas en todos los países de América Latina.

En lo que sigue se presenta una revisión de los aportes contenidos en los distintos trabajos del libro que hacen parte de los debates impulsados en el Doctorado Interinstitucional en Educación de la Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas, iniciativa que, por provocación y dislocación decolonial, confío se reproduzca en el futuro.

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Introducción

Castañeda-Peña: Methodological Imprisonment of
Research in ELT Education:
Exploring Complementary Ways-Out

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Este libro inicia con una breve provocación que esboza la intención disruptiva de los textos que siguen a continuación. Su coordinador, Harold Castañeda-Peña, parte evidenciando inspirado en Wallerstein (1996) , que los científicos sociales se han habituado a la producción científica de la verdad con base en una racionalidad que ha abandonado el escepticismo metodológico. Esto ha naturalizado la certeza del conocimiento en un horizonte de certidumbres producidas ideológicamente en el marco del proyecto civilizatorio de la modernidad. Dicha racionalidad de las certezas hegemoniza la producción del conocimiento en términos epistémicos, ontológicos y metodológicos. En la medida en que esta hegemonía también organiza el proceso formativo de los profesores de ELT, el autor propone trabajar en la incertidumbre como escenario reflexivo para que sea una vía que permita trascender la rigidez académica que, en un gesto de simulación ideológica, promueve un trabajo objetivo encubridor de la reproducción geopolítica de la episteme surgida y expandida colonialmente desde los centros académicos del Norte Global al Sur Global. En una apuesta por denunciar los límites analíticos de tal hegemonía, y trascender las restricciones que éstos imponen al trabajo científico, Castañeda-Peña sugiere repensar el trabajo metodológico enmarcándolo en el espíritu crítico y disruptivo de la decolonialidad.

Es de destacar que el autor recupere, desde los cuestionamientos recibidos, la experiencia personal y la del Doctorado del Énfasis en ELT Education que ofrece la Universidad Distrital de Colombia; sobre esta base desplaza su

problematización de los planos geopolítico y epistémico que son ampliamente trabajados en la reflexión decolonial hacia el nivel metodológico, acerca del cual existen escasos análisis pero que comporta amplias posibilidades para repensar el conocimiento resultante de la materialidad de las derivas sociales, subjetivas y políticas de los sujetos coloniales u occidentalizados del Sur Global; dichos sujetos, paradójicamente en el horizonte moderno de la metáfora kantiana *sapere aude,* redirigen su capacidad reflexiva a indagar en las condiciones de posibilidad de tal capacidad. Siguiendo en la tesitura de las paradojas, el autor sugiere que las críticas recibidas en el nivel metodológico de la producción decolonial son una oportunidad para redoblar los esfuerzos en trabajar en el escepticismo metodológico abandonado por la ciencia hegemónica.

En línea con la tradición crítica foucaultiana (Foucault, 2018), Castañeda-Peña convoca a corroer los presupuestos metodológicos de la racionalidad científica colonial-racista-eurocéntrica devenida en corrientes dominantes en la academia del Sur Global. En virtud de este *no dejarse gobernar* por el legado epistemológico colonial y geopolítico de Occidente, propone trabajar en un horizonte que reemplace la naturalización de las certezas con las certezas de la incertidumbre. Sin aludirlo explícitamente, el texto es un llamado a trabajar en una subjetivización del *homo resiliens* quien, en una ruta distinta a la búsqueda del equilibrio identitario, se lanza a generar una gramática de la identidad-transformación que exige recodificar los lenguajes y horizontes de comprensión del trabajo analítico (Medina, 2018). En esta tesitura, el autor propone la idea de *movimientos de pensamiento* para reflexionar metodológicamente los temas centrales de la especialidad ELT Education: educación del profesorado en inglés, y poder, desigualdad e identidad.

Guerrero Nieto: ELT Research from the Global South: Uncertainties in a Rarely-Walked Road

Carmen Helena Guerrero aborda los desafíos que tiene la perspectiva decolonial para el investigador de ELT. Para ello, como ruta para desmontar las estructuras que organizan la producción de conocimiento, propone revisar la tensa relación entre las técnicas cualitativas y cuantitativas. Se trata de una tensión que condiciona la producción de conocimiento en el presente, tanto en los protocolos de investigación como en los programas formativos

de los investigadores, en los que se tiende a priorizar el método basado en el dato duro (cuantitativo).

En función de que las técnicas cuantitativas surgen asociadas al positivismo, la autora analiza los orígenes de las ciencias sociales. Específicamente, recuerda los esfuerzos de Auguste Comte para conferirle estatus científico a la naciente sociología, o *física social*, a partir de argumentar que en la nueva disciplina social el método positivo es fundamental para el estudio racional de los fenómenos sociales (2012). Sin duda, en la actualidad las investigaciones cualitativas ya no requieren validar el estatus científico de sus protocolos de investigación; sin embargo, en la medida en que dicha tensión hace parte del proceso de objetivación del conocimiento, se vincula a otro legado decimonónico más profundo que estructura el trabajo científico: la máxima cartesiana *ego cogito ergo zum* que funda la distinción entre mente y cuerpo. En términos epistémicos y cosmogónicos, esta distinción inaugura una serie de dualidades que han segmentado artificialmente la realidad social (cultura/naturaleza, civilizados/barbarie, hombre/mujer, moderno/salvaje) lo que, en los protocolos de investigación, se expresa en la distinción entre sujeto (mente) y objeto (cuerpo). De acuerdo con Carmen Guerrero, la perspectiva decolonial exige un proceso de decolonización epistémica para desmontar la distinción cartesiana, y por ello adquiere relevancia evidenciar la aparente paradoja que existiría en la comunidad ELT, formada con base en una perspectiva instrumental para realizar una tarea neutra. La idea, por lo tanto, sería apostar por una continua reflexividad de los protocolos de investigación, los lugares de enunciación y los supuestos epistemológicos que condicionan la producción de conocimiento.

En efecto, en la medida en que los profesionales que investigan en el campo de ELT buscan dar cuenta de (comprender) los procesos de aprendizaje de la lengua inglesa en sociedades latinoamericanas, no pueden obviar que trabajan con personas que han configurado sus subjetividades, y visiones de mundo occidentalizadas, en procesos históricos y socioculturales producidos geopolítica y colonialmente. Por lo tanto, en sus protocolos de investigación

está implicado, por rigor analítico, incluir dispositivos de indagación e interpretación sobre los condicionamientos que imponen la colonialidad del poder y del ser. A partir de estas aproximaciones, sostiene la autora, los investigadores estarán en condiciones de visibilizar el nivel de penetración de los procesos de colonialidad en la comunidad de ELT y a su vez identificar sus prácticas y subjetividades.

Méndez Rivera: Experiencing Uncertainties

En *Experiencing uncertainties,* Pilar Méndez Rivera debate sobre la apropiación subjetiva e intelectual que experimentan los integrantes del doctorado de ELT, haciendo énfasis en la reflexión decolonial en la que exponen y desnudan sus limitaciones, miedos y ansiedades en tanto profesores de ELT situados en el Sur Global. Como punto de referencia en la tematización de este proceso, la autora recupera la categoría *sentipensar* que Orlando Fals Borda (2008) instituyó en los años sesenta como un cuestionamiento a la impositiva racionalidad que establecía una fractura con los sujetos en observación como requisito para producir conocimiento. Así como el sociólogo colombiano propusiera el *sentipensar* para recuperar la experiencia vital de las personas, es decir, no sólo el plano reflexivo sino también las sensaciones, las emociones y las intuiciones que organizan los cursos de acción en el mundo-vida, Méndez Rivera propone dicha categoría para pensar la experiencia del proceso de aprendizaje como una herida y una incertidumbre de futuro.

Cabe señalar que esta categoría también es recuperada por Arturo Escobar (Escobar, 2014) para sustentar su teoría de la ontología relacional. Para este fundador de la perspectiva modernidad/colonialidad, *sentipensar* posibilita reflexionar y sentir la vida, formada por humanos y no humanos, con una multiplicidad de cosmovisiones que constatan la existencia de que habitamos en un *pluriverso*. En la medida en que *sentipensar* es una palabra que surge desde la experiencia comunitaria y de la tierra (Restrepo, 2016),[2] se origina en espacios subalternos, como subjetividades *border* del proyecto moderno (Medina 2017). En ese marco, esta categoría se articula con el concepto *territorio* como proceso de territorialización productora de identidades de la vida, y por lo tanto la articulación *sentipensar* y *territorio* permite configurar

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2   De acuerdo con Gabriel Restrepo (2016), Fals Borda le escuchó la palabra sentipensar a un pescador monposino de la costa caribeña de Colombia.

reflexiones sentidas sobre proyectos de vida, autonomía y horizontes de sentido. En esta dirección, la teoría de las ontologías relacionales de Arturo Escobar se sustenta en las experiencias y cosmovisiones de pueblos indígenas y afrodescendientes y se opone a la ontología dual de Occidente. Como se comentó antes, Occidente parte de la separación entre mente y cuerpo y propone analizar la realidad a partir de observar su contenido como sujetos y objetos autocontenidos y separados de sus contextos. En cambio, para la ontología relacional, en la vida todo está relacionado entre sí: lo humano se prolonga en lo no humano y las cosas en los sujetos. Sin señalarlo explícitamente, la ontología relacional se inscribe en la máxima de la cosmovisión de la filosofía bantú que parte del *ubuntu*: soy porque somos (Machado, Mina, Botero y Escobar 2018).

En ese marco, siguiendo a Fals Borda (2008), el texto invita a resistirse al colonialismo intelectual y a exponerse emocionalmente para permitir decolonizarse como sujetos investigadores que están relacionados con sus contextos, tiempos, sujetos de investigación y territorialidades.

Castañeda Londoño: Research Methodology: Tracing ELT Teachers' Invisibilized Knowledge

En el trabajo de Adriana Castañeda Londoño se realiza un ejercicio de reflexividad muy acucioso sobre la falacia de la objetividad omnipresente en la racionalidad científica dominante. La autora recurre a la metáfora de la serpiente encantada que, por manipulación del músico, enceguecida por el sol aparece bailando desde el fondo de su canasta y en realidad está confundida y vigilante del instrumento musical que percibe como otro depredador. A través de esta metáfora, Castañeda Londoño confiesa que ella, por su formación académica previa, estuvo seducida por los cantos de la racionalidad científica que promete el acto de conocer como un acto de emancipación. Señala que logra observar su propia ceguera epistémica a través de lecturas que cuestionan el estatus único y superior de la racionalidad científica (Spivak, 2003) al discriminar y externalizar otras formas de saber.

También afirma que esa ceguera se reproduce a través de los programas formativos de los investigadores de la comunidad ELT y que, en tanto sujetos el Sur Global, colonizados, debieran asumir el imperativo ético de decolonizarse para no prolongar un ejercicio académico que se rige según las

pautas del canon occidental, esto es, formados de acuerdo con un canon que, además de definir qué es lo que se puede investigar y de qué manera, establece los límites posibles del trabajo científico. Todo ello con la finalidad de favorecer el fortalecimiento de la racionalidad occidental en desmedro de otras miradas de lo humano y lo no humano.

Como una ruta para escapar de la colonialidad, Castañeda Londoño propone realizar una investigación para transformar la realidad con base en un enfoque cualitativo en el que se realce el carácter instituyente del registro testimonial en la producción de conocimiento. El carácter instituyente de las voces participantes (profesores de ELT invisibilizados), busca trascender la tradición interpretativa que surge en una relación jerárquica reduciendo a los sujetos del proceso investigativo a informantes. Es posible que el propio campo de investigación (la comunidad ELT) limite el repertorio de posibilidades que ofrece el registro testimonial: en efecto, los sujetos de interés de la autora son letrados, profesionales bilingües que se desempeñan en el ámbito de la educación y, por extensión, están condicionados por su inserción social y deriva profesional, lo cual puede reducir la potencialidad epistémica del testimonio a un mero registro escrito que no es suficiente para recuperar la dimensión subjetiva de la experiencia social del profesor ELT. La apuesta metodológica en el trabajo de Castañeda Londoño obvia la transgresión epistémica que provocó principalmente la propuesta del llamado grupo de *Estudios Subalternos* (Chakarbarty, 2000), ya que remite a una objeción que la reconocida intelectual poscolonial india, Gayatri Spivak (2003), hiciera a dicha escuela que constituye un cuestionamiento válido en términos formales, pero que no elimina el carácter subversivo del planteamiento de la subalternidad. Como sugiere Spivak (2003) y los otros autores citados por Castañeda (Beverly y otros), al representar discursivamente (en un registro académico) el pensamiento y visión de los sujetos subalternizados por el sistema hegemónico, éstos se desvanecen en la práctica representacional que hace el intelectual que construye el testimonio escrito. Pese a esta certera consideración, la propuesta subalterna evidenció las limitaciones, sobreideologización y ceguera epistémica de la racionalidad científica (y de la academia occidental) para producir conocimiento sobre fenómenos históricos experimentados por sujetos que orientan sus cursos de acción de acuerdo con códigos culturales y no con base en la razón occidental, tal como lo demostró Ranajit Guha (1999) respecto del rol que tuvo el campesinado de la India en la independencia de la administración colonial inglesa.

Aunque Guha trabajó con sujetos sumergidos en una cultura oral, el registro testimonial tiene un amplio potencial por explorar en otros contextos, como por ejemplo en el campo letrado de la comunidad ELT. En la medida en que Castañeda se refiere a un proceso de investigación en curso, podría separarse de la reflexión posmoderna (que sigue inscrita en los horizontes de comprensión del proyecto moderno)[3] y desplazarse hacia marcos decoloniales y del *sentipensar* que podrían recuperar el registro testimonial pero ya no desde el ejercicio interpretativo (racional) de las representaciones sociales (estigmatización social de su profesión) y saberes (experiencias significativas) de los sujetos, sino de sus sensaciones, intuiciones y emocionalidades. Este desplazamiento, sin duda podría generar las condiciones para indagar en un campo del todo inexplorado en el espacio académico del Sur Global.

Dávila Rubio: Narrative Research: Contributions and Frames within Postmodern, Critical and Decolonial Perspectives

El trabajo de Alejandro Dávila Rubio sugiere explorar la conceptualización y uso del postestructuralismo, la decolonialidad y la crítica narrativa en la formación de profesores en inglés. Es una propuesta sugerente y ambiciosa, ya que busca conexiones entre la potencialidad analítica de las narrativas y la reflexión decolonial, que si bien el autor no logra del todo (quizá porque no es su intención) sí consigue otorgar relevancia al registro narrativo como dispositivo develador del sujeto, es decir, como un mecanismo de producción autocontenida con autonomía racional del actor, en el marco de las circunstancias que tal narrativa enuncia. Al hacer énfasis en el carácter racional y auto contenido de las narrativas que todo actor social produce y pone en circulación, Dávila Rubio olvida que los seres humanos se configuran subjetiva e identitariamente condicionados por la urdimbre de sus pertenencias sociales, la materialidad de la experiencia y las discursividades que circulan en las temporalidades y espacialidades de su existencia. Por lo tanto, el relevar la autocontención y autonomía racional de los sujetos y sus narrativas podría responder a una concepción analítica voluntarista que se acerca a una posición idealista. Sin embargo, en el contexto de todo proceso formativo, Dávila acierta al considerar a las narrativas como un dispositivo fundamental en la configuración de subjetividades y concepciones

3   Dussel y Valle-Orellana (2018) plantean que la posmodernidad es la última etapa de la modernidad, por lo que las críticas posmodernas al proyecto moderno surgen en el marco de la propia modernidad.

de mundo. En este sentido su planteamiento problemático ofrece una apertura reflexiva con potencial disruptivo.

Aunque no es del todo explícito, el autor tiende a homologar dos referentes teóricos, el posmodernismo y la decolonialidad, que se inscriben en tradiciones de pensamiento distintas. Por ello cabría esbozar brevemente las distancias que comporta la tradición posmoderna respecto de la perspectiva decolonial. En diferentes escritos, algunos teóricos decoloniales han planteado que la posmodernidad es una propuesta conceptual que hace parte del proyecto moderno, por lo que en oposición a la perspectiva decolonial, su aparato crítico no busca desmontar sus estructuras epistémicas y civilizadoras; por el contrario, la propuesta posmoderna es un nuevo intento por profundizar el proyecto individualizador, productivista y deshumanizador del capitalismo tardío (Dussel y Valle Orellana, 2018; Castro Gómez, 2005). En ese marco cabría relativizar la pertinencia del horizonte comprensivo de la posmodernidad, en tanto **é**sta resalta y promueve el carácter individual de la experiencia social. Así, la apuesta del autor es valorar la potencialidad analítica de *las narrativas personales* en tanto dispositivo comunicacional, social y subjetivo para construir identidades, en virtud de que posibilitan posicionar el yo como similar o diferente a *otro*, permitiéndole actuar sobre y en el mundo y cambiarlo o no con el tiempo, consideraciones todas éstas que requieren necesariamente dar cuenta de la dimensión de poder presente en todo acto elocutivo, es decir en toda manifestación narrativa, dado que el poder marca desigualdades y jerarquías que instituyen los lugares de habla o narrativos. Por lo tanto, la mediación del poder instala el sentido y alcance de todas las narrativas.

Alejandro Dávila señala que en esta oportunidad no le es posible profundizar en sus análisis sobre la narrativa decolonial, por lo que es probable que en los avances posteriores de su investigación tenga ocasión de atender la centralidad del poder en la emergencia, circulación y apropiación (resignificación) de las narrativas y, a su vez, pueda profundizar en la cualidad y especificidad que tendrían las *narrativas decoloniales* en el registro teórico de este dispositivo.

Con todo, es rescatable la mirada que, en virtud de la reflexión planteada por la narrativa crítica, Dávila hace sobre la posibilidad de que los sujetos (especialmente en el espacio educativo) no se limiten a reproducir los discursos hegemónicos circulantes y que, en un gesto de contaminacón, arriesguen

a transformarse en constructores de un sentido *otro* a partir de actuar y situarse en un sentido pleno de la condición humana.

En ese horizonte, se abre la posibilidad de repensar la producción del sujeto que hace parte del espacio formativo de la comunidad educativa del inglés desde la propuesta transdisciplinaria, e interrogar los aportes de la perspectiva decolonial para corroer los condicionamientos institucionales y narrativos que tienen los educandos y, por extensión, erigirse protagonistas de su proceso formativo.

El autor resalta el testimonio como recurso para revelar voces históricas y geopolíticamente invisibilizadas por el proyecto moderno civilizatorio, algo sobre lo que hace énfasis la reflexión decolonial. En efecto, para la decolonialización epistémica, la recuperación del testimonio indígena, afrodescendiente, y de todo aquel sujeto invisibilizado y/o estigmatizado por el relato dominante, tiene por finalidad desmontar la cosmovisión occidental como la única posible y deseable de vivir.

Cabría señalar que las narrativas de los sujetos no occidentalizados o que se rebelan contra la cosmovisión occidental, en tanto dispositivos que ponen en circulación signos, significados e imaginarios, constituyen fracturas en los límites de la racionalidad científica que posibilitan imaginar y alentar horizontes de sentido distintos, horizontes que podrían dislocar la reproducción del relato dominante en el proceso formativo de los ELTP.

Posada Ortiz: Towards a Relational Methodological Research

Con la finalidad de comprender el proceso formativo de los estudiantes de profesores de inglés (ELTP) desde sus propias subjetividades, sentido común y emocionalidad, Julia Posada plantea trabajar de manera horizontal y en diálogo con los participantes en su investigación. Para ello, recupera la idea de situar su lugar de enunciación respecto de la problemática de interés, y sugiere seguir una metodología decolonial con la pretensión de desdibujar la jerarquía en la relación que establece el investigador con los participantes (sujetos de interés investigativo). También alude a la importancia de considerar los aspectos éticos en su propuesta investigativa, en la que trabajará sobre la experiencia de colegas en procesos de formación centrándose en

sus apropiaciones subjetivas y emocionales. Julia Posada entiende que la dimensión ética de su propuesta radica en establecer reglas que, con claridad, otorguen a los participantes la decisión de incorporarse voluntariamente y, sobretodo, de tener acceso transparente a la información o, si así lo deciden, de abandonar el proyecto. Sin duda es un ejercicio que trasciende el clásico lugar que reduce a los participantes a una condición de informantes, al hacer suyo el principal desafío metodológico decolonial consistente en incluir a los sujetos participantes en la investigación desde la fase de diseño del proyecto a fin de que los análisis resultantes se realicen con base en sus consideraciones. Se propone, de este modo, lograr que los participantes se comprometan voluntariamente en el proceso, ya que si son excluidos en la fase de diseño de las reglas del juego, la propuesta de investigación seguirá siendo un ejercicio jerárquico.

Respecto al lugar de enunciación, la autora sostiene que su problematización posibilita develar las distintas dimensiones del ejercicio pedagógico del profesional ELT. Al problematizar su propio lugar de enunciación, devela fragmentos de su configuración enunciativa y afirma, posiblemente por su honestidad analítica cualidad que escasea en el campo académico que este ejercicio le reveló lo conflictiva que es su personalidad (su *ser*). Si bien su reflexividad se quedó en un plano formal y desafectado, develar tales fragmentos le instalaron más interrogantes que respuestas por lo que es probable que en un ejercicio posterior avanzará en establecer con claridad su locus de enunciación en su proyecto investigativo. Por ahora interesa señalar algunas consideraciones del ejercicio propuesto por Julia Posada. Repensar el locus enunciatorio no es acto terapéutico ni menos esporádico, más bien exige una vigilancia epistémica sobre las categorías y los supuestos que se interpelan en las miradas de los procesos sociohistóricos, políticos institucionales, culturales y subjetivos que se intervengan o analicen.

A modo de provocar mayor debate, cabría tener presente que la decolonización epistemológica conlleva un desmontaje de los supuestos y certezas que los académicos construyen en sus procesos de formación colonial (como científicos en el marco de la racionalidad occidental); cabría entonces realizar un ejercicio de reflexividad sobre aquellos supuestos epistémicos que orientan y condicionan las preguntas sobre lo real y sobre la condición de humanidad que tienen quienes habitan nuestro tiempo y espacios; también conlleva interrogarnos sobre nuestra concepción de lo no humano en términos de su condición prescindible, utilitaria o reducido a *recurso* y, por extensión, a *ser explotado*. Ello, sin duda, conlleva problematizar la producción

de conocimiento como un acto político y transformador, es decir, pensar nuestros lugares de enunciación comporta explicitar la condición del investigador/educador como un sujeto de cambio o reproductor del orden hegemónico actual. Un segundo ámbito de reflexión, una vez instalado en el ejercicio transformador, es la identificación de cuáles son los horizontes de sentidos que se interpelan para ello, especialmente en estos tiempos de globalización, consumismo individual y sumisión ideológica.

En su trabajo, la autora plantea interrogantes muy sugerentes sobre la riqueza que tiene este debate en el trabajo pedagógico. Por ejemplo, se pregunta, ¿cómo incorporar temas de la vida diaria de los estudiantes para permitirles pensar en sus respectivas situaciones de manera alternativa y explorar las posibilidades de cambio? En la línea de Pablo Freire (1969), la cotidianeidad, siempre rica en complejidad y vida, ofrece un amplio abanico de posibilidades reflexivas, tanto descriptiva como interpretativamente, que contribuyen a observar los procesos sociales de los sujetos en marcos formativos.

Lucero Babativa: A Research Approach to Study the Relationship between Classroom Interactions and Interactional Identities in English Language Education

En este trabajo se parte de la base de que los estudiantes para ser profesores en inglés, reciben formación como investigadores asociada a sus prácticas, por lo cual se preparan para resolver problemas que experimentan en el campo ELT. En ese contexto, Edgar Lucero Babativa cuestiona el hecho de que en el programa se utilicen investigaciones de contextos diferentes al proceso formativo de los ELTPs nacionales y en las que docentes y estudiantes son considerados *receptores* de un conocimiento ajeno a su experiencia concreta. Como una manera de superar este vacío en la formación de los ELTPs, el autor plantea un modelo de Investigación Acción Participativa basada en la experiencia y biografía de los ELTPs, con la finalidad de recuperar sus propias voces y fortalecer su formación profesional. Para ello sugiere articular el registro *narrativo* (aproximación metodológica ampliamente trabajada en la investigación científica) y el *Paradigma de Investigación Indígena* (PIR), a fin de tejer una interpretación sobre la racionalidad del registro narrativo y la emocionalidad de los educandos. Con base en un esquema, explica que la Investigación Narrativa (IN) se

diferencia del PIR en tres dimensiones del proceso de producción de conocimiento: epistémico, ontológico y metodológico.

En su propuesta, el autor señala que la Investigación Narrativa ubica las historias de los sujetos en la línea temporal (la temporalidad de las experiencias relatadas), espacial (los lugares e incidencia de ellos en los relatos), y social (la emocionalidad y deseos de las interacciones contenidas en los relatos). De este modo, la IN tiene la riqueza de posibilitar la comprensión tanto del pensamiento de los hablantes en el marco de su proceso de aprendizaje, como del proceso en sí mismo. Al aplicar la Investigación Narrativa al proceso formativo, Edgar Lucero Babativa recupera la noción Pedagogía Narrativa (Goodson & Gill, 2011) porque facilita el autoaprendizaje y, a su vez, permite un aprendizaje significativo con base en intercambios y diálogos *profundos* entre el docente y los estudiantes. A partir de articular la Investigación Narrativa con la Pedagogía Narrativa, se propone realizar una Investigación Acción Participativa (PAR) a la que le atribuye la potencia de transformar la realidad. Aunque en su esquema explicativo se tiende a esbozar generalidades que no facilitan establecer claras distinciones entre estas tres aproximaciones analíticas, se desprende que lo relevante del registro narrativo (que las engloba) radica en su capacidad para recuperar la subjetividad de los sujetos en investigación, recuperación que se hace con la participación de los involucrados en la investigación. En términos ontológicos, el registro narrativo asume que el conocimiento es social y, basándose en la experiencia de los hablantes, configura la identidad de los sujetos. De ello se colige que siguiendo la tradición cartesiana el registro narrativo refuerza la noción del *ego cogito*, de un yo que sustenta su existencia en su capacidad de razonar separado de la naturaleza. Metodológicamente, esta aproximación analítica remite al llamado *giro lingüístico* (Rorty 1990) que hacia fines de la década de 1960 sostuvo que el lenguaje configura sentidos y significados contingentes, situados y sumergidos en las formas en que lo usan los hablantes y, por extensión, abandona su estatus de régimen representacional predefinido acorde a reglas fijas e inmutables, tal como se había concebido a inicios del siglo XX (Saussure, 1945). Por lo anterior, metodológicamente la narrativa enfatiza la centralidad del sujeto hablante para configurar lo real.

Por otra parte, Edgar Lucero Babativa plantea que el PIR posee una visión de la realidad que trasciende las posibilidades explicativas del registro narrativo que se inscribe en la tradición occidental de la producción del conocimiento y, por lo tanto, se agota en una versión racional-material de la vida. El PIR, distanciándose de esa tradición, según el autor, aportaría la posibilidad de

lograr una concepción holística y relacional de la realidad. Si bien se enfatiza que axiológicamente la ética del PIR se dirige a transformar la realidad y a fortalecer la relacionalidad, no se aclara ni tematiza en qué consiste la diferencia entre la ciencia occidental (racional-material) y la investigación indígena. Para aclararla se podría retomar la perspectiva decolonial en la que, entre otros señalamientos, se establece que una de las diferencias fundamentales entre ambas aproximaciones es de carácter ontológico, toda vez que para la cosmovisión indígena no existe fractura ni separación entre lo humano y lo no humano, es decir, contrario a la máxima cartesiana de un *yo* elevado y superior a la naturaleza; en la cosmovisión indígena, la naturaleza es una continuación de lo humano.

En virtud de lo anterior, el principal desafío del investigador consistiría en configurar una propuesta o modelo de investigación que resuelva la imposibilidad axiológica y epistémica de entretejer o articular epistemologías que no dialogan entre sí. Una posible ruta de articulación estaría en repensar la configuración de la propuesta en sus inicios y totalidad. Tal como se plantea, a pesar de buscar la participación de los estudiantes en la creación de un espacio dialógico y relacional para compartir las biografías de los participantes, las reglas del modelo están predefinidas por el autor; por lo tanto, se reproduce la relación jerárquica que la ciencia occidental ha naturalizado entre el sujeto cognoscente (docente) y su objeto de investigación (los estudiantes). El desafío consistiría en integrar a los estudiantes en el momento del diseño del proyecto de investigación para que el diálogo recupere a los sujetos (sus voces) desde la fase inicial del proyecto. A través de la incorporación temprana de los estudiantes al proyecto, la construcción del conocimiento evita anticipar escenarios desde las visiones predefinidas (acorde a los intereses y expectativas del investigador) y se abre a lo impredecible y lo incierto que, de una parte, forman parte de las relaciones humanas que trascienden las fronteras de lo normal o racional, y así desplazarse a la incertidumbre del plano afectivo y emocional del relato autobiográfico y experiencia relacional; y, de otra parte, generar la posibilidad de cursos de acción narrativos con el potencial de corroer y desestructurar lo establecido y esperado.

Samacá Bohórquez: Towards A Decolonial Project: A Quest between ELT Colonial Ideologies in the ELTP[4] and the Interrelations among Its Subjects

4   English Language Teaching Practucum

En este artículo la autora despliega claridad conceptual y complejidad analítica en su observación sobre la configuración colonial de los educandos de enseñanza del idioma inglés. Su interés estriba en reflejar las prácticas coloniales en ELT y develar la potencialidad que tiene la perspectiva decolonial para colocar en el centro los procesos de intersubjetividad de los educandos en pos de un resquebrajamiento del carácter colonial de su formación.

Samacá Bohórquez considera a la perspectiva decolonial como un dispositivo categorial que posibilita cuestionar los procesos coloniales y sus legados de dominación, exclusión, imposición y legitimación de la producción científica del conocimiento, lo que a la vez posibilita la invisibilización o estigmatización de las formas de producir, saberes y sentidos no occidentales. En virtud de esto, la autora establece que lo central no radica en valorar la bondad o no del conocimiento occidental, sino atender a su parcialidad y poder restrictivo, que niega formas de saber y de ser que prevalecen en algunas poblaciones del Sur Global.

Plantea entonces que la subalternización de los sujetos promovida por el ELTP comporta prácticas que exacerban una ontología neoliberal a través de políticas lingüísticas que normalizan el estatuto legal del colonialismo. Concretamente, señala que la colonialidad de la lengua inglesa se traduce en aceptar: a) que el idioma para enseñar y aprender es el inglés; b) que lo relevante es certificar un adecuado nivel de idioma, aunque en ello se ignoren las dimensiones sociales, culturales y políticas que hacen parte del aprendizaje de un segundo idioma; c) que se requiera utilizar métodos de enseñanza y libros de texto que homogenizan las prácticas, los aprendizajes y las interacciones en el aula de los estudiantes ELTP; y, d) que la certificación de la lengua es la forma de demostrar que las personas hablan una segunda lengua.

A partir de esta colonización lingüística, la autora se interroga si ELT es un ejercicio de comercializar la enseñanza del inglés. Como respuesta, Samacá Bohórquez expone los cinco mecanismos coloniales que tendría el ELTP. Primero, destaca que la objetivización pretendida por las formas de enseñanza del ELTP produce sujetos sumisos, conformistas y pasivos debido a su carácter jerárquico, monolítico e irreflexivo. En segundo lugar, resalta la racionalidad instrumental en la acreditación de mayores niveles de inglés en términos de promover la formación de sujetos para un mundo globalizado, lo que provoca una estandarización de las tecnologías de enseñanza que tiene un objetivo implícito: controlar a los docentes, esto es, su trabajo, sus

valores y sus acciones educativas. Tercero, señala las contradicciones que manifiestan los educandos que, de una parte, poseen un discurso transformador de las prácticas coloniales y, de otra, quedan subsumidas en las técnicas del ELTP que reproducen un enfoque único en la enseñanza del idioma inglés. En cuarto lugar, el material (libros, ejercicios) utilizados en el proceso formativo del ELTP remiten a realidades y concepciones de vida del mundo anglosajón, que difieren en mucho (normativa, social y materialmente) de las realidades locales, por lo que la enseñanza simula realidades ajenas y no sentidas como propias. Y finalmente, en quinto lugar, los profesores de inglés influyen en las formas en que el ELTP ha sido concebido y desarrollado dentro del contexto escolar.

Con base en estos mecanismos, la autora sugiere que a los profesores de inglés, en tanto su profesión remite a una cosmovisión anglófona (occidental), se les exige negar su concepción latinoamericana, mestiza y transcultural. Dado que el ELTP se construye con la participación de su comunidad (profesores y estudiantes), habría posibilidades de desmantelar esta operación de negación ontológica nacional (local, o regional), ya que los miembros de la comunidad del ELTP son sujetos cargados de emocionalidad, sentimientos y procesos de subjetivación que se configuran en contextos socio-espaciales situados.

Estas ideas de cierta autonomía o, al menos, que fisuran el sometimiento que experimentan los educandos del idioma de inglés, abren esperanzas de que se rebelen contra la idea de una enseñanza del inglés que subalterniza a los estudiantes. Con todo, aunque las cosmovisiones de los estudiantes se inscriben en un espacio y tiempo específico (no universal), Samacá Bohórquez constata que no se logra observar al sistema de enseñanza como opresor. De ahí que se interroga sobre la soberanía de la enseñanza en inglés y la pertinencia de imaginar otra forma de enseñar inglés. En esa dirección propone atender la pluralidad de experiencias pedagógicas del idioma inglés, en las que los hablantes locales buscan reconocer la diversidad cultural del mundo, en particular aquellos aspectos que influyen en su propio estar en el mundo. Pese a que no señala cuáles serían esas otras formas pedagógicas asociadas a estas diferencias de pensar, sentir y actuar en la enseñanza del inglés, deja abierta algunas interrogantes para que la comunidad ELTP le atribuya un sentido diferente a su experiencia social en Bogotá.

Si bien es plausible entender que en la actualidad el idioma inglés sea catalogado como lengua colonizadora o imperial, habría que relativizar la idea (planteada por la autora) de oponer a la enseñanza del inglés, las prácticas y contextos de socialización previos, ya que en su mayoría remiten a otra lengua colonial y occidental: el español. Esta distinción tendría plena validez en aquellos contextos y prácticas sociales que remitan a lenguas de pueblos originarios o en los márgenes de la modernidad (por ejemplo, los afrodescendientes). Con todo, la autora sostiene que la resistencia allende el idioma debe apuntar también a las reglas del juego del proceso de enseñanza, en el que se transmite concepciones occidentales que la comunidad ELTP asume como necesarias.

Arias Cepeda: *Palabrear* the Colombian ELT Field: A Decolonial Approach for the Study of Colombian Indigenous EFL Teachers' Identities

Este trabajo realiza una provocativa indagación sobre los tránsitos existenciales y epistemológicos de los sujetos de habla indígena que participan de los procesos de formación de enseñanza del inglés (ELT). En su apuesta analítica, Carlos Arias Cepeda se propone observar los procesos de configuración identitaria interculturalizados, como una forma de visibilizar la complejidad y pluralidad de realidades colombianas amenazadas con el monolingüismo y el bilingüismo dominante.

Como parte de su andamiaje analítico, el autor problematiza su propia experiencia de estigmatización y otredad en su infancia por sus rasgos (ojos del sudeste asiático), desasosiego que en este trabajo lo lleva a interrogarse por las condiciones coloniales que lo instalaron en un afuera, en una anormalidad. Sostiene que tales condiciones son promovidas por una epistemología blanca que ubica en la normalidad a quienes habitan en el privilegio o, en términos de Franz Fanon (2009), en la *zona del ser*. En este contexto, Arias asume el desafío de documentar las identidades lingüísticas de los hablantes nativos en el marco de un proceso que reproduce o ignora estas condiciones de blanqueamiento como ocurre en la enseñanza del idioma inglés.

Apoyado en lecturas sobre la temática, Arias Cepeda sostiene la pertinencia de su indagación para evidenciar la ignorancia del blanqueamiento

epistémico respecto de la diferencia (la otredad lingüística). Con la idea de aportar a la justicia histórica que ameritan los hablantes indígenas ELT, plantea cambiar del criterio de *aceptación* (de la diferencia lingüística) al de *respeto* que en términos epistémicos se podría traducir como un paso hacia el reconocimiento de la capacidad de pensar de los pueblos indígenas. En este acto de justicia histórica, además de los cambios en las reglas del juego (normativas, programas formativos) en el plano epistémico (atribuirles a sus formas de saber el estatus de validez que tiene el conocimiento científico), sería parte de una reparación mayor que incluya la restitución de tierras, la autodeterminación sobre sus recursos y tener el protagonismo político en el país. Inscrito en una visión humanista del proceso de expoliación y genocidio colonial, el autor considera que este acto de reparación histórica conlleva a su vez el restituirle al *ego conquiro* (y por extensión, *ego cogito*) su condición de humanidad. Este planteamiento no sólo se inscribe en una reflexión ética, también se despliega en el plano político en tanto exige establecer, en el actual contexto de globalización, ¿quién es el sujeto privilegiado y sustento del orden colonial?

En virtud del horizonte político de su análisis, el autor rechaza la emergencia del multiculturalismo y de la diversidad cultural al considerarlas narrativas de simulación que buscan ocultar el carácter racista y colonial del orden social vigente en el país y el mundo. A partir de este rechazo, Arias Cepeda reivindica pertenecer a una etnia invisibilizada por el orden colonial, el mestizaje que para él es resultado de la mezcla entre el colonizador y el colonizado, un mestizaje que habita la incertidumbre. Más allá de la intención del autor, ésta es una afirmación problemática debido a que, de una parte, referir a la configuración histórica del mestizaje como resultado de una *mezcla*, vacía el proceso de conquista de su deshumanización y expoliación que busca visibilizar, como han referido distintos autores decoloniales, que dicho proceso de conquista no sólo promovió el genocidio de las poblaciones conquistadas, sino que también naturalizó la apropiación del cuerpo femenino y la transformación de las configuraciones sexuales, amorosas y afectivas que tenían los pueblos colonizados en el que en lengua indígena es llamado *Abya Yala*.[5] De otra parte, al quedarse en una concepción biológica del racismo, la cosmovisión occidental cae en una mirada esencialista, no obstante que lo central del dispositivo racial en la clasificación de los grupos humanos descansa en su distinción cultural, epistémica

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5　Este espacio no permite abundar en las transformaciones que provocó el conquistador y la imposición de su cosmovisión en las prácticas, cosmovisiones y regímenes sexo-amorosos de los pueblos indígenas. Aunque no existe una extensa literatura sobre ello, entre otros trabajos, se pueden consultar Lugones (2008), Segato (2016), Montecino (1991), Patiño (1993) y Lavrin (1991)

y geopolítica. En el caso colombiano, Castro Gómez (2005) muestra el pragmatismo de las élites colombianas al dar su propia aplicación al *Estatuto de Pureza de Sangre* que la Corona Española comenzó a aplicar en el siglo XV para estigmatizar a moros y judíos del territorio Al-Andalús,[6] De acuerdo con Castro-Gómez, en los inicios de nuestro Estado-Nación, la elite criolla modifica las normas establecidas en el *Estatuto de Pureza de Sangre* con la finalidad de impedir que nuevos grupos de mestizos (distintos a los criollos y mestizos que impulsaron las guerras de independencia) accedieran a los beneficios del sistema, de lo cual se colige que en Colombia la distinción racial no siguió un criterio biológico sino económico y cultural.

Por otro lado, Arias Cepeda sostiene que no existe apertura para el estudio del bilingüismo en el campo ELT, dada la ausencia de una rama que problematice las políticas lingüísticas, la identidad indígena y la confluencia entre el bilingüismo convencional y el bilingüismo étnico. Pese a la riqueza analítica que ofrece esta aproximación a la temática, el autor no aporta elementos para comprender la pertinencia de trabajar estos conceptos o la riqueza de estudiarlos en el campo de ELT. En la dirección a las críticas que le merece el trabajo en ELT, afirma que su incertidumbre como mestizo hispanohablante aprendiendo inglés se expresa en: a) el riesgo de mercantilización de los conocimientos indígenas, dado que éstos se expondrían a posibles procesos de regulación y expoliación occidental por medio de imponer patentes de la propiedad intelectual y, de este modo, reducirlas a ideas que pueden ser capitalizadas y tratadas como una mercancía; y, b) el riesgo de una actitud paternalista y condescendiente que promueva su integración y homogeneidad en el sistema social colombiano, esto es, la latencia de introducir a los hablantes indígenas a procesos de aculturación.

Como parte del escepticismo político que le provoca al autor la inclusión de indígenas a la enseñanza del inglés, resalta la escasa formación universitaria indígena en el contexto del Estado-Nación, la cual se traduciría en: a) una posible resistencia de los indígenas a la identidad nacional; b) que el sistema político asuma su representación; o, c) que en un horizonte utópico se produzca una redefinición de la identidad colombiana a partir de incorporar sus cosmovisiones al imaginario de lo nacional. Instalado en la primera opción, destaca las restricciones que posee la enseñanza del idioma inglés que, al trabajar desde una concepción bilingüística (inglés y español),

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6   El Al-Andalús corresponde a la actual Península Ibérica que, salvo la franja del Mar del Norte, estuvo bajo dominio musulmán desde el siglo VIII y que gradualmente fue siendo conquistado por los Reyes Católicos, proceso que concluyó con la derrota del Sultanato de Granada el 1º de enero de 1492.

excluye el capital simbólico de las lenguas indígenas y la dimensión espiritual que comportan.

En su investigación, Carlos Arias recurre a la hermenéutica pluritópica (Mignolo, 2000) que propone realizar una hermenéutica pluriretórica como una modalidad de potenciar el horizonte de sentido *pluriverso* que pueden adquirir las lenguas indígenas en el marco del proceso de enseñanza del idioma inglés. A través de este dispositivo metodológico, el autor despliega una propuesta contrahegémonica y disruptiva respecto de los enfoques imperantes en el campo del ELT con la idea de posibilitar la irrupción de múltiples lecturas posibles, visibilizar prácticas pedagógicas heterodoxas y generar las condiciones de diálogo entre cosmovisiones distintas.

Castañeda Trujillo: Untangling Initial English Teaching Education from Pre-Service Teachers' Collaborative Autoethnographies

La brevedad del trabajo de Castañeda Trujillo no demerita su profundidad analítica cuando reflexiona sobre los procesos de colonización del ser, según lo expresan los estudiantes del idioma ingles desde la interpretación que hacen de sus prácticas formativas.

Jairo Castañeda Trujillo llega a esta observación a partir de un trabajo basado en las discursividades de su experiencia en el proceso formativo, con (o más bien sobre) sus estudiantes del idioma inglés. Desde una primera lectura sobre el énfasis técnico del programa de formación de ELTP buscó una aproximación más horizontal con sus estudiantes, encontrando un alto grado de desafectación en los relatos encontrados en su indagación, como si éstos suspendieran su emocionalidad y espiritualidad en su proceso formativo, y también como si para involucrarse en su formación debieran abandonar parte de su propia condición humana. Con esta aproximación, vía técnicas discursivas, autobiografías y debates compartidos, constató la cosificación de lo que llama *situaciones coloniales*; esto es, como reflejo de las conductas y disciplinamientos sociales que exige el sistema de educación superior de las sociedades latinoamericanas occidentalizadas, estos estudiantes de inglés denotan actitudes y visiones deontológicas y disciplinarias funcionales a las exigencias del programa. No obstante, considera que la complejidad

de todo sujeto en su inasibilidad ideológica y social alimenta la sospecha de que, bajo ese despliegue funcional y dócil existirían vestigios y brotes de un pensamiento crítico y prácticas que pudieran constituir diferentes niveles de agencia política.

Con base en sistematizar la literatura existente sobre la enseñanza del inglés, sostiene que se prioriza la investigación cualitativa, los estudios de caso y de carácter exploratorio, en los que prevalecen los enfoques narrativos, fenomenológicos y de teoría fundamentada, con base en las cuales considera no se recupera del todo la voz de los sujetos que participan en los programas de enseñanza del idioma inglés. Para Castañeda, esta falencia se explica en la fractura ontológica que prevalece entre el investigador y el sujeto en investigación. Es decir, son propuestas que no reflexionan el propio lugar que tiene el investigador en la producción de conocimiento. Con la finalidad de superar este vacío, propone subvertir la versión cartesiana en la relación sujeto-objeto a partir de la propuesta epistémica del *sujeto conocido* (Vasilachis, 2007) que cuestiona el lugar de enunciación del sujeto cognoscente para romper la jerarquía que impone el legado cartesiano en la producción del conocimiento. En el marco de esta epistemología, el autor propone trabajar la autoetnografía y la autoetnografía colaborativa.

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1. Methodological Imprisonment of Research in ELT Education: Exploring Complementary Ways-Out

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"It is necessary to incorporate
utopian thinking in the social sciences"
(Wallerstein, 2005)

… and, by extension, in methodologies
to research ELT Education
(Castañeda-Peña, 2020)

Introduction

As Wallerstein (2005) put it, humankind tended to get used to certainties that were ultimately offered by the so-called *scientific findings*. Truth (e.g. scientific findings) could only be revisited and modified when new findings added more true and valid arguments to a *customized* truth. Yet, there was a sort of belief that the scientific method and scientific research were the only valid form to apprehend and comprehend facts mainly external to the subject. Probably, it could be asserted that, throughout their education years, most scholars, as well as undergraduate and graduate students, learned to follow well-organized and consistent research steps, and to use reliable instruments that enabled them to *extract* and analyze data, in order to obtain univocal conclusions expressed in universal analytical categories. This research approach clearly was a less iterative and a more linear way to conduct research. Thus, truth obtained through scientific research processes that *followed the book* appeared to be universal, univocal, immanent and perhaps inevitable. In my view, this approach constitutes a sort of methodological *prison* with

important epistemological and ontological implications. However, I realize that those restrictions imposed by the scientific methods have nested most of the knowledge that humankind possesses, while paving a luminous way for scientists and researchers to follow. As a result, "… for many, the labels 'scientific' and 'modern' became almost synonymous, and for almost everyone, those labels were commendable" (Wallerstein, 2005, p. 15). I dare to say that ELT Education also got caught in this *luminous way*. Thus, in this chapter, or rather brief reflection paper, I mean what I mean drawing on the *scientific* and *modern* language I possess. Such language is part of the educational tradition mentioned above. The desire, however, is not to radically oppose to a methodological tradition, since I have been living / researching using it. There is a desire to multi-signify such tradition using a decolonial *spirit*.

In this paper, a decolonial perspective is proposed as a complementary way out from the methodological imprisonment that *scientific* approaches and *modern* labels have imposed to research in ELT Education; based on a deliberate practice of what I have called *thinking-on-motion*. this chapter proposes that a decolonial perspective could free ELT research out from its methodological imprisonment; a discussion of how such imprisonment has turned English language teaching and learning into a rigid and monolithic practice is included. The ideas that I discuss here, should be considered an ideological, speculative and subjective exercise evolving from Wallerstein's arguments (2005). Yet, they are incipient and not fully developed. Questions and reflections, more than answers, are the contents of this chapter. They are mirroring the uncertainties that have emerged along the way of my own collective and polyphonic research experience in the ELT arena. The underlying assumption is that, even nowadays, a myriad of colonial mechanisms still exists, which support certainties that should be put into question under a decolonial perspective. A second purpose of this chapter is to envision how an ideological and subjective decolonial experience would look like in the local ELT. The chapter finishes with a voice of caution to critically embrace some methodological decolonial assumptions related to ELT Education.

Some Questioned Certainties about ELT

Applied Linguistics to the teaching of English as a second / foreign language, has long conceived the education of English language teachers under a model focused on universal grammar, error analysis, and comparative analysis,

among others. Additionally, cognitive theories have contributed with ideas about long-term memory, learning styles and cognitive / metacognitive styles. More recently, a more socio-culturally based model has emerged as a result of problematizing ideas of power, identity and agency.

This evolution of the thinking behind English-language teaching models (which has been merely mentioned here) has favored the upsurge of a variety of approaches to teach the language (García, 2019), including *Native Language Arts*, *Heritage Language Education*, and *Bilingual/Multilingual Education*, among others. On this matter, García (2009) also states that languages tend to be taught as natural entities in curricular spaces that include, but are not limited to, *Immersion Bilingual Education*, *Developmental Bilingual/ Multilingual Education*, *Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)*, *Transitional Bilingual Education*, and *Mother-tongue-based Multilingual Education*.

In the list above is also important to include those approaches with a presence in the local and regional contexts, in particular those applied to undergraduate English language teacher education programs such as *B.Ed. in Languages*, *B.Ed. in Modern Languages*, *B.Ed. in Bilingual Education*, and *B.A. in Language Professional*. According to García (2019), it seems evident that "different types of languages have been assigned to school learners in an effort to control access to opportunities. And it is also evident that both, elite and minoritized populations, have participated in legitimizing these constructions" (p. 159).

In addition to García's realization of the underlying linguistic and educational standardization at schools, I would like to also point out the fact that this multiplication of the educational systems' efforts to expand and solidify learning of English language from early education years, has originated methodological and epistemological considerations regarding related phenomena such as: a) binary structures (e.g. native speaker vs. non-native speaker); b) universalization (e.g. methods for English language teaching); c) appropriation of other's identities, (e.g. language learner as an abstract entity); d) loss of the subject (e.g. ideal language learner and ideal language teacher, best teaching practices); and, e) ideas of community as equals (e.g. unified academic communities), among other mechanisms that currently support colonialism in ELT Education. Under these circumstances, what is considered a certainty is not just the binarism, the loss of the subject, or any

other of the numbered considerations above, but rather the way to conduct research on such certainties.

Granados-Beltrán (2018), for example, states that research in ELT Education has become naturally hegemonic. He proposes, as an alternative, that "prospective ELT undergraduate and graduate researchers should appropriate other methodologies that might enrich their understanding of contexts and participants, such as ethnography, phenomenology, narrative research, and case studies, among other possible study designs" (Granados-Beltrán, 2018, p. 188). Yet, it seems important to point out some pertinent voice of caution to say that novice and more experienced researchers could further their methodological competence by adscribing to either critical methodologies or decolonial doings.

Ever-Growing Local ELT Decolonialisms

Some epistemological and ontological objections to Critical Applied Linguistics, and to some decolonial views (such as those recognized as allegations of linguistic imperialism that Phillipson identified in 1992), advocate the idea that inequality is seen as culturally and socially indispensable to maintain a natural discursive and linguistic order. For example, Rajagopalan (1999) has stated that "In any society, language planning and language teaching necessarily entail a rehashing of existing power relations simply because power is exercised in and through language. It is foolhardy to expect that such power inequalities can be rectified or done away with, once and for all. From a linguistic perspective, all societies are riddled with what Ray (1965) calls *indispensable inequality*" (p. 206). Such thinking that social and cultural organization is naturally instrumentalized through language needs revision. The reason for that is precisely what discursively configures ideological certainties that perpetuate for example, binarisms, universalization, appropriation of other's identities, loss of the subject and diverse communities seen as no equals. In spite of this criticism, it would also be senseless not to expect evolution of ideologies that contribute to the discussion with alternative and complementary viewpoints.

That is why I regard the emergence of decolonial positions with enthusiasm and at the same time with some anticipatory concern, particularly when it comes to the Colombian and regional contexts in relation to the

teaching-learning of the English language. At the time of writing this chapter, such positions have effectively been sponsored by our doctoral program[7] in the emphasis of ELT Education (see Castañeda-Peña et al, 2018). For us, the most prominent uncertainty is related to the methodological aspect of the research process. Methodology has been, so far, the most criticized research-related aspect challenging our PhD students as well as myself. In most cases, methodological criticisms have come from a positivist mindframe that puts into question, for example, the number of participants in any particular research study, its statistical validity, its triangulation processes, and/or how unreliable its research findings might come to be.

However, some efforts rooted on the decolonial view are examining the ELT arena with a critical-ethnographic-action-research (CEAR) approach, that put forward actions to decolonize English language teaching (López-Gopar, 2014, 2016). This upsurge of reflection papers that reinvigorate the quest for decolonial doings has been recognized. Some examples are, the revision of the colonial legacy in relation to ELT teacher professionalism and identity (Torres-Rocha, 2019), and the need to help pre-service and in-service English language teachers to become more power literate (Granados-Beltrán, 2018), both aiming to reflexively challenge the ideology of indispensable inequality. There is not an intention to prescribe a *one size fits all* solution. Yet, the main question revolves around comprehending what could work as decolonial doing. Would such decolonial doing apply to investigate challenges related to English-language teaching and learning? The same question is valid when it comes to basic and continued education programs for English teachers. It is necessary to recognize that the research methodology tends to be a problem of Modernism. How to escape from such imprisonment?

It is not my intention to find a final answer to all these questions. However, I think helpful to reiterate the need for a flexible, open-minded evolution on how to think *English-language teacher's education* and *power inequality and identity,* which are two of the foundational themes of the ELT Education in our Education PhD program. Some of these ideas are based on the work of Kincheloe, McLaren, and Steinberg (2011) regarding an evolving critical attitude and methodological bricolage. In their words, it is advisable not to commit to a singular or specific way of doing research "by eschewing positivist approaches to both qualitative and quantitative research [...] and refusing to cocoon research within the pod of unimethodological approaches; we

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7   Doctorado Interinstitucional en Educación - http://die.udistrital.edu.co/enfasis/elt_education

believe critical theory and critical pedagogy continue to challenge regularly employed and obsessive approaches to research" (p. 173).

In the same line of thinking, some other authors see that "we are immersed in an exchange of insults (between those who do not consider themselves decolonial and those who do) in the midst of the struggle for control of the resources on the institutions that generate knowledge. It is time to start meditating on the philosophical premises of our scientific activity and the political context of knowledge structures" (Wallerstein, 2005 p. 16). Thinking can be understood as something that has the ability to move, and that should exercise such ability to movement. Under this view, the natural attributes of any thought are recognized to be political and ideological, including epistemological, ontological and methodological axes interweaving as a tapestry made of multiple rationalities. The *thinking-on-motion* should also be applied to possible revisions of decolonialist theories and political proposals, possibly in the same manner as the decolonial thinker and critic Espinosa-Miñoso (2014) does regarding feminist critical epistemologies, or some other epistemologies and philosophical traditions at some point in history did regarding alternative loci of enunciation (for example the Confucionism).

Exerting the *thinking-in-motion* should result in the identification of, at least, the three current and major decolonial perspectives that Castro (2016) finds in Latin America: "Within this model of rationality, there are various positions ranging from criticism to all foundational and universalist normativity (Grosfoguel), to a paradigm that restores essentialisms appealing to *the popular* (Dussel), or to those coming from the claim of border thinking (Mignolo)" (Castro, 2016, p.1). To this viewpoint, Ojeda and Cabaluz (2010) add up that the identification of several decolonial perspectives would happen "particularly in regard to the categories of 'coloniality of power' and 'geopolitics of knowledge', (which) have enormous links with critical pedagogies as an emancipatory political project" (p. 155). Within my proposed scenario of *thinking-on-motion*, and following to Wallerstein (2005), "the fundamental argument is that the assertion of universal truths, which include universal norms, is a 'meta-narrative' or 'master narrative' (a global narrative) that represents an ideology of powerful groups within the world-system and that, therefore, has no epistemological validity" (p. 124). No form of knowing, or related to knowledge, should have the status of *the* only supreme, unparalleled epistemology. I would like to argue that, within a decolonial *thinking-on-motion* methodology, questions regarding methodology emerge

precisely because of the epistemological rethinking that is installed as part of ever-growing, permanently evolving local or regional decolonialisms in ELT.

Assumptions to Help Exploring Methodological Ways Out

According to Wallerstein (2005) "we must discard the image of the neutral scientist and adopt a conception of scientists as intelligent people but with concerns and interests and moderated in the exercise of their hybris" (p. 21). What is more, accordingly with some methodology recommendations from Granados-Beltrán (2018) focused on researchers on ELT Education, it would be important to critically and decolonially consider the following set of assumptions to shatter traditional unimethodological approaches and to support revisited research agendas (see Castañeda-Peña et al, 2018):

- Research processes are to be conceived as researching with (someone) not about (someone).

- Research processes are mediated by power relations that develop heterarchical alternatives.

- Research processes are relational.

- Research processes appeal to traditional research instruments yet should revisit them from a decolonial perspective.

- Research processes acknowledge the existence of a locus of enunciation or loci (understood as "the geo-political and body-political location of the subject that speaks" (Grosfoguel, 2011, p. 5).

- Research processes are ethically intersubjective.

- Ever-growing local decolonialisms *foci,* in ELT, are discursive and constituted through language.

- Ever-growing local decolonialisms in ELT emphasize historicity focused on finding continuities, discontinuities, ruptures, cracks and multiple relations (which are not necessarily relations of cause-effect).

- Ever-growing local decolonialisms in ELT are intellectual and should remain connected to critical emancipation and to critical action.

- Ever-growing local decolonialisms in ELT should respond to criticisms with a critical and decolonial mindframe and method.

- Research processes should focus critically on "public policies on education grounded in globalization", should be seen as a "complex phenomenon [that could] be understood in a continuum" (Guerrero, 2018, p. 121).

- Research processes should focus on unmasking "the power knowledge relations in which the English [language] teacher subject has been objectified to fulfill the requirements of policies, the standards of an idealization of being or to explain the failure of a State's goal" (Méndez, 2018, p. 203).

- Research processes should focus on "colonial mechanisms or devices that are noxious to human existence in general" (Castañeda-Peña, 2018, p. 28-29), and to English language learners, and teachers in particular.

Conclusion

The first six assumptions above would constitute, to some degree, a decolonial-doing framework that is no prescriptive and has no pretention to becoming a decolonial certainty. Those assumptions simply put forward alternatives that should enable researchers to exercise epistemological and methodological reflection. Such resource is needed in order to prevent "restablishing hidden [or overt methodological] mechanisms that invigorate colonial situations", (Castañeda-Peña, 2018, p. 28), which support and maintain knowledge and colonialism within ELT arenas. The remaining seven assumptions also point towards uncovering potential research agendas that methodologically could challenge unimethodological positions, and/or methodological research imprinsoments in English language teaching and learning.

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2. ELT Research from the Global South: Uncertainties in a Rarely-Walked Road

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Introduction

Being an educator of English Language Teachers and embracing a decolonial perspective may seem a contradiction. Often times, when talking about this doctoral program to colleagues of other disciplines, they look puzzled because in their worldviews, it would be not possible to form teachers to teach the language of the empire while at the same time problematizing the very same field from the vantage point of decolonialism. But, the world is not black and white. The world has many colors, shades, and textures. And, although we try to keep consistency between our discourses and practices, we also acknowledge that we live in constant contradictions, and are full of questions, doubts, and uncertainties. That is a part of who we are, as well as an important component of the intellectual and academic work.

One of the questions that constantly hunts us, and we munch about with our doctoral students in the research seminars, has to do with: what would entail a serious pursue of qualitative research in the Global South? We are yet to have the answers. However, in this chapter I would like to take a risk and discuss some of my reflections, which ideally would keep pushing us, the ELT community, out of our comfort zone.

For the rest of this chapter, I'll be using the voice of a first person singular, thus accepting my responsibility for the ideas that I am about to present. In trying to answer such a complex question, I will only deal with the role of researchers as well as the challenges and possibilities I see for them[8]. I would like to start by reviewing the contribution of quantitative and qualitative methods in the

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8   In order to keep a gender perspective, I will use the singular "they" (them/their/they) whenever I refer to a second person singular, that is, she/he/her/his/her/him. I ground my decision on Geoff Pullum,

production of knowledge and truth. I consider that this is a necessary discussion if we are interested in undertaking research from a decolonial perspective where these concepts are decentered. Then, I will address the need to engage in epistemological reflection in ELT. After that, I will discuss some challenges and difficulties that embracing a decolonial perspective might entail, particularly when adopting an *Epistemología del sujeto conocido* (Epistemology of the Known Subject), and finally I will close this chapter with proposing some possibilities for doing research in ELT from the South.

Quantitative and Qualitative Methods in the Production of Knowledge and Truth

Research is a vast and therefore exciting field. From a Western perspective, there has been general consensus regarding what knowledge is, what truth is, and how they are discovered or uncovered. The two dominant paradigms in research, the quantitative and the qualitative, have both pursued the same ideal. The quantitative paradigm, as it is widely known and accepted, has been largely influenced by positivism. According with the positivist thinking, only what is observable and measurable can become a source for knowledge and knowledge itself; the same happens with truth.

The emergence of different types of qualitative research methodologies led to the configuration of the qualitative paradigm. Qualitative methodologies challenged the prevalence of quantitative research because their object of study, as well as their methods for collecting and analyzing data, came to be very different than those of quantitative methodologies. Many of the qualitative methods were not observable or accurately measurable because they were imbricated in the living world where the individual, their feelings, ideas, and ways of signifying the world were central. However, and due to all the criticisms towards this emerging approach, qualitative researchers tried to mirror quantitative stages and procedures in order to make these methodologies more *scientific* (e.g. trustworthiness as a way to show reliability, as Cochran-Smith & Lytle discussed in 1999), or used triangulation in data analysis as a way to minimize sources of bias, as explained by Freeman (1998). As a consequence, the concepts of knowledge and truth remained unchallenged, as much as the methods to access and produce them, which was evident in most graduate qualitative research textbooks (including the widely used in Colombia *Metodología de la Investigación* (Research

Methodology) by Hernandez (2019), which adhered to the principles and procedures of quantitative research. Some other indicators of the strong influence of the quantitative paradigm, in particular the quantitative approach when understanding and producing knowledge and truth, include: a) the criteria established by research agencies to finance research projects; b) the guidelines of indexed journals for the publication of research reports IMRAD (Introduction, Methods, Results And Discussion); and, c) the general outline and format for masters and doctoral dissertations on graduate programs.

Through time, and with more and more scholars conducting different types of qualitative research, the field has undergone deep transformations as the result of questioning the consistency of conducting *by the book* qualitative research that is based on positivist thinking and quantitively-oriented methods while reality presents itself in so many and complex ways. Feminist research methods, for example, emerge as a response to a generalized masculine view on research that was apparent in every aspect of the process (Lichtman, 2012). These methods challenge, for example, the hegemonic relationship between the researcher and the participant, where the researchers see themselves as the owners of knowledge and truth while relegating participants to the role of mere informants who are left in the dark about the purposes and results of the research study. This is just to give an example, because as reported by Denzin & Lincoln (2012), scholars are problematizing the given in a wide array of qualitative research methods.

Adding to this ample global interest in examining qualitative approaches, and with the emergence of decolonial theories, the question about how to conduct research within such qualitative framework becomes of interest to those interested in conducting decolonial projects (Mardones, 2016). Puentes (2015), states that, within decolonial theories, the methods to conduct research remain as one of the gaps that still needs to be addressed, which in fact has become a challenge in our doctoral program.

ELT on the Path to Epistemological Reflection

All the authors who contributed to this book, including myself, have performed as English-language teachers at some point of our professional careers. Some of them remain working as such, while some others have become teacher educators. We all have in common an education as English teachers based on Anglo American teaching methods and approaches. Thus,

most of us likely have participated in colonial practices while teaching English. Additionally, several of us have privileged either American or British English dialects over other English-language varieties and have also penalized students for using Spanish in the classroom or have praised those students who were able to attain an English-language pronunciation that was to some degree native-like, among other common teaching practices in the classroom. As researchers, our studies have all been framed within the qualitative paradigm, and we have consistently attempted to explore the most complex issues (such as subjectivities, identities, gender, power, and language policies, to mention just a few), from critical perspectives. Yet, while engaged on those qualitative research projects, we have strived to follow the traditional research parameters pertaining to quantitative thinking, since these are the practices accepted and legitimized in academic communities. However, we have complied with all the requirements and steps of a research study.

Only after engaging in this doctoral program, we have started to detach from thinking research only from traditional perspectives and have embraced epistemological reflections. As stated by Vasilachis (2009: 3), such processes are the result of the ingenuity expected to emerge, in part, when investigators face research situations for which there are not clear perspectives, or for which the existing research methods do not serve the purpose of the study. In this aspect, Social Sciences have advanced thanks to the work of the group of scholars participating in the decolonial turn (Cruz-Gómez & Grosfoguel, 2007), and have contributed to generate new ways of thinking about the administration, production, and distribution of knowledge.

ELT, on the other hand, is in need to examine itself, which is particularly true when considering ELT ways to produce knowledge. As stated by Vasilachis (2009: 2), "What we call science, like other forms of knowledge, is a social construction and depends as much on the beliefs and values of scientists, as it is on its strict adherence to abstract methods and measures"[9]. Traditionally, ELT research has been dominated by Western perspectives regarding how to produce knowledge. Such perspectives deal with several matters, including topics of interest, role of the researchers, the methods to analyze and report data, and the role of participants, among others. It is relevant to say, though, that some Colombian scholars have been working on the development of alternative research agendas, some of which are distant from the imposed (or self-imposed) research topics-of-interest that are prevalent in the Western thinking. Publications in indexed journals, scholarly events, and

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9   My own translation from Spanish

graduate dissertations, are evidence of this transformation in research topics. However, the field does need to engage in a more serious epistemological reflection, particularly because, until these days, most of us, the researchers, have reproduced research methods that, in some cases, cannot account appropriately for many of the phenomena in our complex realities.

Challenges and Possibilities

Conducting research from a decolonial perspective constitutes an enormous challenge related to a variety of aspects. It demands that, as researchers, we change our old skins to unlearn practices as well as to question and reformulate our beliefs about knowledge, science, and the entire process of doing research. Research questions might be many, but here I will only refer to what Vasilachis (2009) calls "*sujeto cognoscente*" and "*sujeto conocido*" in order to propose a turn in the way we conduct ELT research; such, should decenter the "*sujeto cognoscente*" and place the "*sujeto conocido*" at the core of the process.

Vasilchis (2009) definition of "*sujeto cognoscente*" (knowing subject) and *"sujeto conocido" (known subject),* stems out of the three paradigms that she identifies in her epistemological reflection about research in sociology: Historical Materialism, Positivist, and Interpretive. The *sujeto cognoscente* and the *sujeto conocido* are conceived in highly unequal terms, where the *sujeto cognoscente* has the cognitive tools to know the *sujeto conocido* in their context, while also possesses all the information and control over the research process. The *sujeto conocido*, on the other hand, comes to be the other actor in the process, where he is constructed as passive and objectivized, voiceless, and unable to interpret his own reality.

Positivist research curtailed the human dimension out of humans (emotions are not measurable or quantifiable) in their interest to be fully scientific and objective. This idea, as mentioned above, has permeated even qualitative studies, which in turn have developed procedures to attain the desirable objectivity. The challenge for research in ELT, discussed in this chapter, is to change the positivist perspective to adopt an *Epistemología del sujeto conocido*. Such epistemology proposes, first of all, that participants must be considered not an object but a person who has the ability to signify and gives meaning to a living world, where meaning emerges from the individual and

not from the external context. Bringing the human dimension back would mean that the researcher and the participant are seen as two selves who co-construct knowledge in an intersubjective relationship.

Considering both, the researcher and the participant, as parties who jointly develop knowledge within an intersubjective relationship, is something that might result in producing tensions for the researcher. I will refer to three of those tensions that I have identified in the collective work with the doctoral students in this program, and which are intertwined: tensions related to the researcher epistemological perspective; tensions that have to do with the research process itself and how to conduct it; and, tensions related to the professional implications of doing research on the Global South. In epistemological terms, these tensions tackle a wide range of aspects.

Tensions related to the researcher epistemological perspective. As mentioned above, members of the ELT community worldwide have been constructed from a very technical and instrumental perspective (Kumaravadivelu, 2003), where teaching the language (in this case English) is seen as a neutral and candid task. As such, from the epistemological point of view, the field of languages teaching has been defined within some limits related to which competences should students develop and with which teaching methods, as well as what are the types of questions to be asked and the processes or methods to answer them. An immense challenge to ELT researchers emerges when, within broader discourses on what knowledge (in singular) is, the need to explore another people's knowledges becomes apparent. Such is a challenge that necessarily destabilizes the field, the researcher's own self, and the ways of knowing, among others.

Tensions associated to the research process. The influence of the positivist thinking has also permeated qualitative research approaches and confined researchers within very strict boundaries. Traditional ways of knowing have turned into an obstacle, because the researcher is considered knowledgeable and competent as long as he follows the rules of traditional research. Thus, casual conversations with participants in a given research study, or any data coming from sources that were not originally included in the research design (regardless of how relevant it comes to be) cannot, and shall not, be used because they are assumed to violate the general research protocol. It seems that in an attempt to be as objective and valid as possible, qualitative research has become even stricter that quantitative research when it comes to designing and conducting research studies. The need of piloting instruments, as well as

the processes of triangulation of data, are good examples of this self-imposed *objectivity*.

The task of removing the heritage of positivist paradigms, in order to view the *sujeto conocido* as an *acting other* who has something to say about who he is and how he constructs his worldviews, is something that creates tension. That is, among other reasons, because the researcher has been conceived as the *knowing subject* who is invested of a superior power given by his academic and research careers. Thus, when embracing a symmetrical relationship with the *sujeto conocido,* it is implicated that the participant in a given research study also has access to the rules, tools, and information pertaining to the research process about which he was ignorant before.

Tensions pertaining to investigating in the Global South. A third tension that I have identified, has to do with the professional implications associated to conducting research at the Global South, particularly when adopting the *Epistemología del sujeto conocido*. As I have been claiming along this chapter, positivist thinking has been highly influential in our field. As scholars, we are expected to produce and disseminate knowledge. However, as I mentioned somewhere above, the guidelines for publications in indexed journals and graduate dissertations in both, masters and doctorade programs, generally follow a clear positivist structure. In addition to that, most terms of reference from national or institutional research-related organizations, require adherence to the same positivist patterns when applying for research grants. Once again, this set of rules becomes a career obstacle because the opportunities to disseminate knowledge produced in the Global South are very limited given the positivist structures that dominate academic circles.

However, I would like to mention some scenarios where to rethink possible solutions to these issues that we, as a team, (teachers and students) have found in our research endeavor:

Constant engagement in epistemological reflection. During the two years of our Research Seminars, we have taken every opportunity to reflect about the research projects we are proposing; we have challenged our own systems of beliefs and have strived to find or create possibilities for an *Epistemología del sujeto conocido*.

Value the potential for intersubjectivity in the co-construction of knowledge. Listening to the *sujeto conocido* opens a whole lot of possibilities towards knowledge and towards different ways of understanding and acting in the world.

Placing the *sujeto conocido* at the center of the research process has allowed us to move from asking *why* to asking *who*. The subject recovers their human dimension and their perspective on the living world. Furthermore, by placing the *sujeto conocido* at the center, he is not represented but actually invoked (Vasilachis, 2009), while by doing that, we bring to the research report his story, his identity, his essence, and his very existence in the living world.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have tried to answer the question: what would entail a serious pursue of qualitative research in the Global South? It is necessary to acknowledge that such a question deserves (and demands) a comprehensive study, so that to be able to, at least, scratch an approximation of an answer. Here, I have brought to the table some of the concerns that, as a member of a scholar team that is engaged in issues of identity, power and inequality, and ELT, I have researched about. I have focused in the proposal of adopting an *Epistemología del sujeto conocido* (Vasilachis, 2009), in the hopes to seduce other ELT researchers to join us in this uncertain but fascinating endeavor.

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3. Experiencing Uncertainties

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"El lenguaje que dice la verdad
es el lenguaje sentipensante.
El que es capaz de pensar sintiendo
y sentir pensando".

"The language that tells the truth
is the language sentipensante[10].
The one that is able to think feeling,
and to feel thinking."
(Galeano, 1992)

Introduction

We could not find better words to describe what becoming a researcher capable to expose himself/herself, while understanding *the others*, means to us. The word *sentipensante*, which was first used by Orlando Fals Borda (1981) on his marvelous anthology, and then coined by Eduardo Galeano (1992), refers to a type of person who is able to use a language where reason and heart combine to think and feel. In this chapter, *sentipensante* will be used as a paratext to analyze how such person is invited to resist intellectual colonialism during his process to becoming ELT researcher, and ends up emotionally and physically affected (Fals Borda, 1968). This chapter was inspired by the speeches, responses, and reactions from doctoral students to a research course that invited them to integrate an epistemological reflexivity (Vasilachis, 2009) into their research agendas and personas. Such exercises of reflexion should take those doctoral students to think about methodologies that prevent from preconceived answers, simplistic formulas, and certainties assumed as irrefutable facts. This deep thinking is also a part of our own

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10   The impossibility of separating mind and soul.

reflections about the struggles and resistances of teachers who want to govern themselves (Méndez, 2017), to the point that we have decided to extend it to the academic field so that to expose some of our own wounds and struggles as education researchers in the Global South.

When reflecting upon the meaning and implications of being a PhD student in a specific area of knowledge, some demands from the established academic community become immediately apparent. Among them, I can mention the challenge to being able of producing relevant and situated knowledge to the field; being able to adopt and adapt a type of reasoning to integrate our research into the existing work; and, to succeed when developing and delivering academic dissertations with a correct use of the terminology, perspectives, standards, methods and procedures, in order to be accepted as member of the academic community, while making our own research reliable, and consequently enjoying the power and privilege of speaking with confidence. Some of these challenges are, often times, openly discussed and shared, while some others take place covertly. Indeed, some of these demands can be easily accepted while others must be endured! Once we have been educated in the academic tradition of the Global North, it has been not easy for us to face the epistemological and personal demands of doing research from a South-South perspective, where being *sentipensante* seems to be the right and only mood that fits within a type of research that really cares for *the others*.

When reading Vasilachis' ideas (1997; 2003) regarding a meta-epistemology to think qualitative research, where the knowing subject (sujeto cognoscente) and the to-be-known subject (sujeto conocido) are necessarily complementary, we come to realize how some ways of being and relating to people, that are common within the research communities, have been the outcome of some scientific dominant paradigms that claim for objectivity. Such claims have forced researchers to adopt and adapt some specific parameters to explain realities that match certain theories, as well as to use a language that hides subjectivity, and to use labels such as *informants*, *participants*, and *data,* all of them usurping the legitimate identity of the individuals and turning them into generalizations. Vasilachis' ideas have brought up a new and different understanding to our intention to conduct our research within a decolonial perspective, which immediately led us to question our own journey as researchers. It has, in turn, made us realize that we have supported canonical research in ELT. We have also assumed that certain types of discourses on researching, teaching and even acting are the natural way of

thinking. Furthermore, we have developed, yet involuntarily, an undesirable sense of superiority in our being teacher-researchers, upon the basis of some certainties coming from those views behind canonical research.

Conducting research is a process whose effects can be experienced in different forms. Some of us, researchers, might have felt compelled to follow the methodological traditions learned in the early years of our undergraduate or graduate education, thus undertaking our research projects within the perspective of knowledge extractivism. Such traditions have provided a sort of research *fluency* regarding *how to proceed,* which had gotten internalized, thus making us to speak of, to act on, and to perpetuate, a type of research where we thought we knew everything and had control over every single aspect including the perceptions of our participants. Yet, at some point along our research trajectories, some of us have felt summoned to go beyond those certainties and conduct a type of research that is open to uncertainties and new possibilities, thus transforming all individuals who are involved, including the researcher, while sharing power with everyone. However, arriving to this new locus of enunciation has never been an easy endeavor; becoming a *decolonial thinker* and a *sentipensante* researcher proved a goal causing wounds and making us vulnerable, since it would make our fears, trepidations and insecurities emerge. Although researchers would prefer to keep for themselves some types of episodes on this process most of them related to own struggles in the making as researchers , I agree with Alsup (2006) regarding her views that individuals' subjectivities act as the main vehicle to relate to each other, if assumed that a noticeable change will occur within the research process, and that such is particularly true within the arena of teacher education programs. That is, precisely, what qualitative research should show! We, researchers, should be able to explain how our locus of enunciation compelled us to work with teachers and prospective teachers, in our case, in order to understand, through our particular stories and problems, who we are, and how we have become subjects of the English teaching practice. In this sense, the challenge to being really impacted by our interactions with other individuals requires a serious ethical commitment to self-knowledge and openness.

Central to this discussion, is to share how the reactions of some doctoral students can be documented as struggles and wounds experienced during the process of preparing their research project at a doctoral level. I would like to start by discussing some of our first reactions to an opening exercise that took place within one of the sessions of our research seminar. The overall

purpose of such exercise was to assess the *coherence* and *consistency* of some research projects developed by our students. The exercise could have been regarded, at first glance, rather simple, as it only involved a chart to be horizontally filled to depict relations among research questions, objectives, methodology, instruments and, most importantly, assumptions subjacent to those questions and objectives. A second view would reveal that the chart intended to be an effective tool to detect how/if some assumptions lacked the proper connection with the questions. Actually, we, the participants in the seminar (which included thesis advisors as well as students), were able to corroborate that the chart was highly effective at making evident any inconsistencies; in fact, and despite the highly canonical chart template, when we engaged in discussions about some assumptions of our students, based on what was depicted in the chart, challenges and queries regarding some research questions or objectives that had been accepted in previous steps of the research process were uncovered. More specifically, for some projects the intended linkage between the epistemological view (decolonial or poststructuralism) and some specific procedures or research instruments revealed problematic.

The reactions of students to this exercise, in particular from those who were at the time more experienced in conducting research on a particular topic, were emotional and even perturbing. We were able to attest how some of the most self-confident students went through a sort of *panic ego attack* when they failed to sustain the validity of their exercise without invoking an author or a theory. Some other students were assaulted by a nervous laughter and ended up confessing their impossibility to explain the contradictions. Even some others, were unable to hide their concern and fear for not knowing how to fix a particular problem. This particular exercise was a breaking point even for us as teacher-advisors, because we did not have answers to all the questions of our students; additionally, we needed to recognize that we did not go through any similar type of pression when we were graduate students, mostly because by then we followed canonical views and methods to conducting research despite of our poststructuralist or critical epistemology positions.

Our expectations to challenge the rules that the so-called Global North had imposed upon us regarding not only conducting research but also upon our being and think, became essential. We believe that such is what a graduate education program from the Global South in our field must embrace. We do not know to what extend this challenge can be acknowledged, particularly by some people, even if they come to recognize it as a contradiction. The reason

to our doubts is that, while we speak and teach English, most of the time we do not even dare to speak about what it means to be an English teacher in Colombia. So, if we the graduate professors who teach English in our country do not discuss these matters, who is going to do it? Our conclusion is that we need a type of research able of exposing our own wounds, which at the same time carrying the potentiality to heal them and help us to think differenttly.

At some point while conducting our research projects, we all agreed to bring to the table inspiring literature and some other works in order to analyze how researchers who positioned themselves as decolonial, critical, or poststructuralists in qualitative research, dealt with a *sentipensante* epistemology implicating an ethical and political commitment to getting involved with the subject to-be-known. We also agreed in creating an atmosphere of work where we would be not afraid to expose our fears, insecurities and doubts. And, tacitly, we also agreed in becoming a community of researchers willing to work for social justice and cooperate with each other to dismantle colonialism within our research field.

As our research seminars have advanced, we have witnessed how the experience of conducting research under this mindframe sometimes turned painful. In the face of canonical research requirements, demands or criticisms to the works of our students elicited certain types of reactions. Some students who might have been taken over by their emotions, would bite their tongues and/or repress their tears in order to avoid any visible expression of their pain. Some others would get their face red and reacted with rage, even muttering incomprehensible words; here, those who risked speaking under such circumstance would need to come later on and apologize for having been rude.

We devoted some time to open expressions of those individual emotions while having a coffee or a tutoring session. Not surprisingly, even during some of such conversations, physical manifestations were experienced. For instance, some students confessed that they were unable to decompress regarding their thesis even at night, which had seriously disrupted the quality of their sleep; some others started to suffer health problems after enrolled in the doctoral program; some others started experiencing displeasure at work because they did not feel comfortable working with a different set of beliefs in comparison to those we maintain at our classes; a few of them were depressed or intimidated to the point that some even contemplated the idea of dropping out.

So, as graduate program professors, we wonder: are we exerting excesive pressure on our future doctors? Of course, we are! We do know their capabilities and potentialities as researchers. We also recognize that their research proposals are very promising for the field, to the point that we want to get the most of them, which should allow us to make their works highly visible. As advisors, we are learning from them, while we are all but available and willing to support them and push them to give their very best. At the same time, our students are also experiencing the social pressure from colleagues and bosses who have specific expectations about them as full-time graduate teachers at their workplaces. Support from the families of these future doctors is also crucial to surviving along all those years of study and research! But, what could be said in face of all that much time invested on the doctoral program if our future doctors are not devoting time to their families? Just to describe this reality by using an expression from the digital era, it can be stated that our future doctors always live in thesis mode! Every person who has been through the experience of developing his doctoral thesis, knows that a variety of emotions is experienced every single day. But at the end, we all shall see the worth of the effort.

Despite of all the considerations above, we would like to highlight that our students experienced a pressure that was stronger than any other, the most implacable one, the worst of all. Such was, the intellectual pressure that our doctoral students exercised upon themselves. Once they were seduced by the decolonial, critical and poststructuralist viewppoints, they became their own critics. Sometimes, they refused to present their work because they considered it superfluous or lacking rigorousness. They had been so open to change that they started experiencing doubts and questioning some characteristics or procedures of research that they had taken for granted before. Another important aspect to highlight here, is that we embarked on reading again some authors to problematize their claims and assumptions under these new epistemological lenses. Such new readings led us to rediscover different forms to position ourselves and expose our locus of enunciation, which in the past had been ignored because of canonical dominances.

Conclusion

In canonical methodologies, *thinking* prevails over *feeling*. Hence, objectivity in research reports is highly valued, thus creating the impression that conducting research is a process where the researcher is, in no way, related to the research question as if it was not a concern ; additionally, the researchers are assumed to be not affected at all by their interactions with research participants or the context under study. It would seem that they are immune to the assault of doubts, contradictions and uncertainties! In this sense, researchers within this tradition are dispossessed from their subjectivity and from the expression of their emotions, learnings and transformations. That was the reason why, the main goal of this chapter was to make visible that the constitution of English language teachers as researchers at this doctoral program, embraces an epistemology where *thinking* and *feeling* are intimately interrelated. We cannot turn a blind eye to epistemologies that rescue the human side of research and bring to the surface researchers' struggles to subvert the canon while decolonizing themselves.

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4. Research Methodology: Tracing ELT Teachers' Invisibilized Knowledge

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> *"My education was Western, and years of living under Western thought is hard to undo and unlearn. Maybe no puedo get rid myself of it completely. Mis ganas and disposition only go so far. The resistance to any new kind of rethinking and reimagining is debilitating if not futile when one tries to (un)learn Western research and teaching. Research's and teaching's scientific tools, spirit and rituals run deep, and constantly (re)appear like fantasmas in a haunted house. When I least expect it, I search for truths, which once "found" only serve to limit our multiple ways of living and existing. When I least expect it, I become a colonizer and I reinscribe colonialist relations of domination/subordination. When I least expect it, I construct "los otros", when I least expect it, I embody whiteness… When I least expect it, I vivisect not only my mind from my body but my research participants as well. All this happens while attempting to perform criticalist research and teaching!*
> *(Saavedra, 2011)*

Introduction

In this chapter, I will start by describing my current tensions as a teacher-researcher trying to frame a research design, or a path, to unravel the ways through which teachers relate to knowledge, or the ways how teachers experience them. I will first develop a critique of the Western tradition of research. Second, I will explain why I am trying to deviate from it, especially in the context of English Language Teaching. Third, I will advocate for a decolonization of the method and will reflect about strategies for such an

endeavor, by describing the testimonio (testimony) as a provisionally fulfilling qualitative methodology for understanding English teachers' experiences when generating or sharing knowledge; an example case will be included.

The Metaphor of the Snake Charmer on My Relationship with Western Research

I started this paper quoting Saavedra (2011) at length, to contend that I experienced the same tensions she did when carrying out research that did not necessarily subscribed to the Western paradigms, or fluctuated between the center and the periphery of knowledge an attempt to develop border-thinking (Mignolo, 2013). Saavedra's ideas indeed resembled my digging into my thinking outside the box. However, I have come to find a metaphor that illustrates the tensions I have recently undergone when conceptualizing and writing the chapter of *research methodology* of my dissertation regarding a re-interpretation of teachers' knowledge.

I think of Western research as having the effect of the snake charmer. For years, partially due to my lacking awareness, exposures to other ways of thinking, and epistemological reflexivity, I was charmed by Western methods and research parameters with no questioning at all. For example, I believed that research always had an emancipatory intend, and that we had to be completely objective even if we were conducting research within the field of social sciences. I had never reflected about how researchers exercise power over the researched by categorizing them and/or describing them in ways that are alien to their own world views.

Luckily, I came across the thought-provoking writings by Smith (2012), Chilisa (2012), and Berkin and Kalmeier (2012). Then, what I thought to be my highly consistent epistemological view, turned out to be only my epistemological inconsistencies. Those were, in fact, the fluctuations on my thinking when intending to develop a research agenda that detached, at least to some degree, from research parameters that had remained static over centuries, or had been considered as the ultimate and only valid research paradigm. Now, I now want to share with you, reader, how it is that snakes get *charmed*.

Snakes (e.g. *trained* cobras or pythons) are said to be hypnotized to dance and move at the pace of a *pungi* player the charmer . Upon doing my own search regarding snake charming, I learned that snakes are unable to listen the way we typically understand the concept of *listening*; what happens is that snakes feel the vibrations of the *pungi* (the music instrument) in their heads. Snakes are kept in a basket, with no light. So, as the player starts the music, a snake can come out, blind by the outer light, and mistakenly might take the *pungi* for another serpent. Then, the snake starts doing some movements that in reality have an intention of protecting it from what has perceived as another predator, while observers see them as dancing movements. Most charmers have a good estimate of what is a safe distance from the snake; even more, some charmers remove the fangs from the snakes to lessen the dangers. Many of these snakes also remain in a state near starvation as the charmers regularly do not feed them properly. Something that I found highly enlightening here, at first sight, was the fact that the snake is not actually charmed or hypnotized but confused.

What I just narrated, is a metaphor of how I related to Western research and how it related to me. To some degree, the anecdote of snake charming could be equated to that phenomenon of the *captive mind* (Alatas, 2004 cited by Chilisa, 2012); it could also resemble what Fanon (1967) and Thiog'o (1986, a), and b), cited by Chilisa (2012), call the *colonization of the mind* to refer to the "uncritical imitation of Western research paradigms within scientific intellectual activity" (Chilisa, 2012, p.7), which dictates how theoretical structures, research questions, methods, results, and dissemination ought to be.

In my previous research journey, as well as in my most recent conceptualizations of what my PhD dissertation was going to be, I had *danced to the tune* of the Western charming research parameters. Somehow, my mind was *colonized* similarly to how the snake is charmed or confused; additionally, at some point the Western research appeared to me as completely aseptic, unproblematic, and free from colonial interests. It also appeared as invested of certain truths, which supposedly would provide me, as a researcher, with all the necessary support to conduct proper, ethical, responsible, and context-bound research projects. However, after engaging in some epistemological reflections, I have come to agree with Vasilachis (2009, p. 21) regarding an important drawback of Western scientific research:

> Scientific knowledge observes only the reality that it has previously constructed as knowable. It limits itself and restricts the possibility

> of knowing what is yet to be known because it goes beyond only those ways of knowing that already have a status of legitimate … How does the qualitative researcher solve the tension between the supposed 'objectivity' that scientific knowledge demands, and his/her own 'subjectivity' and those of the participants?[11]

I realized that I was certainly blind as a *colonized being*. Western research might not have actually *fed* me with what I needed (having a decolonial interest), while it has kept itself away from me at a certain distance; such, because in general terms Western research is prone to othering that is, seeing other cultures or ways of seeing the world as strangers ; in other words, Western knowledge "creates differences between itself as the norm and sees other knowledge systems as inferior" as explained by Spivak in Chilisa (2012, p. 8). Therefore, as I became more aware of my new ignorance, I ended up understanding how certain tenets of Western research fall short in accounting for a problematization regarding local English language teachers' experiences of knowledge. Further discussion of this matter will be found down below in this chapter. Now, I would like to problematize whether the social sciences originated in the West should have an universalizing goal, and how methods relate to scientific colonization.

Why Western Research Might Not Fit with My Search for Teachers' Invisibilized Knowledge?

This chapter is focused on discussing the approach, method and techniques that I used to explore how English teachers experience knowledge. I have placed myself within a decolonial locus, which implicates that I see myself entitled to select a particular theoretical stance, or as Smith (2012) would say, a "position from which I write and choose to privilege" (p. 1). Hence, I cannot help but to problematizing the core concepts of research and its varied approaches. I think that, when tracing back the origins of research, as it is used in academia, the colonial, imperial agenda could be easily identified.

Given that research is a process that, for long, has been embedded within imperialist and colonialist ideologies, in the next paragraphs I will include a brief overview of such ideologies. In general terms, I see imperialism as a series of historical and connected events where, based on their economic

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11   My own translation from Spanish

goals, countries from the other side of the oceans discovered, conquered and abused some other countries. In my view, imperialism was what resulted from Europe's global businesses and the development of the modern state. Colonialism on the other hand, is understood here as the system of thoughts that put imperialism into practical terms. Chilisa (2012) explains that the processes of colonization that was experienced by vast populations across the Earth as suppression, subjugation, and dispossession by the Enlightened West (France, Britain, Germany, Spain, Italy, Russia and the USA), ended up being not only political but also implicated an imposition of the colonizers' ways of knowing and control over the production of knowledge. Chilisa calls such phenomenon *scientific colonialism*. Scientific colonialism resulted in an unchallenged use of the positivist paradigms over the colonized, with the colonized, and for the colonized. In some cases, Western researchers converted colonized populations into objects of their research, and in other cases into consumers of it, this latter being my case. Smith (2012) explains that critical assessments of research have mostly focused on empiricism or on the ways how the positivist tradition has tried to see the natural phenomena as an equivalent of the social or vice versa. Yet, according to Smith (2012), Western research is more than that. It is, "a compilation of judgmental views regarding several aspects such as: cultural orientation; set of values; conceptualizations of time, space and subjectivity, all of them pertaining to different and competing theories of knowledge" (p. 44). Under such viewpoints, some knowledge would be more valuable than some others, some would embed others, some would be conflicting, and even some would be coming from *the other*. Smith also points out that, unfortunately, the Western hemisphere does not clearly recognize these deep implications of colonialisms.

In a similar line of thinking, Chilisa (2012) says that "psychology, anthropology, and history, operate under the positivist goal to generate and discover laws and theories that are generalizable; researchers mapped theories, formulas and practices that continue to dictate how former colonized societies can be studied and written about" (p. 10). Certainly, Smith (1999) makes a good point when explaining how "research is one of the ways how the underlying codes of imperialism and colonialism are regulated and realized" (p. 8). The author exhaustively demonstrates that such regulation has occurred through scientific models, disciplines, and the entire intellectual production, which has been enacted through the institutionalization of research across research societies, universities, and scholarly networks. She concludes that, in a similar fashion, by locating branches of Europe-based research institutions

and universities at the colonies, the local interests were embedded within the colonial systems.

By comparison with the ELT field, it seems evident that our discipline has also dictated how the formerly (still?) colonized learners should be taught a language through systematic generalizations, standardizations, or theories of how L2 users should be written about and constructed, (see a thorough elaboration in Cook 1999, 2002), through research, public policy, and production of materials, among others. In our context, such actions have occurred overseas; yet, their products have come to our hemisphere by means of an ample variety of mechanisms, including: textbooks; journals; congresses; conferences; lessons from mainstream authors to teachers-to-be regarding second language acquisition; handbooks of second language teaching, learning and research; and, validation of foreign academic works made by local researchers.

Kumaravadivelu's (2016) article "Can the subaltern act?" explains that "hegemonic forces in our field keep themselves 'alive and kicking' through various aspects of English language education: curricular plans, materials design, teaching methods, standardized tests and teacher preparation, primarily through center-based methods and center-produced materials which assure that the marginality of the majority is managed and maintained" (p. 72). With a clear intention of making English teachers critically reflect, he asks: "how many graduate level methodology books on methods that are used as foundational texts for a core course in TESOL, are actually written by non-native professionals? How many ESL/ELF textbooks manufactured and marketed worldwide by 'mainstream' presses in our field are actually written by non-native professionals? Not many. Why is that?" (p. 72).

To answer his question, we should come back to the discussion brought up at the beginning of this chapter: The Western hemisphere canon of knowledge has a will to hegemonize how research must be carried out, and how its results should apply for most contexts. In Smith's words "Colonies were peripheral satellites which gained access to new knowledge and technologies through recourse to the writings of author in the centre" (p. 64). A case in point is brought up by Kachru (1994) when explaining how the concept of interlanguage has been backed up in research by mainstream ELT. The author explains that data that were collected in the United Kingdom from "international students, guest workers in Western Europe, has been treated as valid source of data to generalize or support claims of second language acquisition hypotheses" (p. 795). Kumaravadivelu (2016) goes on to say that

method is the archetypical zone where hegemonic forces feel compelled to apply the biggest control, because the methods work as driving principles determining other aspects, which in the particular case of ELT, include training, materials, assessment, methodological paths, and so on. In terms of research, methods come to play almost the same role not only in ELT but in research in a more general sense.

In my case, when I read Smith's (2012) seminal questions about the research process, *whose research is this?, who owns it?, whose interests does it serve?, who will benefit from it?, who has designed it and framed its scope?, who will carry it out?, who will write it up?*, and, *how will its results be disseminated?* (p. 11), I arrived to the conclusion that more than instrumental, neat, and crystal-clear answers for a research design that Western research could have expected, answers to such questions needed to be framed within an ethical compromise; they should also reflect my own locus of enunciation and my position as a researcher within an emerging decolonial view regarding the relations of English teachers with knowledge, including any invisible, unexplored versions of themselves. Cleverly, Chilisa (2012, p. 7) urges us to take responsibly our identities as researchers when stating: "the research you do, will have the power to label, name, condemn, describe or prescribe . . . You are encouraged to conduct research without perpetuating self-serving Western research paradigms that construct Western ways of knowing as superior to the other's ways of knowing". She goes on to describe what would be a code ethics for us: "Researcher as a provocateur, and a transformative healer guided by the four *Rs*: responsibility, respect, reciprocity and rights/ regulations of the researched (Chilisa 2012, p. 7).

Having stated this polyphonic background reflection, I will now explain some arguments regarding why I do not use anymore Western research frames; afterwards, I will elucidate the methodology that most likely, yet provisionally, reflects my expectations as to what it means to conduct research within a decolonial perspective regarding the knowledge that has been made invisible.

The Case of Research in the ELT Field

Would it be possible to conduct research and construct knowledge without resorting to modern science methods, particularly in the ELT field? Sousa Santos (2018) asserts that modern science methods (as it is exemplified in

the works of Creswell (2012), a frequently-used theoretical source in some ELT research), are developed within a logic of *extractivism*. Such *extractivism,* which can be intellectual, cognitive or physical, is observed particularly in the design and application of data collection instruments such as interviews or surveys, where researchers literally extract information and are the only ones summoned to interpret the resulting data, thus exerting to a great extent , power in the research process and over the researched (Chilisa, 2012). When it comes to analyzing the ethical concerns of research, Cresswell (2012, p.169) stresses that:

> Data collection should be ethical, and it should respect individuals and sites. Obtaining permission before starting to collect data is not only a part of the informed consent process but is also an ethical practice. Protecting anonymity of individuals by assigning numbers to returned instruments and keeping confidential their identities, offers privacy to participants.

> Hence, ethical concerns in educational research applied to ELT contexts, should be addressed by means of obtaining participants' permissions to extract their experiences, ideas, and knowledge, while rigorously keeping anonymous the source of knowledge, that is, the identity of the research participants.

Discussions above seem to support Chilisa's view that a sort of inner belief underlies the dominant paradigms of research: "Knowledge is an individual entity: the researcher is an individual in search of knowledge, knowledge is something that is gained, and therefore knowledge may be owned by an individual" (Chilisa, 2012, p. 21). Mainstream research advocates might resort to claiming that researchers are informed by 'member checks' through which the researcher confirms with the researched the themes he/she found in order to establish the credibility of the findings and supposedly give voice to the researched. To decolonize the research methods, more emphasis should be given to the participants' voices allowing for "polyvocality", which consists of allowing the participants to speak for themselves, in a medium designed by themselves, as well as to decide whether they want to be visible or not:

> How can extractivism in research be avoided? Sousa Santos (2018, p.130) proposes breaking with the extractivist logic through cooperation among knowing subjects "rather than through subject/object unilateral cognitive interactions, that is, by means of engaging the researched in other steps of the research process, including the

formulation of the problem to investigate as well as making him/her be part of the interpretation process or authoring of the research study.

An additional aspect that deserves attention, is the narratives related to the implications of conducting qualitative research in ELT. After an extensive literature review of available research on second language acquisition from the Northern academic environment, Ellis (2012, p.19), draws on Chaudron (1988) to explain that:

> L2 classroom research has 'an important role' to play in both language teaching and language teacher education. However, the problems of applying research to language teaching remain even when the research is classroom-based. The essential problem is the extent to which the findings derived from the study of one instructional context can be generalized to other instructional contexts… This is not just a problem for descriptive studies of specific classrooms but also for experimental studies that employ inferential statistics in order to claim generizability."

In the passage above, an interest in transferability or generalization of research results is deemed desirable, despite the fact that qualitative studies not always seek to produce generalizations. In that sense, the ELT mainstream research field should get acquainted with what Sousa Santos (2018) calls the 'hermeneutics of partiality'. Such hermeneutics refer to understanding that science, as any other way of knowing, is partial because it cannot extrapolate what happens in one context to another. Another black hole in the study of ELT research is related to the role played by non-scientific, vernacular knowledge that may contribute in the teaching-learning process, which is hardly ever considered.

Another issue to be critically analyzed is the status that ELT teachers' research enjoys. Ellis' chapter named *Methods for Researching the Second Language Classroom* (2012), introduces what the author calls "a useful distinction between formal and practitioner research" (p. 20). Here, the *formal research* refers to the type of research conducted by researchers relying on emblematic research traditions, while the *practitioner research* means research conducted by teachers in their own research contexts *drawing on the principles of action research*:

> It should be noted, however, that both types of research have in common the general features of research that is, there is a problem

or question to be addressed, data is collected and analyzed, and an interpretation of the findings provided."

To exemplify the difference between both types of research, he resorts to Long's Interaction Hypothesis which Ellis himself tested through pre and post test experimental groups, establishing whether learners' language acquisition was facilitated through meaning negotiation. He wanted to *fill a gap in theory*, demonstrate cause-effect relationships, and 'conduct a study that would lead to publications in academic journals…all leading journals in my field' (Ellis, 2012, p. 23). According to this author, formal L2 classroom research is, among others, characterized by:

> 1) The phenomenon investigated is determined by the researcher. 2) The research is either theoretically driven (as in experimental research) or conducted with a view to developing theory (as in descriptive research). 3) The results of the research are written up in accordance with the requirements of academic articles, and with a view to publishing them in academic journals… a limitation, however, is that itmay never reach teachers as they are unlikely to read the journals in which it is published."

Ellis (2012), describes practitioners' research as that one that is conducted by teachers who want to develop connections between research and practice. He goes on to say that "research topics are not derived from theory but from teachers' desire to experiment with some innovation in the classroom, to seek a solution to some problem. . . Practitioner research, however, is not likely to be published in academic journals as formal research, which raises the question of its status in the field of L2 classroom research as a whole" (p. 26).

From the paragraphs above, it can be concluded that there is a suggested, if not overt, interest in keeping the distinctions between those scientific methods that supposedly enjoy more prestige, and those pertaining to research studies conducted by teachers, which appear to be considered as not leading to formulate or consolidate any knowledge or theory. Sousa Santos (2018), explains the matter by saying that "scientific knowledge tends to have an exaggerated idea of its own relevance" (p.138), which would be evidenced in the subtle distinctions between *formal* and *practitioner* research in the ELT field. t can be also inferred that the kind of research carried out by teachers is thought not scientific, whatsoever, and teachers hardly access formal research journals. What the author conceals, however, is that research carried out in the Global North does not allow a proper open access to such knowledge

for the Global South unless high prices are paid. In addition to it, the fact that the results of research are written in accordance with the standards of academic articles, shows how the ELT research field does not escape from the patterns of science promoted by Northern epistemologies. Sousa Santos (2018), says that "the epistemologies of the North favor written knowledge, be it in the science, the humanities, or literature" (p. 184); such, because writing *confers fixity, stability, and permanence to knowledge* (p. 184), while makes knowledge production different from other social practices. Writing gives to science a touch of exclusivity and reinforces its 'monumental' character "establishing distance, perennial effect, and remembrance" (p. 184).

Using Testimonies as Method and Data is a Path Towards Liberating the Captive Mind

Could I dare to say what Fanon (1967, p. 5) radically stated in the introduction of *Black Skin White Masks*: 'I leave methods to the botanists and the mathematicians'…? Indeed, I cannot completely go against the currents of the knowledge community[12]. Nevertheless, as decolonization deals with "centering the concerns and world views of the colonized others, so that they understand themselves through their own assumptions and perspectives", in order to give voice to the historically silenced, suppressed or invisible individuals, and to analyze how mainstream texts legitimize positions of superiority (Chilisa, 2012, p. 13, 14), a research methodology ideally should respond to these ethical, epistemological and ontological challenges. Consequently, I regard a transformative paradigm to research[13] and a qualitative participatory approach with testimonial data and methodology, as a prospective option to delve into the teachers' knowledge that has been made invisible, rather than, for example, the interpretive models of hermeneutics or phenomenology, or even the poststructuralist perspective, although recognizing that this last mentioned is also highly appealing based on several reasons that I will now proceed to explain.

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12   A thorough discussion about teaching in the knowledge community is developed in Hargreaves (2003).

13   For Chilisa (2012), a transformative paradigm (as opposed to the interpretive or the positivist) focuses on the transformation of individuals through actions. Ontologically speaking, reality is a product of our social locations while certain locations have advantage over others. In terms of epistemology, knowledge emerges from "collective meaning making" (p. 36), where both, participants and researchers, share power and transform each other.

Adhering to the research views from Chilisa (2012), I am not going to frame this research proposal within an interpretive approach, or traditional hermeneutical or phenomenological methods. Ontological, epistemological and axiological reasons lie underneath this decision. First, although ontologically speaking the interpretative approach predicates that reality is socially constructed, it is limited to space, time, and context. Second, even though the epistemological views corresponding to the interpretative approach predicate that knowledge is subjective, scholars have not actually voiced populations or individuals historically invisibilized through research studies. Third, although axiology pertaining to the interpretative approach includes some valuable standpoints, and its methods focus mostly on naturally occurring data thus exposing researchers values and biases, it fails to acknowledge the issue of power within the research design of who investigates, who is investigated, and whose voice represents/constructs reality. (See Chilisa, 2012, pp. 32-36).

An additional consideration is that the origin of the interpretive tradition in the German thought, comes to be problematic within a framework of reference that intents to detach, even if partially, from the Euro-Western epistemology. Decolonization of knowledge, if at all achievable, "would require taking seriously the epistemic perspective, cosmologies, and insights of critical thinkers from the Global South thinking from subalternized, racial, and ethnic sexual spaces and bodies" (Grosfoguel, 2011, p. 4).

Similarly, if I intended to be consistent with the decolonial standpoint, a post-structuralist perspective to research would conflict with the epistemological challenge of detaching from the Western research parameters, even if partially (as already discussed). I could have a post-structural research design aiming at tracing how discourses of resistance circulate as effect of power, thus allowing marginal discourses to revive, and accounting for how any competing ways to give meaning to the world are constructed in teachers' knowledge (Weedon, 1987). Certainly, poststructuralism posits that everybody takes subject positions within discourses, but is that true? Can everybody indeed subject position as to be heard? Can even invisibilized voices subject position in mainstream arenas and be taken as valid interlocutors? I am not sure. The reflection by Beverly (2005) about Spivak's (1988) essay "Can the subaltern speak?" creates some doubts deep inside of me when he states: "if the subaltern could speak that is, speaking in a way that it truly matters, that compels us to listen then he would not be a subaltern[14]" (p. 350).

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14   My own translation from Spanish

Therefore, in this research process, I want to voice English teachers' subalternity based on a testimonial research framework. For Beverley (2005), the subaltern is a social location that is not satisfactorily represented in the social sciences or the *university*, because they are institutionally framed within the dyad power/knowledge that constructs and nurtures subalternity. However, a channel can be built through a testimonial research framework, because it is a way to intervene where the subaltern cannot. For Beverley, although the testimony does not necessarily surpass the typical Western/modern dichotomies of the metropolis/periphery, creole/mestizo, elite/popular, literate/illiterate, it implies a new way to express these oppositions in a collaborative way. The goal to regard the subaltern as being the teller of his/her own situation is best summarized by Gugelberger, & Kearney (1991, p. 4) when asserting that:

> In contrast to conventional writing about the colonial situation, which is produced at the centers of global power and near the apices of class difference, testimonial literature is produced by subaltern peoples on the periphery or the margin of the colonial situation. Thus, the margins of empire are now *writing back* in an overdue attempt to correct the Western canon and its versions of *truth*.

In that sense, what is a testimony? What has been said about it? And, how can it be used to serve the purpose of decentering Western research? Testimonial narrative, for Marin (1991), has been "a kind of writing from the margins about the, and to, the systems oppressing the speaking" (p. 51). Privileged individuals, says Marin, write literature, autobiography, ethnography, biography, and Scriptures, but testimony has been theorized to favor those who have not been privileged within the mainstream discourses. For Delgado Bernal, Burciaga, & Flores Carmona (2012), scholars are gradually using testimony as a methodological approach, as data, and as pedagogy. Its use contests the disciplinary preparation received by researchers to producing impartial knowledge. On the other hand, testimony questions objectivity by situating the individual and the collective in tune with situated bodily, spiritual, cognitive and communal production of knowledge. These authors contend that testimonies can reach several publics because they can be written, oral, or digital, and they should be seen *much like a gift* (p. 6) by the listener; he, the listener, unfolds testimonies' inner sense since learning about one person gives us insight into the life of many others.

Saavedra (2011), asserts that testimony is a groundbreaking Latin American literary genre, which allows people tell a collective history of domination

through the narrative of only one person. These stories are frequently told to someone else who provides access to the testimony to more listeners or readers. Yúdice (1991), explains that as a genre, testimonial writing started to gain terrain in the decade of the 70s, when authors such as Freire tried to bring to the public sphere the struggles of popular sectors to gain recognition in canonical texts. However, even though there was testimonial literature before and after the Latin American boom of writers, this genre was not recognized as literature in mainstream literary circles until the creation of the testimonial literary award of the Cuban Casa de las Américas (House of Americas). More recently, testimonial literature has been taken as a tool in educational settings as pedagogy and as a research methodology (see for example, Hamzeh & Flores Carmona, 2019).

For Marin (1991), first generation testimonies such as those on the books *I, Rigoberta Menchú, An Indian Woman in Guatemala* (1983) and *"Si me permiten hablar. . .", Testimonio de Domitila, una mujer de las minas de Bolivia (Let Me Speak! Testimonty of Domilita, a Woman of the Bolivian Mines)*, written by Domitila Barrios de Chungara and Moema Viezzer (1977), show inner political intentions of recognition, fore the communal standpoint through the individual's voice, and twist the importance of the first-person singular that is the prominent figure in the Western canon of thought, principles that have remained at the core of testimony until now. Elenes (2000), reflects that in the Western tradition "the autobiographical subject has historically been the European man: the subject of the Enlightment" (p. 109). The author wonders whether *the other*, the subaltern subject, the colonized, the marginal, can build an autobiographical character in which the *I* relates with the *we*. Then, this kind of *speaking from the margins* is situated knowledge that reconstructs multiple identities of the subjects/agents of the testimony as well as of those of the absent ones.

Some authors (Marin, 1991; Delgado Bernal, Burciaga, and Flores Carmona, 2012; Beverley, 2005), draw distinctions between testimonial narratives and other forms of biographical and autobiographical research. Delgado Bernal et al (2012), say that testimony differs from other types of biographical research in that the *testimonialista* is implicated in a critical reflection of his/her experience inside particular socio-cultural realities. For Beverley (2005), although both testimony and autobiography confirm the authority of personal experience, the testimony sustains that the own experience cannot be separated from the class situation or the subalternized group that is brought up with it.

Recent developments on the testimonial genre and methodology are found in the Chicana Latina movement (see Latina Feminist Group, 2001; Burciaga & Tavares, 2006; Benmayor, 2012). Delgado Bernal et al (2012), list 36 dissertations in the decade of the 90s and around 800 in the 2000s using testimony mostly in the educational field. Also, testimonial data and methodology can be found in Critical Latin Studies of microaggressions and racist nativism (see Pérez Huber, 2011), and in studies of embodied literacies and bilingualism (Saavedra, 2011; Passos DeNicolo & González, 2015). Also, testimony has been used as a pedagogy to learn how to rejoin the mind-body-spirit in order to destabilize settler colonialism and legitimize it as a genuine methodological practice of knowledge production (Hamzeh and Flores Carmona 2019). More recently, Colombian author Carvajal (2017), developed a critical and decolonizing ethnographic study utilizing testimonial data in order to challenge traditional concepts of homelessness in the American society. In a similar vein, Brazilian author Ramos (2017), developed her dissertation on how students with a personal background as refugees understand traveling and education within the context of forced migration, using testimonial interviews. The objective of these two dissertations in education and language is to de-monumentalize and challenge static ideas of what it means to be a homeless and/or refugee in such contexts.

The reader might wonder whether the testimony has any ontological or epistemological value whatsoever. Within a postmodern perspective, Yúdice (1991) argues that testimonial writing rejects master narratives that validate grand actors and subjects of traditional history such as the State, the West, and the Academia, among others. The witness or testimonial writer is the one who matters because he/she portrays his/her experience as an agent of collective memory. Truth is summoned to denounce a current situation of oppression, thus turning the need for writing the history again into an imperative (*writing back* as Gugelberger & Kearney 1991; Smith, 2012; and Chilisa, 2012 have pinpointed).

Still, there are differences between postmodern and testimonial writing when applying to *fragmentation and marginality* (p.21). For Yúdice (1991), despite certain postmodern texts intend to deconstruct "the classics of the Western tradition, their purview remains, unsurprisingly Western. The marginalized elements with their own specificity are not explored outside hegemonic discourses" (p.22), while deconstructionists have not defended nor liberated the marginalized but actually have considered them as alterity or as *the other*. In short, deconstruction only recovers the other as absent. Yúdice (1991, p. 25), brilliantly concludes from postmodern texts:

> A person cannot *see* the subject of the counterhegemonic project because they are marginal and such marginalized elements appear in hegemonic postmodern texts only as the horror which excites the writer. With the *other* thus neutralized, becomes undistinguishable from the oppressors.

In that train of thought, a testimonial narrative is meant to unveil this *other* that has wrongly been constructed in the Western cannon of thought as non-existent, not able, not interesting, not knowledgeable, and not important.

In discussing the epistemological status of testimonies within a historical perspective, Tozzi (2012) assesses the function it has in the constitution of representations about the past. The author contends that, in regard to historical research, testimonies should not be considered secondhand source of knowledge, but rather tools for the constitution of the historical fact as such. A case in point brought by the author is the Shoah (the holocaust) in which the survivor's testimonies are not just additional elements of the event but constitutive of the event itself. In that sense, there is an advocacy for its use and a call for the recognition of its value, inasmuch as history has also undergone as sort of scientization, while an interest in objectivity and evidence has pervaded it.

Theoretical considerations summarized in the previous paragraphs, suggest that testimony could be a valid source of information regarding the part of teachers' knowledge that might have been made invisible. Particularly inspiring are the contributions of Benmayor (2012), which are the result of more than ten years conducting research projects with undergraduates. As part of one of her undergraduate courses called *Latina Life Stories*, the author has collected testimonies where her students have expressed "their own social and cultural truths (p. 144) and have developed a subsequent interpretation that serve a theorization of their experiences.

One of my research projects inspired by Benmayor's contributions, included a several-steps process, as follows: a) On my role of participant-researcher for this specific project, I called in a group of teachers pursuing an M.A in Applied Linguistics to the Teaching of English; they were invited to reflect upon their experiences of teaching and how they related with their own knowledge (i.e. their professional assets developed and accumulated through their careers such as skills, theoretical contents, insights, etc.); they were also asked to give special emphasis to those of their experiences that had been challenging and/or memorable; b) I introduced the participants to the

testimony genre, and some examples from Chicana Latina Life Stories were examined to analyze the potential of this type of writing/speaking. 3) The participating teachers left the sessions with a question that would help them examine their memories, their classes, their past experiences intending to delve into their knowledges. 4) Teachers were encouraged to write or record some preliminary ideas and exchange them with other participants during subsequent sessions, in an attempt to dialogically help each teacher in the recalling exercise to bring to awareness past episodes. 5) Teachers were asked to decide how they wanted to introduce their testimonies (based on thematic question posed during the first step), regarding specific moments of their teaching that they wanted to bring up for sharing or discussing about. Their testimonies were to be accepted either in writing or verbally. 6) Teachers took at least 3 weeks to produce their testimonies. Once such testimonies were completed, they narrated or read them aloud in order to *collectively theorize* following Benmayor's (2012) words each story. Finally, each reading aloud/oral text was recorded and sent to the *testimonialista* to provide him/her with an opportunity to listen to his/her testimony again, refine contents, and also as a resource to help our participating teachers to theorize about their testimonies after collective interpretation.

The act of verbally sharing the own experiences with other people (i.e. giving testimony), which in the example above took place among the participants in the research study is pivotal to the *Epistemologies of the South,* where knowing *with* others takes prevalence over knowing *about* others (Sousa Santos, 2018). In a similar vein, there is a reconceptualization of the value of listening. Sousa Santos (2018), asserts that "Western culture privileges writing and speech to the detriment of listening" (p. 175). The idea behind listening to the testimonies of others, is that a dialogic relationship can be established, whereas each person can enrich his/her own testimonies when reading them aloud. Therefore, a first layer of interpretation and communal co-construction of knowledge occurs by means of deep listening and engagement. An additional, yet key consideration here, is that there is an overt attempt to favor the *oralization of written knowledge*, acknowledging that scientific standards do not promote oralization because it is seen as prone to imprecision. However, following Sousa Santos (2018), the *Epistemologies of the South* encourage and support oralization because it allows for a certain degree of personalization in the contruction of knowledge. The practices engaged in oralization of knowledge invite to the use of vernacular language, dialogic relations, and narrative as a substitute of explanations (Sousa Santos, 2018). Instead of testing theories of success, the contributing to societies, and foregrounding the importance of

experience, are desired outcomes. Indeed, the Freirean concept of dialogue and experience has been foregrounded in the notion that it is through dialogue that knowledge can be co-constructed, thus making especially relevant the themes that are existentially pertinent to a particular context.

I would like to exemplify how I used testimonies in the ELT field to develop an exploration of English teachers' knowledge experiences. The collection of testimonies, as mentioned before, took place with teachers pursuing a degree in Applied Linguistics to the Teaching of English. In the paragraphs below, a description of a specific testimony by a teacher or *testimonialista* is shared. The excerpts are part of a collection of 8 testimonios with the purpose of gaining deep understanding of how teachers perceive their own relations to knowledge. Hence, here I want to share the result of having followed this method of data collection in a real context. The subsequent excerpts exemplify the result of having crafted a testimony, a communal interpretation and a theorization of it. Three types of voices are introduced: the voice of the *testimonialista*, i.e. the teacher who participated in the process of writing the testimony; the second voice is the voice of another teacher interpreting the testimony in the read-aloud session, and my own voice as participant-researcher comes to be the third in the interpretation. Participating teachers were asked if they wanted to have their real names displayed. An asterisk has been added where a pseudonym was preferred. The final excerpt exemplifies a piece of the theorization made by the *testimonialista* after listening the recording of the communal interpretation of his text.

The *testimonialista* introduced in the first part is Alex*. The other participant is Javier, his classmate. The excerpt of the testimony that appears below is the result of working towards the working questions: What have been some of the most difficult experiences as an English teacher for you? How did you experience that? How do you link it with language pedagogy?

Eight English teachers listened to Alex when he read aloud his testimony. Once he finished reading, they were asked to react and interpret the testimony. Verbatim labeled as *Yellow, Green*, and *Red,* as well as Javier's reaction, are included below to illustrate how interpretations from other people intervene in the co-construction of the testimony interpretation[15]:

> **Alex***: *I can't believe we still have to protest this sh***

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15   My own translations from Spanish

Yellow: *. . . I would say that I exist because of politics. Actually, my parents met at a youth basis of a, let's say, red leftist political party. I am perhaps the product of the social movements and political and economic struggles of those who are behind. My childhood was, thus being a happy and free kid who quickly understood the value of the social advocacy and the political commitment for a better country for <u>every single person</u> . . .*

Green: *University was a constant tension. Although my closer peers and friends aren't as posh and rich as you may think, I had the chance to meet people with way more opulence. I admit I oftentimes felt my notions, positions and struggles didn't find a right place. There wasn't any strike, any political meeting, any graffiti, any demonstration, and even worse, further social and political concerns seemed to be distant among professors and peers. "Yo nunca he ido a una marcha, y esa vaina me da como miedo" used to say a very good friend of mine.*

How would you expect to contribute in a system like that? Teaching, no matter our area, implies more. I wasn't concerned about CLICL or the Communicative Approach so popular at the time, rather, I wanted to know how to foster access to language education to everyone regardless one's socioeconomic status.

Red: *And currently, my pedagogy and notions are the product of everything I have lived. My parents, my friends, my city, my country, my school, my university, and especially the social and political struggles that lie behind. So, the next time that your impressions mismatch with who I really am, remember my own history.*

Please, remember I grew up with a constant fear of not seeing one of my parents coming back home at night. And not because of the fear of dying itself that's the beauty of life , but because I quickly understood that in our country people are assassinated because of their ideologies. Please remember I carried out my undergraduate research reading English short stories in peripheral areas of our city. Please remember I did volunteer work and taught how to read and write to South-east Asian immigrants while living in the Windy City. Please remember that English language is also advocacy . . . And please, please remember that I am just the product of those million voices that couldn't be silenced.

After Alex* finished reading his testimonial narrative, Javier, his peer, spoke:

> **Javier:** *I find it interesting and recall back in the class . . . There was one reading, something we read it is like . . . it would be easy to us to just label Alex as a private college student, from a private university with certain access to higher education. You know, in terms of research, but we do need to know more about people we are interviewing. Having said so, it makes me reflect how are we going to display our students in such an endeavor like, in our research, the one we are carrying out now. I may say this: "from my background, students are from a higher status because . . . [this and that] and that is quite deterministic in certain way, you know.*

Once Alex* had the opportunity to listen to his testimony when it was read-aloud, he wrote the theoretical reflection that appears below, which was the product of having heard his partners discussion and contributions to his work:

> **Alex*:** *By reexamining my own testimony, I realize that there exists a constant inclination toward the political and social struggles that have shaped my life, my academic journey, and my current teaching practices and ideologies . . . the political and social struggle of my background.*

As a reseacher, I understood that Alex* considered the very fact of existence as connected with politics. He also found connections among social advocacy and politics with a better future without exclusions. As the testimony exercise advanced, he also saw connections between the English language with advocacy, which suggested that knowledge is connected to politics and social advocacy, whereas knowing necessarily entails them both.

In the verbatim labeled *Red*, a potential conflict regarding knowledge seemed to have come to surface, as Alex* perceived the university to be monolithic: "How would you expect to contribute in a system like that? Teaching, no matter our area, implies more" (Alex). Tension was revealed here, apparently related to the fact that, for Alex*, the knowledge he wished to foreground within the university had not been problematized at all. A subtle criticism of the institution called university and the relations to knowledge it constructs, emerged here. there. On the topic of the university, Castro-Gomez (2013, p. 81) argues[16]:

> The university is seen not only as the place where knowledge that leads to moral and material progress is produced, but as the vigilant nucleus of knowledge legitimacy . . . the university more or less functions as the Foucauldian panoptic, because it is conceived

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16   My own translation from Spanish

as an institution that establishes the frontiers between useful and useless knowledge, between the *doxa* and the *episteme*, between the legitimate knowledge (that is, the one that is highly regarded as having *scientific validity*) and the illegitimate knowledge.

In this order of ideas, legitimate knowledge in ELT is dealing with methods but not with social advocacy and politics. Alex* locates himself within the post method era concerns (Kumaravadivelu 1994). He was interested precisely in comprehending not the circumstances under which acquisition of languages occur or might occur (an interest of mainstream research, see Ellis 2012), but in questioning under which circumstances the access to language education is desired. He was not interested in CLICL or the communicative approach, but rather on how access to language rights were granted. Again, Castro-Gómez (2013, p. 84) helps us understand this situation by problematizing one characteristic of disciplines at the university level:

> In practically all university curricula, disciplines have their own canon that define what authors should be read, (the *authorities* or the *classics*), which themes are pertinent and what things should be known by a student who chooses to study such discipline. Canons are power mechanism whose aim is *to fix* knowledge, in certain places, making them easily identifiable and manageable.

When Alex* said: " . . . and currently, my pedagogy and notions are the product of everything I have lived", he implicated that his relation to knowledge is imbricated by his experiences as lived in the flesh, his emotions and his life trajectory. Aditionally, Javier's intervention revealed one key concern of decolonial research: how are we going to characterize the participants of research without, for example, resorting to stereotypical or restricted visions of them, which would necesrily be framed within our own biases of race, class, gender or economic status?

Conclusion

So far, I have tried to show the epistemological decisions I made regarding the research design of my doctoral dissertation, which intends to uncover teachers' experiences of knowledge. I have also discussed my reasons behind those decisions. I've also advocated for a decolonization of the method and outlined a likely path to do so. Certainly, the paths to decolonizing research and knowledge are uncertain and hard to walk. Nonetheless, it is in this very

uncertain path where we should be able to recognize ourselves as knowing subjects who acknowledge *the others* as knowing subjects as well.

Teacher-researchers in the Global South, like myself, are intending to develop new ways for us to build knowledge considering our own peculiar contexts, with authors and perspectives that honor our origins, ideas, lived experiences, historical locations, emotions, and bodies.

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5.Narrative Research: Contributions and Frame within Postmodern,Critical and Decolonial Perspectives

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Introduction

Narratives have accompanied individuals for a long time in history as part of their daily lives. However, it has been until recent decades that narratives have provided new spaces for researching, while opening opportunities to alternative interpretations of different phenomena in areas such as education, psychology or cultural-social studies. Nevertheless, narratives are so embedded in the daily life of subjects that it is difficult to grasp what they intend to tell us about reality. This menas that, within a single personal narrative there are many elements about the subject's understanding of reality, all of them interconnected. Chase's (2018) account of the inquiry within the critical viewpoint, problematizes this aspect by discussing two aspects of embodiment. On one hand, Sparkes & Smith (cited in Chase, 2017) refer to narratives as an embodied social process characterised by the empathy among those who listen or watch. Without being essentialist, those who engage in narratives research need to avoid disingenuous or dry relations with their participants to have real respect for the other. In other words, when carrying out narrative research, researchers become an integral part of the participant's narrative, not an outsider. On the other hand, the embodiment of narratives has recently been studied from the performances that people do when narrating. Riessman (2012 cited in Chase, 2017), highlighted the externalization of emotions/feelings of narratives through non-verbal communication and dialogues among members of a community. Embodied performances of narratives encourage researchers to observe not only the narratives themselves but also

actions that subjects can do while narrating. For example, in the ELT field, we can find interesting narratives of English Language Teacher Educators (ELTEs) when professors sit around and work on curriculum development or construction. While working on the outline of the curriculum, ELTEs may engage on dialogues about complementary aspects of the curriculum that may not be included in the formal document.

Furthermore, Barkhuizen, Benson & Chik (2014) identified two major areas that have used narratives in their research works. On one hand, psychology sees and works with narratives to gain insights on how individuals organize their experiences. Also, narratives help to understand the construction of identities in terms of the subjects' self-representation and to the others. On the other hand, sociological studies have used narratives to explore the multiplicity of voices that might have been covered by official or hegemonic academic discourses. Social studies have made visible and heard other voices about the reality that might have been discredited by the lacking the scientific rigour and universality of the modern thought.

Therefore, narratives in research have the potential to understand not only the subjective, particular and situated experiences of subjects, in this case, ELTEs, but also can contribute to identifying external elements that exert an influence, either positively or negatively, on the construction of identities. The challenge for the researcher on using narratives lies on the epistemological positioning from which narratives are understood. Currently, we can identify three major fields of work using narratives as a research tool: poststructuralism, decolonial projects and critical theories. This paper aims to explore the conceptualization and use of narratives within these current epistemological perspectives, by examining the work of representative authors in each one. Also, I will discuss how the previous perspectives on narratives can guide research on English Language Teacher Educators' subject constitution.

In the following section of this paper, I will examine how narrative is understood from the point of view of the three current epistemological, philosophical and social perspectives above, poststructuralism, decolonial projects and critical theories. What is the role of narrative in research? What are its main characteristics? What are its contributions to research? These questions will lead the ongoing discussion about the use of narrative as a research tool and its conceptualization to implement narratives that tackle the subject constitution of English Language Teacher Educators in Colombia.

A New Definition for the Self:
A Postmodern Construction of Narrative

Casey's (1995) influential paper was one of the first attempts to conceptualize narrative research in the field of education. From a postmodern positioning, this author characterizes the use of narrative as something inherent to the human life, as the best strategy that individuals have to both make meaning of their lives and organise their experiences through language. In terms of research, Casey (1995) calls our attention to the wide diversity of approaches and definitions of narratives that have emerged from different areas of knowledge, all of them shifting and taking distance from a positivist stance of research and moving towards a more interpretative posture. Moreover, this turn to narratives has represented a change in the issues of research in social, educational, cultural or psychological studies since narratives provide researchers with the chance to recognise the social forces that are shaping the current society and culture (Freeman, 2015). It is through narratives that researchers can get access to the actual influences of historical events in our current society, while at the same time expose, denounce or identify situations of dispossession, commodification or annihilation. However, narratives present an interesting, yet unfinished, discussion. According to Casey (1995), seeing narrative as an essential human activity will require from the researcher to have a clear and supported vision of the speaker's self. It is commonly accepted that personal narratives are the main way used by subjects to construct their identities by positioning the self as similar to or different from other, the self as acting on and by the world, or the self as changing (or not) over the times (Bamberg cited in Chase, 2017). This discussion has been challenged by Bhatia (2002), who proposes another focus of the study of narratives moving away from the self and reaching to the influences that contexts have in the production of narrative identities. For this author, the conflicting cultural, institutional and historical contexts fold and unfold in narratives allowing researchers to observe narrative's connections to specific cultural practices and/or events.

At this point, I can perceive that the movement towards narratives in research, as described by Casey (1995), settles its ground in a poststructural stance; my view comes from realizing the prevalence given within this stance to the self and to understand the narratives; at the same time, we can elucidate elements of both critical and decolonial perspectives when the authors point to the way how alternative social and cultural issues have been included to the discussion about narratives. As far as it was discussed above, narratives

focused on the self and its construction have moved towards a new direction by embracing cultural, political and social perspectives to the analysis.

By the same token, Clandinin & Huber (2010) stated that narrative inquiry is a recent development in the field of qualitative and social research, highlighting that it has postmodern and constructionist characteristics. As Casey previously mentioned, Clandinin & Huber (2010) also considered that the main objective of narrative research is to allow researchers to have access to, and I quote, "the complexity of the relational composition of people's lived experiences". In this view, narratives are considered as the way or *portal* that individuals use to gain access, interpret and organise their world while making it meaningful. As it can be appreciated, Casey (1995) and Clandinin & Huber (2010) share the idea that narrative research provides researchers new elements to access aspects of the subject's inner understanding of the world, by means of exploring their experiences through the stories or narratives they tell. Also, it can be seen that, although the use of narratives by human beings has been present for a long time in our history, the use of narratives as a source of research is new, thus reaffirming their postmodern characteristics.

Moreover, Clandinin & Huber (2010) provided a conceptual framework in which three common factors are described to be essential when undertaking a narrative research project. First, there is temporality. From a philosophical perspective, the lives of subjects are situated in the past, present and future, which means that experiences are always in a state of transition. Narrative research may attend to this fluidity in time, places and things when tackling narratives in research. Second, there is sociality. Both personal and social conditions of the researcher and participant are taken into consideration within the narratives. The researcher looks to the inner aspects that the subject narrates in his/her story, for example, feelings, desires or moral positioning. Also, the researcher may attend to the milieu where the narrative takes place focusing on cultural, social, institutional and linguistic, among other aspects. Third, there is place. A place is conceived as the physical and topological terrain in which narratives, participants and researchers are unfolding the stories. This conceptualization of place as an influential aspect of the narratives is shared by a decolonial positioning of territory. To this respect, Comboni & Suarez (2015), from a decolonial perspective, call our attention to the crucial role that territory has in the process of research. Here, we can appreciate a resonance between these two perspectives; that is because the concept of territory developed from a decolonial thought takes the physical space as an influential aspect in the construction of the identities of the subjects. It

is in the territory where subjects first start to attach themselves and start a process of identification both physical and symbolic. This attachment will then be expressed through narratives that will unveil the way subjects construct themselves as such.

The Critical Narrative Research: A Claim for Social Justice in Education

So far, I have discussed some aspects of how the postmodern perspective sees and works narratives as a research tool. However, the evolution of narrative research has had a steady pace making the field more mature and complex (Chase, 2018). Following this assumption, I will go on to discuss a contemporary, yet more recent, perspective of narrative research called Critical Narrative Research.

While working and reading different authors of both decolonial and critical perspectives and the use they make of narratives, I have acknowledged the complexity of the unfolding of narratives within each perspective. There are no clear-cut differences but rather an overlapping of ideas, positionings and research experiences using narratives, which have taken me to look carefully at how narrative is conceived. Gill (2014), maps out the field of critical narrative by focusing on Freirean ideas of education as well as reflecting upon the real sense of learning in our current days. I consider this position as a landmark, since this author not only provides examples of critical narratives in education but also provides interesting epistemological stances to conceptualize narratives within the critical paradigm. As with the postmodern perspective, critical researchers pay special attention to the self and reflect upon it to discuss the real objective of education. The self is perceived from four aspects: moral, social, narrative and autonomous. The moral aspect of the self is seen as a cornerstone for Gill's positioning, as it answers the question of how we should live our lives as fulfilled humans. The moral aspect of the self establishes that there is an inner sense of the good in humans that is translated into education in terms of which elements are to be studied within the curriculum of schools so that to provide students, children, teenagers or adults the opportunities to become subjects who are free of, or at least aware of, possible subjugation practices. The social aspect of the self is described as the external forces that contribute to the individual's sense of him/herself concerning others. The social aspect connects both, the inner

and external aspects of the self, by means of revealing those influences from the society, culture or politics that either hinder or contribute to develop the self. The narrative aspect illustrates people's journeys through life. Narratives are seen as central in the organization of the experiences as a continuum that is both coherent and non-chronological. The final aspect is the agency of subjects, understood as the autonomy that people have to become actors rather than reproducers in the construction of meaning.

The conceptualization of the self in the critical narrative, although connected to the self, challenges the postmodern view regarding the endless exercise of deconstructing the identities of individuals. For critical thinkers using narratives, such as Gill (2014) or O´Loughlin (2016), the self that is situated in the education field seeks to act towards the good understanding because of the commitment that subjects have to be fully humans. Here, it seems to me that critical narratives working on the self take distance from those postmodern ideas of the self as something unfinished, always fluid and immersed in everlasting relations of power that change according to the social contexts. The reason for adopting the concept of the self in this moral way, lies in the objective that education has according to critical theory. Erikson (cited in Gill, 2014), defines self as follows: "a forever to-be-revised sense of reality within social reality". This idea suggests that the construction of the self is not done by the age nor inherently given through living experiences; rather the self is constructed through a constant effort for searching such fulfilment in life.

Therefore, learning is not conceived as the acquisition of knowledge or employment skills that only transforms people into objects of the economic system or instruments to fulfil specific actions from the government and state. In coherence with its discourse, critical theory defines learning as a mutual endeavour between teachers and students focused on the construction of a fulfilled human being (Gill, 2014). It is through narratives that teachers and students can overcome the constraints that inert curricula many times offer. Narratives play two crucial roles at this point. On the one hand, the educational benefit of narratives is that they provide to teachers and students with alternative strategies to help students in their life's journeys by using the skill of questioning that narratives can unfold. On the other hand, narratives have become a highly influential and vital research methodology as well as a tool to unveil not only conscious but also unconscious aspects of the subjectivities of both teachers and students (O'Loughlin, 2016).

The unconscious aspect cited by this author, is similar to Freire's (1969) *generative themes* regarding how teacher education programs have been focused on providing teachers with tools to work on the cognitive development

of students and content delivery strategies/techniques, which leads teachers to conceive education as a mere academic/ cognitive action. According to O´Loughlin (2016), the unconscious is directly connected to the students' lives since they always bring pieces of the community's traditional and evolving knowledge that is overlooked in the curriculum design. It is through narratives that teachers and researchers can work on what the construction of grounded curriculum design is, when they explore the life stories of students, colleagues and society where education takes place. It is in narratives that students construct their subjectivities in particular ways, thus contextualizing such construction within specific social, cultural, political and special contexts; it is also through narratives that researchers and teachers can uncover dormant subjectivities while engaging in possible subaltern identifications.

An important reflection that highlights a clear characteristic of critical narrative research is posed in the following question: how are students portraited in education, especially in teacher education programs? From a critical perspective, the narratives of students have been normalized in such terms that they are defined with clear-cut characteristics of the ideal student. Thus, the discourse of homogenization takes into account children and teenagers within teacher education programs but fails to address the actual variety of subjectivities present in every single student. Therefore, critical narrative research takes narratives as a resource to provoke reflection about different aspects that have been either silenced or normalized in education. It is more connected to the lives of teachers and students through constructing the curriculum based on the current and local issues of the community and students' lives. Narratives, within this perspective, are focused on the construction of subjectivities for both teachers and students, which ought not to be subjected to standards or sterile curricula but rather are able to critique and recognise the different elements that co-opt their lives.

The Decolonial Project: Narratives of Silenced Voices

While critical narratives are focused on denouncing social injustice in education systems, decolonial narratives place their main focus on the epistemic decentring of the world, in search for for alternative geopolitic, non-European knowledge perspectives. Before starting our discussion on the role of narratives within the decolonial project, I would like to point out two differences about the concepts of postcoloniality and decoloniality

that may be useful to understand the evolution of these perspectives. For Bhambra (2014), although both movements are characterised by emerging from diasporic authors, their reflection focus may differ in two aspects. Postcolonial authors focus their studies on the colonial discourse and the cultural agency of subjects (Castro-Gomez & Grosfoguel, 2007), whereas decolonial authors call the attention to the ways how, from a Eurocentric vision of the world, other contemporary epistemes were and have been silenced and disregarded. On the other hand, both perspectives have seen its birth from different geographical locations which in turn has influenced the differences regarding their main focus. Whilst decolonial authors have been located mainly in South America, postcolonial writers have come from the Middle East and South Asia. Nevertheless, both decolonial and postcolonial perspectives and authors have been interested in challenging the European and North American hegemonic traditions in the academic, economic, cultural, social and political fields, using situating narratives from local contexts at places of distinction, places of recognition to reveal the many struggles that minority groups have endured through history.

Decolonial narratives have paid attention to an epistemic otherness where different interstices between those local, situated and overlooked forms of knowledge, being and power, interact with colonial ways of subordination. Narratives in the decolonial perspective fight for building self-determination from a world and subjectivity that have been fragmented (Smith cited in Whitlock (2015). Following Ramallo (2017), decolonial narratives allow the subjects to communicate their ways of experiencing, feeling and participating, that is, their ways of being in this world, using other alternatives while *playing with the languages*. Thus, decolonial narratives use local histories told by local people about their local contexts to make visible what has been ignored by hegemonic forms of narratives. It is from these subaltern narratives that other meaningful ways of narrating emerge inviting other subjects to see what each culture understands by narrating. Therefore, there are multiple and varied ways of decolonial narratives, and trying to explain all of them will overpass the scope of this paper. Meanwhile, I would like to pinpoint one of those forms of subaltern narratives which has been widely explored is the *testimonio* (testimony). Although the testimony has been used in different research and disciplinary perspectives (psychology, anthropology and even medicine), it is in the decolonial project where it has gained more momentum so as to dismantle the univocity of registers that was established by a rational, Western and positivist way of knowledge production. It is in the *testimonio* where the subject abandons his/her status as an object of study to embrace the position of knowledge producer, that is to say, the narrating subject is

not circumscribed to a predetermined framework of interpretation from an outsider view (the researcher), but rather the subject her/himself is sharing new insights about a local situation, which provides complementary forms of understanding. Through narratives, people recall those cultural phenomena from both individual and social memory that have been extinguished in time, while at the same time narratives become embodied stories since they also are performed by those who narrate them.

Another of the most relevant forms of narratives in the decolonial project has been the autobiographies. However, this form of narrating has been *whitened* in terms that it has been used to construct a homogeneous idea of selfhood characterised by being rational, male-oriented and *racially white* (Chakrabarty, 2000). Anderson (cited in Whitelock, 2015), points out that this *whitening* and rationalism of autobiographies reproduce the idea of a universal human nature. Decolonial authors Grosfoguel (2006) and Walsh (2013), call our attention to the way how Western visions of the world have silenced in many aspects indigenous or natives' ways of knowing, by means of imposing a rational, universal and authoritarian view of the subject, knowledge, life, and religion among others. Thus, other types of narratives coming from other race groups, rather than white ones, have been silenced and ignored and in this way created a subject that is unified, exalted and characterised by Westerns (American or European) visions of the world. It is here where the decolonial projects emerge as the movement that pursues not only to rescue but also to make visible, to reclaim, to make sound those overlooked narratives that testimonies come to be.

An additional, yet highly relevant, characteristic of the decolonial narratives, is the recognition of the *other*. The use of narratives as testimonies in the decolonial perspective is characterised not only by paying special attention to the self of those minority groups, but also by the strong and active resistance to Western discourses on modernity and homogenization. In hegemonic groups, the self is seen as individual rather than collective, as rational rather than socially constructed, as colonial rather than intercultural. For Quijano (2007), the decolonial movement reflects, discusses and confronts different ways of colonization in terms of political and economic aspects. Also, the domination carried out by the modernity/coloniality perspective takes place through knowledge colonization. It is here where narratives as a way of collectively and individually constructing the self, are seen as the main way to liberation as well as to exposure of the subtle mechanisms imposed by hegemonic discourses.

Therefore, the emerging of the *other* in narratives means the recognition of alternative, multiple and complex ways of enunciation that transform narratives by the inclusion of new dialogues about the past, while at the same time "contest modernity through the establishment of other historical sites" (Bhaba cited in Bhambra, 2014). At this point, we can appreciate an important difference between postmodern and decolonial perspectives related to the recognition of the epistemic violence exercised by hegemonic traditions. Spivak (cited in Bhambra, 2014) points out to the lack of discussion, reflection and activism from postmodern authors in denouncing the epistemic domination by ignoring the question of ideology.

Another difference of the decolonial narrative research compared with the postmodern and the critical, is that the decolonial, which attempts to construct or reclaim a self that has been silenced, subjugated or erased from history, also allows and encourages the narrators to perform their testimonies. According to Young (2003), testimonies are dynamic and interactive so as to they are appealing to the person or people who see and listen to the testimony. We can see that this embodiment, provided by testimonies, suggests that the self and its construction is problematic, complex, varied and heterogeneous. One may say that testimonies take the autobiographies to a more real, personal, vivid and attractive level since, for the most part, they do not intent to just narrate a life story but also explicitly look for an audience to be attentive and empathetic.

After discussing the main elements of narratives in the postmodern, critical and decolonial perspectives, I have come to realize that these points of view, although paying attention to different aspects of the culture, society and self, have also captured the complexity where individuals are immersed, depicting scenarios that may complement each other in their reflections. As an example, I can extract from postmodern narratives the importance of the self and its narrative/discursive construction, as well as a clear notion of how the subject is immersed within a highly complex matrix of relations to the point that the most powerful tool at hand for an individual to think his/her reality is the narration, here understood as the construction of a life story mainly conformed by discursive elements. This understanding of the self is complemented by both the critical and decolonial narratives. For the critical narratives, the self is central to the construction of a fully-humanized subject taking this as the main goal of the education. In the critical theory, narratives constitute both the path to construct situated curricula and to provide students and teachers with opportunities to build subaltern subjectivities. As for the decolonial

perspectives, narratives have evolved to take the form of testimonies, among others, as an alternative way of autobiographies that have been whitened. Decolonial narratives have included the performance aspect of the narration into it, thus making the testimonies and other types of narratives more dynamic, fluid, expressive and more connected to the self of either the individual or collective subject. Figure 5.1 below shows the main aspects discussed so far.

Figure 5.1

Narrative Research Perspectives

NARRATIVE RESEARCH

Postmodern, critical and decolonial narrative research

1. What is the role of narrative in each perspective?
2. What are their main characteritics?
3. What are their research implications?

Postmodern narrative research

1. Narratives are focused on the construction of the self and meaning making.

2. Narratives allow researchers to access the complex relations that integrate life stories.

3. Three aspects of narratives seen in research: temporality, sociality and place.
Researchers can work both inner and external subject's understanding of the world.

SELF PERFORMANCE

EDUCATION

Decolonial narrative research

1. Narratives access the self seen as both individual and collective constructions.
2. Narratives are added the performance aspect of narration to make them more connected to the life stories of narrators.
3. Researchers use narratives (testimonies) as source and methodology to scrutinize silenced and fragmented visions of the world.

Critical narrative research

1. Narratives are connected to the self in four aspects: moral, social, narrative and autonomy.
2. Narrative research is directly connected to education. Also, narratives reveal conscious and unconcious aspects of the self.
3. Researchers along with teachers and students recognise homogenization practices.

Source: Own

Figure 5.1 depicts how each narrative perspective above discussed, tackle the three pivotal questions of the role, the characteristics and the research implications that narratives take. So far, I have identified the following key topics of discussion within each perspective: the self in the postmodern narrative; education in the critical narrative; and performance in the decolonial narrative. On my view, in spite of the continuities that interconnect and complement these perspectives, discontinuities also exist, which guide and make the narrative unique in each area. For example, narratives take a more performative role for the decolonial approach, whereas for the critical, they are an instrument to unveil the homogenization practices exerted over teachers and students.

Narrative Inquiry in ELT to Study ELTE Subject Constitution

The distinctions above have given me insights to shed light on my study about English Language Teacher Educators (ELTE) and the ways they have been constituted as subjects. Inspired by the use of narratives and its potential to let ELTEs narrate their stories, I wonder: how do ELTEs make sense of their experiences? How can researchers access to ELTEs' narratives to untangle their subject constitution? An attempt to situate the work on narratives within the perspectives above mentioned, should take me to explore even further the use of narratives in the ELT field so that to start developing a plausible research process that uses ELTEs' narratives to unveil how they have become teachers of teachers.

Jerome Bruner (cited in Barkhuizen, 2014) suggested that there are two ways of organizing experiences: arguments and stories. On one hand, arguments (paradigmatic) try to convince of their truth through the use of mechanisms that most of the times are rational and empirical. On the other hand, stories (narrative) try to convince of their connections to life through verisimilitude. The use of narratives in research dismantles the idea that research only favours the creation of arguments over stories. Moreover, it has been seen that sometimes the results of paradigmatic research fail to create convincing arguments linked to reality due to the absence of the life-likeness that stories have. As explained earlier in this paper, narratives have taken a relevant place in research due to its focus on researching areas where the person's understanding of the situation is more important while at the same time the

most plausible way to gaining insights about the research situation. One of those areas should be the constitution of subject, more specifically, the constitution of the subject called English Language Teacher Educator (ELTE). Generally, the constitution of subjects has been studied following Foucault's archaeology work, as discussed by Mendez (2017; 2012) and Nuñez, (2007). Researchers around the globe have used the toolbox provided by Foucault to explore the different ways how subjects are constituted as such within our current historical moment, unveiling the relations of power, knowledge and resistance that go through those subjects and affect their construction of identity.

However, using narratives to understand the constitution of ELTE subjects at our local Colombian context through the examination of narratives, may shed light about the different power relationships where teachers of teachers are immersed, and the different resistance or subjugating practices exercised by and on them. The use of narratives may also provide new ways of identifying aspects of the subject constitution, such as the subject's internal struggles to become an ELTE and the external forces trying to subjugate them, now seen from the perspective of the own subject.

Although most of the work done on the topic of subject constitution has favoured archaeological procedures (i.e. tracing back specific documents such as archives to understand the present) evidence suggests as above discussed that ELTEs can unveil aspects historically situated about themselves and how some forces have affected them, by participating on studies focused on understanding how they come to be who they are as teachers of teachers. In my view, there is complementarity of visions of the external and inner forces that influence the ELTEs in Colombia.

Conclusion

At this point, it is undetermined what ELTEs can narrate about their constitution as teachers of teachers. Barkhuizen, Benson & Chik (2014) have identified three major characteristics of narratives in English Language Teaching and Learning (ELT&L), which in my view might be strongly related to the postmodern, critical and decolonial perspectives. First, many ELT narratives are personal and take the form of autobiographies. As discussed earlier, decolonial narratives have evolved from autobiographies to testimonies, often times including a performative component into the narration. Also,

decolonial narratives reveal a fragmented and/or silenced vision of the world. I consider that narratives, seen as ELTEs autobiographies, have the potential to allow the researcher to uncover aspects of pedagogical, methodological, political, academic or personal aspects that have been kept hidden while appreciating the way the narration is being told. Second, ELT narratives go around teaching and learning experiences based on the teller's imagined or real day-to-day life. Similar to critical narratives, the educational aspect of narratives is present in both. ELTEs may centre their narratives on the main goal that the education process, specifically learning a foreign language, should have. Although it is still uncertain if there may be critical aspects of education in the narratives of ELTEs, such as, denouncing social injustice situations and contexts, I expect that ELTEs narratives would reveal aspects about the reasons why learning a foreign language can be either positive or not-so-positive, which in turns will lead me to the moral and ethical aspects of this activity. The last aspect is the relations that narratives have with the narrator's identities. From a postmodern perspective, narratives construct the self while making meaning of the experiences lived by the subject. In the case of ELTEs, their narratives may also reveal how they perceive their roles as the individuals who are in charge of the formation of the new generation of English language teachers in our local context.

To summarize, there is a multiplicity of voices brought in narratives that should provide opportunities for marginalized groups to be heard (Casey, 1995). It is in their narratives that subjects situate themselves within the world, a culture and a society. As it was explored in this paper, narratives can serve for different purposes, each one implicating a researcher's epistemological positioning towards the conception of the subject's self and his/her use of the narrative. Thus, the narrative can be either an instrument of research or the same research process itself. Important, though, is to keep in mind that narratives are not the actual representation or the objectivation of the reality; instead, narrating is a personal, temporal and situated oral, written or non-discursive expression of the narrator about his/her life experiences. Exploring ELTEs' narratives is expected to uncover different characteristics of their subject constitution in terms of their complex relations with pedagogy, policies, economic, historical and contextual aspects, while, more importantly, should help understanding how they come to be who they are as teachers of teachers.

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6. Towards a Relational Methodological Research

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La universidad se inscribe en lo que quisiera llamar
la estructura triangular de la colonialidad:
la colonialidad del ser,
la colonialidad del poder
y la colonialidad del saber.
(Santiago Castro-Gómez, 2007)

Introduction

This research project focuses on an ELT Education Program in Colombia. Its main purpose is to develop a thorough understanding of the imagined communities, identities and investment of English Language Pre-service Teachers (ELPTs) at a public university.

The project is conducted with a qualitative research approach. My theoretical proposal underlying this project is that the ELT education program community should recognize the socio-political implications of English language teaching and teacher education, as well as the change for both ELPTs and Teacher Educators. These two groups are, more often than not, left out of any serious development within the profession or represented as superficially detached from their everyday real-life embodied experiences. It is anticipated that participants in this research project would translate such participation into a liberating encounter (i.e. an encounter that legitimizes the voices of the ELPTs) that would enable them to exercise power in their local contexts.

As a doctoral student, I need to mention at this point, that this paper is the result of a challenge that one of my teachers presented to me as part of one

of the mandatory seminars on my PhD coursework. The assignment was to conceptualize a research project within a decolonial perspective. Such was a task that seemed highly provocative, in particular because self-interrogation and countless reflections from my part were called upon.

My Situated Position

As a language teacher educator, and on a more personal note, I would like to mention that, after reviewing the decolonial turn literature (Fanon, 2004; Quijano, 2000; Maldonado, 2006; Grosfoguel, 2011, Castro, 2011; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; Walsh, 2017), I began to put together pieces of me that I had lost when I first embarked on the path of becoming a language teacher educator. I used to be a literature teacher who had had the opportunity to conduct research in the field by comparing and analysing literature written by African Colombian women from the Pacific Coast of Colombia. Prior to that, I had encountered the decolonial thought, yet unconsciously I had forgotten all about it in the passage of time. It is under these circumstances that I perceived the challenge of thinking about a decolonial methodological research project as inviting, opportunistic and most welcome. It resonated with me. In the process of writing this paper, I have revisited my previous experiences as a researcher, only to realize how conflicted I was regarding research approaches. Now, my journey to write my decolonial paper has awakened questions related to my *cultural identity* and role as ELT education program teacher, some of which are articulated in the goal of the project.

How do I communicate my own cultural values and conceptualizations instead of those of the English language? How do I express who I am and what kind of cultural background I represent? By extension, how do I empower learners to be able to develop competence to talk about their own culture and *cultural identity?* Is it, an emphasis on English=language as the target language in ELT education program, misplaced? How do I include historical and contemporary issues and themes from the whole society in my classes, by drawing students' attention to the forms how marginalized people feel or act? How do I incorporate themes from students' day-to-day lives to enable them to think about their respective situations in a way that is alternative and empowering while allows for exploring possibilities for change? If the right context for positive action were created, how could I in such circumstance transform classes into more critical settings? How, and to what extent, have

I been unconsciously colonised by teaching practices that presently seem *normal*? How, and if, have I perpetuated colonization in my teaching practices, thus making invisible other epistemologies?

Why Mine Is a Decolonial Research Proposal: Theoretical Premises

I'd like to start this section with a brief discussion about colonialism and coloniality. First of all, according to Castro (2007), the university is inscribed in what I would like to call *the triangular structure of coloniality: the coloniality of being, the coloniality of power and the coloniality of knowledge* (p. 79). Coloniality of being makes reference to how whiteness gained ontological density far above blackness, indigenous people and any other race; coloniality of power revolves around the construction and constitution of asymmetrical relations of power; and, coloniality of knowledge brings up the question of who generates knowledge and for what purpose (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013).

The triangular structure of coloniality is evident in academic research where the traditional paradigms (qualitative, quantitative and mixed) determine the concepts, impose the speeches and / or theories, and organize their discourses and their generation and regeneration (Morin, 1999 p. 9). Because of all the above and returning to the challenge of a research project with a decolonial perspective in ELT, I will propose a methodological research approach through which I would like to go beyond traditional research models and attempt to incorporate an *integrative thought* as defined by Castro (2009). That means to bring to the fore "emotions, intimacy, common sense, ancestral knowledge" (p.90), with the purpose to expand the vision of the ELT research community ruled by the Western canons.

To demonstrate my readiness to achieve the above purpose, I will begin by narrating a *situation* (Haber, 2011) as an excuse for *re-cognition, learning*, and *solidarity* between the ELPTs and myself. Such is a process that I expect to be able to conduct simultaneously with my ELTPs as collaborators, with the purpose to incorporate elements of Narrative Pedagogy (Goodson & Gill, 2011) (NP); Narrative Inquiry (NI) (Barkhuizen, G, Benson, P & Chik, A., 2004; Barkhuizen, 2013; Clandinin. D. & Connelly, M., 2000), and Indigenous Research Paradigm (IRP) (Tuhiwai, 1999, Wilson, 2001;2008; Chilisa, 2012; Arévalo 2013). NP, NI and IRP consider experience as a common term that

yields better understandings of educational life and context, compared with other methods used in social sciences and education to conduct research. These approaches create a possibility to carry out a Participatory Action Research (PAR), which has a potential to open spaces for a more symmetrical relationship between the researcher and the participants; that should be the result of using narratives as starting point for research, which allows for the participation of everybody in a joint process with blurred lines between researcher and participants.

It is worth mentioning here that, since curricula in the ELT education programs are usually designed by teachers and faculties' administrative staffs, they tend to ignore the ELPTs' practices when designing the programs. As a result, the curriculum is imposed on the ELTPs practices, while some other issues such as students' investment and expectations rarely are a factor. Given such conditions, an effort to develop a research methodology that opens room for an intergenerational dialogue between the ELTPs and myself, is worth trying. This effort will promote a collaborative work between ELT professors and ELPTs (students), thus turning it into an opportunity to codesign ELT education programs.

Ethical Considerations

There is a risk here, as with any other research study concerning human beings, to elicit unpleasant feelings and emotions, including a sense of intrusion to privacy. I will take a number of precautions to avoid discomfort feelings. By the moment to recruit research participants, relevant ethical considerations will be highlighted and discussed with potential candidates to ensure that their participation is voluntary; assurances that they will be allowed to withdraw from the project at any time without offering an explanation will be part of those initial conversations. I will provide writing information about the project and will ensure that all resulting materials will be kept anonymous through report writing and publication processes. I realize that despite of all that, a risk for unexpected complications would remain since there will not be a way to predict how ELPTs will experience the research activities. However, I believe that I should be able to handle any unforeseen tensions that may arise with a level of competence, given the fact that I am a professional teacher. I will be transparent all along the project and will continuously provide information about what participating in it would

entail. My expectation is to create a research relationship based on trust and transparency, and I believe that providing information in a clear and honest manner is an important factor in achieving that. My previous experiences with similar projects have led me to conclude that ELTPs would appreciate the opportunity to be made visible trough telling their stories to someone who will listen with a keen interest and will strive to understand their responses from their respective perspectives.

Dialogue: A Tool for Collaborative Research

According to Haber (2011), "Undisciplined research makes a research problem, a situation, an excuse to think and reveal ourselves to us inhabiting the world . . . so that . . . we recognize the relationships in which we already exist" (p.18). Following his viewpoints, we, ELT researchers, should be able to approach research from a perspective that abandons the traditional roles assigned to the researcher and the research participants.

Using Haber's assertion as a starting point, I would like to describe how I came up with the idea of a research process with no researcher, no object to be investigated, and no problem of investigation; such research process rather would be an experience leading to deep recognition of the individual self of those involved on it. The ELPTs and I will work together as pairs who recognize each other through dialogue and constant negotiation, in a process mediated by collaboration instead of control. This means that the investigation process will be not governed by hierarchical principles (Castro-Gómez, 2007).

My idea to work on a *situation* related to dreamed communities, identities and investment, came from my teaching an ELT course called "Language, Society and Culture" (LSC). Regularly, I give my students in this course the assignment to write an autobiography; such autobiographies provide interesting insights about my students' life trajectories, thus enabling me to better understand their experiences as well as their perceptions and the types of relationships they develop while in their academic life. Over the years I have come to realize that, by requesting those autobiographies, I might have started actual dialogues with my ELPT students (as described by Freire, 1970) which have turned into opportunities to perceive their life experiences as reasonable and valid. Often times, when reading about my students' experiences with their respective teachers, I have reflected about my role as a teacher. In the

process, I have gained more insights into the reasons why their career choice was ELT education, which has helped me appreciate their behavior in class. Also, some intimate information I have become privy of as a result of the autobiographies has produced deep impact on me. I would dare to say that my relationships with my ELPTs have grown more open as a result of all that.

Following Haber's assertion (above) that undisciplined research makes us recognize the relationships within which we already exist, my students' autobiographies made me realize how little I knew about them when they disclosed their private information. Out of sheer courtesy, I felt obliged to reciprocate their trust, which came to originate the first component of the *situation*, i.e. what Haber called the recognition process (2011). Under such recognition process, it became clear to me that the reasons why the ELPTs decided to enroll in the ELT education program was a combination of the motivation coming from their significant others, social events and other external influences. Parents, relatives and friends were key factors behind their choice for learning English. The following excerpts from students' autobiographies bear testimony to this:

> One day I was talking to my father and he told me that I had to study something that opens doors everywhere . . . he recommended me to study English because I wanted to be a teacher and I could be an English language teacher . . . he thought that English opens doors everywhere and if I spoke English, I could get a good job, a better job than if I studied another major (MG, p.1).

The excerpt above shows how the ELPTs invest in learning a foreign language because it represents social status while allows them to gain (better job opportunities, traveling and interacting with people from other cultures). The ELPTs also had access to information in English and this fact made them curious about the language:

> I found some books of Meyer's Institute and looked at the images of London and some comics and I was interested because I did not understand anything so, I took a dictionary, some cassettes and tried to understand what those books were saying (FB p.1).

> I became interested in English because of the music . . . (SH p.1).

While attending their courses, ELPTs go through negative and positive learning experiences that make them invest in English learning. Negative experiences are of two types: One is the fact that they must see most of their

courses in English and for that reason, they feel disadvantaged, especially with the peers who have a better level of fluency on the language. The second fact is that they often find teachers who do not support them in their learning processes or that simply make them feel uncomfortable in the classroom. For this reason, they join groups in chat rooms and bars, look for help from their classmates help, or resort to the ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies). These facts are illustrated in the following excerpts:

> *My experience at the university at the beginning was a little difficult because my level was low, and my classmates were fluent and knew a lot of vocabulary* (DG p.1).

> *Sometimes teachers do not help enough . . .* (AC p.1).

> *In order to improve those factors (previously mentioned) I decided to search on the internet for topics that I did not understand very well* (LR p.2).

ELPTs not only think about the instrumental aspects of learning the language, they also imagine themselves as: a) good English teachers; b) professionals with continuous development processes; and, c) teachers with a strong social commitment, able to change the world and to help their students and communities. Some examples of their seeing themselves as good English teachers who can be even better than those professors they encountered during their forming years are:

> *My dream is to become a very good English teacher…* (CS p.3).

> *I want to be a very good English teacher, better than the ones I have had* (IM p.4).

ELTPs are, often times, professionals who are aware of the fact that studying abroad will increase their cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1991), and who want a higher status, teaching at a university:

> *Firstly, I want to travel because if I travel to the U.S.A, I would have more job opportunities in Colombia. Secondly, I want to do a specialization or master in order to grow professionally and be able to teach at a university in Colombia* (CG p. 2).

Additionally, it has been very common to find in the ELPTs autobiographies sentences such as the following:

I see myself as someone who helps people, who teaches, who listens, who understands, and who loves the profession and obviously as a person who changes the world (JA p.2).

I want to change the world from my classroom (DN p.3).

Furthermore, some ELPTs even wish to be able to combine their English-language teaching professions with other professions they have for the same purpose:

I would also like to combine my profession with studies related to Management because I think that in that way I would me more able to help the community (DG p.4).

Verbatim such as those above, show a strong social commitment on the part of the ELPTs. ELPTs understand that education is a political act (Freire, 1970) and as such their responsibility goes beyond teaching a language.

The lessons that I learned from what my ELPTs wrote in their autobiographies were basically related to their experiences as language learners in an ELT education program. For this reason, I believe that it would be even more interesting to go beyond and find out what is going on with the rest of their teacher education.

English is part of the disciplinary aspects that ELTPs learn, and in this sense is easy to perceive the coloniality of power, knowledge and being that Castro (2007) and Ndovlu (2013) mention. English is the dominant language worldwide (Phillipson, 1992), and the ELPTs seem to believe in a folk myth that learning this language will give them access to better opportunities. However, they also talked about the political issues implied in teaching. This is something that I would like to explore more in depth, because ELT education programs have also suffered from coloniality. As some Colombian scholars (such as Castañeda-Peña (2018), and Gónzalez (2007) have already pointed out, "we are still exposed to models of training and education in which our local reality and knowledge is displaced by a colonial academic perspective imposed by the view of native speakers as the source of knowledge and expertise" (González, 2005 p.35). It is also stated that it is necessary to conduct more research on how such phenomena takes place, as well as how "to take a stand in national political actions to be part of the decision-making process in the defense of the right to participate in the construction

of in-service agendas sponsored by the Colombian educational system" (González, 2005 p. 34).

One possible way to detach from any research models that might have been adopted traditionally, is to seek to gaining knowledge on ELPTs learning practices as well as on the communities they affiliate. The reason is that such knowledge can bring to light alternative practices that might be occurring now but are invisible to our eyes because we are just looking at external or superficial aspects of the ELPTs.

That is, precisely, what my research project entails. Nevertheless, I would like to undertake it in a way that differs from traditional methods where I would have seen myself as a researcher who will find a solution to a problem. Rather, what I would like to do, is to conduct a research study together with my ELTPs, which would be based on a dialogue where we are expected to be able to listen to each other in a way that together we can bring about generative themes (Freire, 1970). Such exercise should allow us to to think about new possibilities to design ELT education programs. In order to attain such purpose, I would like to work on a methodological research proposal under the umbrellas of Narrative Pedagogy (NP), as well as Narrative Inquiry NI), in addition to some elements of the Indigenous Research Paradigm (IRP), all of that within a participatory action research (PAR) approach. By doing so, I would be providing a real opportunity for an intergenerational dialogue to take place. Within such dialogue, the ELPTs and myself would likely get an effective recognition of, and learning from, each other, so that to be able to propose together innovative ways to design alternative ELT education programs.

Indiscipline in ELT Research

Mainstream research practices are generally,
although unwittingly,
implicated in the reproduction of systems of
class, race, and gender oppression
(Kincheloe, McLaren, Steinberg, 2001)

According to Johnson (2001), one of the purposes of the ELT education programs is to develop research skills, mainly developed and associated with the practicum. For this reason, the ELPTs are expected to develop reflective and writing skills, to collect information, and to report data, a topic that is thoroughly discussed in my next academic paper. (Posada, in preparation). The skills that are expected from ELPTs are mainly developed through research seminars of ELT education programs, where they learn that, basically, only three paradigms are available to conduct research, quantitative, qualitative and mixed.

In this train of thought, the ELPTS learn that the *quantitative paradigm* "relies on the collection of quantitative data (i.e. numerical data) . . . focuses on the scientific method . . . and . . . is said to be confirmatory because researchers test or attempt to confirm their hypotheses" (Johnson and Christensen, 2004 p. 30). The *qualitative paradigm* "relies on the collection of qualitative data (i.e nonnumerical data such as words and pictures) . . . and on the inductive component of the scientific method . . . and is often exploratory" (p. 30). Lastly, the *mixed* research involves mixing of quantitative and qualitative research method, approaches or paradigm characteristics (p. 30). Finally, the ELPTs also learn that these paradigms are useful to solve the problems faced in the field of ELT, while in our field we adhere to the qualitative paradigm as it is considered more relevant to social sciences and education.

Additionally, the ELPTs learn all the characteristics of the research process such as how to formulate questions and objectives, as well as how to develop a research design. They learn that, traditionally, research was conducted outside the school context by *experts*, and that teachers and students were considered *recipients* of others' people knowledge (Falk & Blumenreich, 2005). For this reason, conducting situated research within the lived experience of teaching and learning is the opportunity to empower teachers and transform them into teacher researchers (Bailey, 2001), therefore into knowledge producers.

Along this tradition, teachers, including myself, start reproducing the research paradigms that have been inspired by the positivist view of research, which for a long time has seen the quantitative and the qualitative research as conflicting or opposed. We all know that the qualitative paradigm still follows some protocols that adhere to the quantitative paradigm, so that to be validated, and that even within the qualitative paradigm some innovative and recent trends derived from post positivism have come to be in contention (Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba, 2017). With that, any attempt to develop a proposal for a decolonial research project seems to be quite a challenge, since it implies to think about an ontology, an epistemology, and an axiology that might be contentious too.

For this reason, I would like to propose a research methodology that incorporates some elements of the Western tradition, and some elements of the indigenous research paradigm. What I expect to accomplish here is, again, to bring to the fore what Sarasa has described as, "the so far unheard, ELPTs' voices, narrating their curricular paths and investments towards becoming graduate English teachers" (Sarasa, 2016 p.112). I intend not only to learn with them, but also to learn about their curricular paths, and, additionally, about how it might have contributed or not to the colonization of their minds

The only possible research approach that seemed suitable for such purpose was to use narratives as a way to continue the dialogue that, as described, commenced in one of my classrooms.

The next paragraphs discuss narrative inquiry, narrative pedagogy, the indigenous research paradigm and PAR and how their elements intersect. The intersection of all these approaches has given birth to the methodological research proposal that I will explain in detail further down, where the ELPTs and myself together will become co-constructors of knowledge.

Narrative Inquiry, Narrative Pedagogy, and PAR: Intersections and Resonances

Narrative inquiry (NI) "brings storytelling and research together either by using stories as research data or by using storytelling as a tool for data analysis or presentation of findings" (Barkhuizen, Benson & Chik, 2004 p.3). NI is

also "an alternative paradigm for social research" (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach &Zilber 1998 p.1).

Although Barkhuizen, Benson & Chik only mention storytelling, narratives can take several other forms, including essays, blogs, interviews and journals, among others (Arfuch, 2002). What is key in narrative inquiry (NI) is that it is "the best way of representing and understanding experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000 p. 18). For Dewey "experience is both personal and social . . . People are individuals and need to be understood as such, but they cannot be understood only as individuals, they are always in relation, always in social context" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000 p. 3). Clandini and Connelly also consider that the word experience helps us understand those ocurrences that take place with *others* including people's individual learning which happen with a teacher, in a classroom, etc. One criterion of experience is *continuity,* which refers to the fact that our past and present experiences have an influence on our future and therefore, experience is a moving force.

As a research approach, NI entails an interest in experience, because it allows for deep dig into the context and the content of stories in terms of temporality (the times in which experiences unfold), place (the place or places where the experiences are lived), and sociality (personal emotions, desires and interactions between people), as discussed by Barkhuizen (2013).

The characteristic of NI described above, makes this approach especially relevant in Language Teacher Education because, on one hand, "it helps to understand the inner mental worlds of language teachers and learners and the nature of language teaching and learning as social and educational activity" (Barkhuizen, Benson & Chik, 2004 p.2); on the other hand, "it can also help us to understand language teaching and learning form the perspectives of the . . . learners . . . a focus on narrative content can certainly contribute to a richer . . . understanding of language . . . learning as lived experience" (pp. 5-6).

Understanding these lived experiences in context has constantly intrigued me; that is because, as researchers, we tend to make generalizations when talking about the *language learners* and frequently forget or ignore the individual nature of experience already discussed. The individual learner is a micro cosmos, and by learning about this individual learner's representations and understandings related to the academic world surrounding him/her, we might arrive to findings that have not been visible due to the generalization and homogenization of the term *language learner.*

After describing NI as a research approach that is relevant to understand language learning, I would like to discuss Narrative Pedagogy (NP) and why I have decided to also resort to it. The first time I read about the term Narrative Pedagogy, I was reading an article written by Sarasa (2015), an Argentinian researcher who used NP in a Teacher Education Program with the purpose to to explore the identities of her future language teachers.

Goodson & Gill (2011), theorize NP as "the facilitation of an educative journey through which learning can take place in profound encounters . . . by engaging in meaning-making and deep dialogue and exchange" (p.123).

According to NP, any person's narrative allows for getting to know him/her, while such narrative also elicits a self-learning process for the narrator. Hence, NP enriches each other's humanity as well. NP permits a new way of learning where "firsthand and existential narratives . . . become legitimized as part of the academic curriculum, generated by all actors at the university" (Sarasa, 2015 p. 21). Knowing the lived experiences of the ELPTs and their investment in their learning process could make them aware of their capacities to wellbeing and flourishing; it also would bring to the fore new sites and practices that "allow for the construction of true knowledge in English teacher education" (Sarasa, 2015 p.21), which should be relevant to teacher educators, ELPTs, and the educational community in general. Hence, it would be helpful to move away from the linguistic and imperialist practices (Phillipson, 2012), while opening a room for more local perspectives.

The learning process within the NP occurs in a cycle described as an spiral that is comprised of three key moments: *narration, collaboration and theorization* (Goodson & Gill, 2011). The *narration* is the starting point, where teacher and students look for the creation of a space for the narrative to get started. Two phases can be identified in this starting point: In the first phase, the narrators choose how to present their narrative; that is why this phase is considered the room for creativity. In the second phase, the narrators, including the teacher, start working on their writing, which can take the form of a story, a myth, or a blog, among others. The moment of c*ollaboration* is conceived as an event where stories and interpretations are exchanged, reconstructed and revisited. The moment of *theorization* also includes three specific steps: *location, theorization and integration*. Within the step of *location*, readers identify the pertinent place where their own narratives would fall from historical, cultural and social viewpoints, so that to detect and/or gain awareness of the influences they had been through. Such

location leads to a *theorization*, which brings about abstract understandings of the person's story; this is how a bridge between what has been reflected in terms of experiences is built to connect time, space and the person's own life. Finally, everything finishes with an *integration* where the reflection on *location* and *theorization* would allow the person to craft a new and holistic vision of selfhood.

NI and NP are two approaches that complement each other, since they both are focused on experiences as a valid resource to help people make sense of their life and place in history, as they relate to each other. Such understanding could also be complemented by a PAR, where learners and teachers can examine practices that are taking place in the classroom and might prompt process of social transformation and/or personal development to the individuals involved in research studies conducted within this type of approach. The resulting transformations would be originated in a mutual caring for each other among learners and teachers, with understanding of the others required for responsible agency (Medina, 2013 p. 138).

According to Medina (2013), we, the Teacher Educators, have the responsibility to find out who are the students with whom we are sharing our daily life, as well as to develop familiarity with the different people that make part of our communities. PAR can be considered a valid resource of achieve the purpose, where it is conceived as "a social process of collaborative learning realized by groups of people who join together in changing the practices through which they interact in a shared social world where, for better or worse, we live with the consequences of one another's actions" (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2007 p. 277). PAR connects experience, reflections, the knowledge of the others, and the knowledge that these others can bring to us. For this particular case, this would be applied to the ELPTs and myself who are part of an ELT education program, where most of the knowledge is derived from the program that establishes what we have to teach and learn, while that does not take into account what the ELPTs bring with them. "Through participatory action research, people can come to understand that —and how— their social and educational practices are located, and that they are the product of the particular circumstances of material, social, and historical nature that produced them and by which they are reproduced in everyday social interaction within a specific setting" (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2007 p. 278). This understanding is particularly relevant as ELT education programs have been constructed around theories of language and learning that were generated mostly by White European or American theorists whose

knowledge has been consumed religiously and has been "maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self- image of people and in many other aspects of our modern life" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013 p. 13).

Previously in this article, I mentioned that achieving the levels of English fluency that commonly universities require is a challenge for ELPTs, while they see such fluency in English language as an actual opportunity to obtain higher social or professional status, as well as a means to make their dreams come true. Sometimes ELPTs strive to improve their English-language speech competences to sound *British* or *American*, i.e. to reach a native-speaker accent. Additionally, textbooks that they have to use for their English classes focus on "teaching culture in celebratory or neutral terms by emphasizing the most emblematic elements that define a cultural group . . . Learners are taught to appreciate positive characteristics of other nations, such as that Americans are well-organized, the British enjoy having tea every afternoon" (Gómez, 2015 p. 169).

PAR might bring an opportunity to reflect upon the aspects described above, as well as, to unveil alternative practices that might be more compatible with the ELPTs' dreams and aspirations, which are assumed not only based on the Eurocentric dream, but also, on their own realities. This is due to the fact that PAR promotes a process of communication through dialogue where researchers and participants do listen to each other. This process of communication leads not only to transformations in the community; it also fosters up the development of critical thinking. (Balcázar, 2003).

PAR is also structured in a spiral cycle that comprises: Planning a change; acting and observing the process and consequences of the change; reflecting on these processes and consequences; replanning; acting and observing again; reflecting again; and so on. (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2007 p. 277). Although the process is iterative, it does not neccesarily follow a strict order.

Finally, it is important to highlight that PAR considers the participants as "social actors, with their own voice, ability to decide, reflect . . . and actively participate in the research and change process" (Balcazar, 2003 p.67). Therefore, PAR also implies a change in power relations as these power relations become more symmetrical.

In Figure 6.1, I have included a summary of the main intersections and resonances of NP, NI and PAR, in terms of epistemology, ontology, methodology, voice and values. In terms of epistemology these three approaches (NI, NP and PAR) focus on experience as the main resource for the construction of knowledge between the reader and the narrator, with the purpose of transforming their realities. In ontological terms, narratives help people understand who they are in relation to others, as well as the places and times where their stories unfold (Barkhuizen, 2013). PAR and NI belong to social research while NP entails a notion of pedagogy as mutual engagement between students and teachers, where both co-construct a knowledge that goes beyond the delivery and consumption of given contents, rather focusing on existential narratives as a key element to design curricula.

NP, NI and PAR promote processes of communication through dialogue, which permits mutual understanding that in turn enhances the creation of generative themes in order to bring about social and educational transformation; and finally, these approaches promote values such as mutuality of interaction where "relationships between entities and processes are mutual, rather than unidirectional" (Longino, p. 47).

Figure 6.1

Narrative Inquiry, Narrative Pedagogy and PAR: Intersections and Resonances

Subject	Narrative Pedagogy (NP)	Narrative Inquiry (NI)	Participatory Action Research (PAR)
Epistemology	Meaning-making and deep dialogue and exchange. (Goodson and Gill, 2011)	Learning is a social activity influenced by time, place and sociality Storytelling is a cognitive activity; it makes experience meaningful and permits the co-construction of knowledge (Barkhuizen, 2013).	Extended epistemology of experiential, propositional, and practical knowing; co-created findings. (Guba & Licoln, 2005).
Ontology	Reflection on the location and theorization permits the individual to craft a new and holistic vision of selfhood (Goodson & Gill, 2011).	Experience is key in the construction of who we are.	Knowledge is socially constructed. (Kilgore, 2001).
Methodology	Narrative Turn into Education Education endeavours ought to be focused on facilitating dialogue through narrative exchange (Goodson & Gill, 2011). Narrating one's life. A narration whose interpretation is carried out in a spiral cycle (Goodson and Gill, 2011) that entails a process of narration, collaboration and understanding.	Social Research Interrelation among the eight dimensions of narrative analysis namely, epistemology, methods, content, form, practice, co-construction, categorization and storying (Barkhuizen, 2013).	Social Research A research process carried out in a spiral cycle that entails: Planning a change; acting and observing the process and consequences of the change: reflecting on these processes and consequences; replanning; acting and observing again; reflecting again; and so on (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2007 p. 277).

Figure 6.1 (Continued)

Narrative Inquiry, Narrative Pedagogy and PAR: Intersections and Resonances

Subject	Narrative Pedagogy (NP)	Narrative Inquiry (NI)	Participatory Action Research (PAR)
Voice	In facilitating narrative learning, the teacher and the learner share their understanding, knowledge, worldviews and personal experiences.	Narrative is a sense-making activity between the narrator and the one who reads the narrative. Stories re-shape our experience.	A process of communication through dialogue where researchers and participants, listen to each other. This communication process leads not only to transformations in the community, but also, to the development of critical thinking (Balcazar, 2003).
Values	The teacher cares for and is cared by the learner in an act of reciprocity.

Teacher and learners mutually enrich each other's humanity (Hayden, 1995) | Mutuality | Mutual caring where learners and teachers care for each other with understanding of the others required for responsible agency (Medina, p. 138). |

Source: Own

Although the approaches mentioned above could be integrated in PAR, and despite of the fact that they are mutually complementary, I feel that even now another element could be added up so that ancestral knowledge might be incorporated as a decolonization tool in research (Corona Berktin _& Keltmeier, 2012). Such element, that could be taken from the Indigenous Research Paradigm (IRP), is relationality. Relationality implies understanding of the fact that relationships are linked not only to place, time, and to other human beings, but also to everything, to nature, to the universe in general. (Arevalo, 2013). Besides, the IRP complements the Western research tradition.

The Indigenous Research Paradigm (IRP)

"The indigenous research paradigm is a proposal that emerges in the particular context of exclusion of the indigenous perspective of doing research in universities, and as a way to consolidate an indigenous research approach at the end of the twentieth century" (Arevalo, 2013, p. 60). As every paradigm, the IRP is composed of an epistemology, an ontology, a methodology and an axiology.

In the IRP, knowledge is co-constructed. From the indigenous ontology, the reality is wider than in the Western vision. To put it in some way, the composition of indigenous reality contains the Western (the rational-material version) but goes beyond to include what the Western vision fails to capture by the senses. From this point of view, reality can be explained holistically and relationally as a totality of what we are all part of. Methodology in the IRP refers to the tools that might help to facilitate our understanding of the world. The tools can take different forms such as observations, the use of stories or even proverbs. The use of the tools depends on the purpose of the research project.

Axiology makes reference to ethical issues and the research position. The set of ethical principles that underpin the IRP are contextual and relational in nature. Research should be developed under the principles of respect, reciprocity and responsibility, and should connect mind and heart, reason and feelings, so that the emotional and cognitive experiences are linked; research should also acknowledge the multiplicity of subjectivities of both the researcher and the participants (Arevalo, 2013).

The basic principle of IRP is the concern for the role of research in social transformation, as well as its contribution to the strengthening of relationality. This principle is highly important because it goes beyond obtaining a research professor status within the world of scholars. Here, the concern is that research can really contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of the communities in a holistic way.

IRP is very connected to NP, NI and PAR, all of them dealing with experience, while all of them also focusing on transformations. However, IRP includes relationality and a serious desire of transformation that goes beyond the material life and includes a more holistic view. In the next section of this

article, I would like to propose a way to link elements of the Western tradition such as NP, NI, and PAR with elements of IRP, with the purpose of revisiting PAR as a form to enable an *integrative thought* to arrive to a relational research methodology.

Revisiting PAR

According to Chilisa (2012), the IRP enhances "the exploration of local cultures . . . collective experiences . . . and . . . knowledge systems to theorize and imagine other possibilities "(Chilisa, 2012, p. 16). It also should be a commitment of the researcher to deal with colonialism and imperialism. (Smith, 1999; Chilisa 2012, Wilson, 2008; Kovach, 2010).

A relational methodological research might contribute to the exploration of the expansion of our knowledge about our ELPTs' experiences, while at the same time, it might foster an awareness of the colonial mechanisms that have shaped our knowledge, being and dreams. When I say we, I refer to the ELPTs and myself. It might also contribute to imagine other possibilities for the ELT education program curriculum design beyond those that one which we have been used to follow.

Taking into account the similarities in epistemology, ontology, methodology, voice and values between NP, NI and PAR described in Figure 1, and the fact that the same apply to IRP, I have designed a spiral cycle for a relational methodological research process that includes elements of the approaches described so far (Figure 6.2). The spiral is crossed by the word relationality that in the IRP is one of the main tenets of an ontological position. In ELT, this relationality has to do with the communities the ELPTs affiliate, the way they care for the people and the materials they interact with, as well as the attitudes they bring with them to their classrooms. All of these create the learning environment, which is considered as fine strands of energy that nourish our relationships in the classroom for good or for bad, but which we rarely consider; should we consider it, we might be an effective help to the enhancement of the academic life.

The relational methodological research process that I would like to propose here as a way to revisit PAR, comprises four specific stages: *observation, experience, interpretation* and *commitment and action* (see Figure 6.2). It is important to highlight that each stage is a process itself while also each one depends on the other.

Figure 6.2

The Spiral Process of PAR Revisited
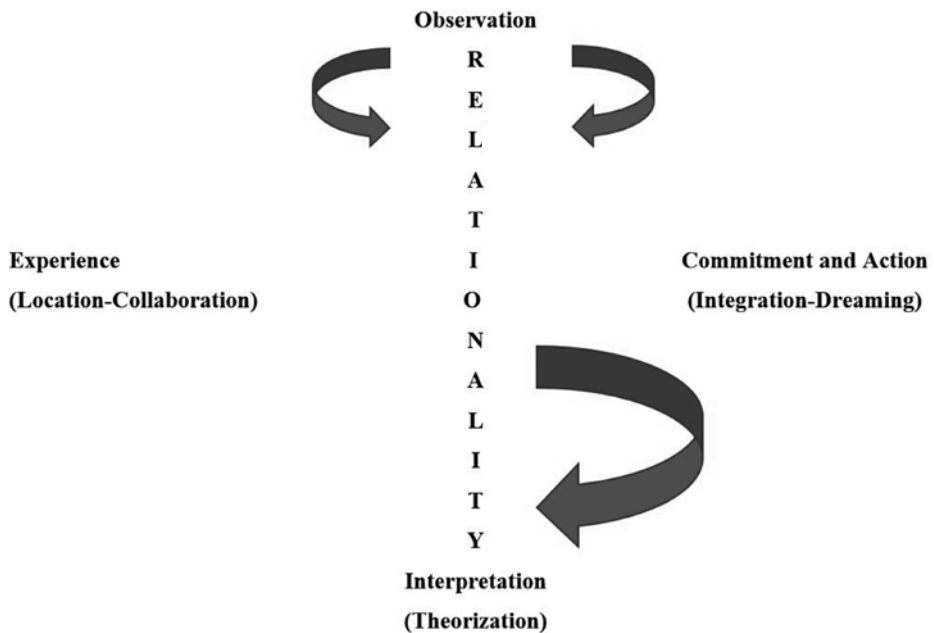
Tools[17]: Autobiography – Interviews

Source: Own

For the *observation* stage, the ELTPs and I will choose a specific tool to tell our stories; it might likely be a written autobiography focused on narrating our experiences as ELPTs. These autobiographies correspond to what is called *tools* in Figure 1. Autobiographies will be accompanied by interviews through which we can undertake a deep exploration of those aspects from the autobiographies that catch our attention. The observation process should entail a reflection that revolves around questions such as who we are, and how and why we have become who we are, so that to gain perspective of our own stories from our own inner sides.

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17   Arévalo, 2003

In the second stage, labeled *experience*, we will choose a specific location, such as a particular classroom, where we will read our own autobiographies as well as those from others in order make sense of all of our life stories and their connections with time and place; here, place will be seen not only as mere physical surroundings but actually as environment that affect our leaning process. We will also connect with individuals pertaining to our social environments at the times when they occur. On making these connections we will enter in the third stage, called *interpretation* under the expectation that those interpretations would possibly bring about generative themes that should open spaces for more interpretation and theorization. Such interpretation also would imply understandings of the experiences lived, leading to mutual commitment. Finally, *action*, which comes to be the last stage on the process, would be directed by *dreaming* as an inner force that connects past, present and a future with better possibilities for everyone.

In the stage called *experience*, location also means that our experiences are situated in time, space, social spheres and relationality, and that the knowledge we gain from our experiences is co-constructed with the relationship we have with the environment and with the people with whom we interact. Such processes are not of individual nature but rather a collective learning: we learn with others. Learning is then, situated and collaborative. The spaces where our learning takes place also influence the way we learn; spaces are considered an important part from the holistic viewpoint subjacent to IRP: we are connected to everything.

In our research study, interpretation will not be considered only a matter of identifying categories. Rather, it would be seen as deeply connected to *integration*, i.e., to the cumulative process of meaning-making, which should allow to integrate our life process in a way that enable us to realize who we are, who we want to become, and why. We will also keep in mind that integration is also connected to dreaming, i.e., the act of envisioning all the possibilities hidden in the present. Furthermore, we will acknowledge that integration is a recognition of our strengths and weaknesses so that to help us build a better future for the communities to which we belong.

In making sense of our stories, we expect to be able to develop a more critical view of the historical moment in ELT that have led the English language to gain the status of the most powerful in the world; we should also rethink how this fact has shaped our investment in this language and has influenced our dreams as future language teachers. We should then analyse

the neoliberalist project behind education, thus gaining deeper understanding of the whitening processes through which we have been in the constitution of ourselves. Needless is to say here that we should also be able to uncover the struggles, dreams and hopes of the ELPTs; that would help to creatively envision alternative angles to design ELT education programs.

Conclusions

This paper discusses a research proposal with a decolonial perspective in ELT. The main purpose of such a proposal is to combine elements of the Western tradition such as Narrative Inquiry, Narrative Pedagogy and Participatory Action Research with the Indigenous Research Paradigm, so that to incorporate an integrative thought where emotions, intimacy and relationality are taken into account as a means to create more symmetrical relations within the research process.

The incorporation of the IRP also seeks to expand the Western research tradition with the ancestral knowledge promoted by indigenous intellectuals, where relationality as an axiology, epistemology and ontology represent a more holistic view for a knowledge production that takes place in a heterarchical process, thus conveying collaboration instead of control.

A research process carried out in this fashion allows for a dialogue between the researcher and the research participants that contributes to a social transformation where all voices count. In the particular case of ELT education programs, this approach should lead the integration of ELPTs in the construction of programs that are better aligned with their expectations.

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7. A Research Approach to Study the Relationship between Classroom Interaction and Interactional Identities in English Language Education

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Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss Conversation Analysis as an available research methodology to study the relationship betweenn classroom interaction and interactional identities of participants in English-language education. As currently I am embarked on a query focused on exploring this relationship, I will include a review of some research methodologies to study this matter. This review becomes of major relevance to explain how classroom interactions and participants interactional roles have been studied within this field.

In my current research query, I see classroom interaction as dynamic, fluid, and situated. English-language teachers and students permanently and reciprocally construct their interactions in various manners by interweaving their interactional practices, identities, and individual knowledge, as well as their visions and experiences about English-language education and the world. By doing so, both participants in classroom interactions, i.e. teacher and students, enact a wide variety of interactional identities. Under this assumption, neither classroom interactions nor interactional identities can be pre-established, since one of them helps construct the other in innumerable manners within varied contents and contexts.

Tracy and Robles (2013) define interactional identities as the "specific roles that people take on in a communicative context with regard to specific other people" (p. 22). These interactional roles are not static, but fluent, multiple,

movable, multi-scale, multidimensional, and multifaceted (see Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Thornborrow, 1999; Tracy & Robles, 2012; Zimmerman, 1998). This means that interactional identities can be taken on, assigned, enacted, and challenged in line with how interactions happen in context. Based on this notion, for my current research query I will define interactional identities as what teachers and students are, do, and become as interactants in classroom interaction. There are, then, constant movements and realizations of interactional identities in consonance with the manner how these participants construct and maintain the turn-by-turn of interactions in English-language education classrooms.

My current research query has been elicited by my personal observations related to the relationships between how classroom interactions are organized, and the multiple interactional roles that participants in English-language education classroom recognize or become aware of. My analisis focuses on the *not-yet*[18] of the general studies about how teachers and students construct and enact their interactional identities in the moment-by-moment of classroom interaction. In the same way, as classroom interactions may occur in many different manners, countless interactional identities may occur wthin the classroom, which additionally may have limitless realizations.

In this perspective, the realization of interactional identities and the organization of classroom interaction cannot simply be established by language teaching standards. In my view, the way classroom interactions and teachers and students' interactional roles have been discussed in corresponding literature, ignores the existence of conflictive tensions that might have been originated by the fact that such interactions and roles are perceived as pre-scripted or pre-established. A multiplicity of perspectives and multi-faceted interpretations about interactional identities and classroom roles might have been identified, while current studies on the matter may be omitting them (Butler, 1990). I consider that no a single set of purposes are established for interactional roles, as much as no a unique set of patterns would occur when organizing or structuring classroom interaction in English-language education. The way interactants interpret the interactional contexts of their classrooms would reveal a multiplicity of interactional roles and practices across the dimensions of time, space, and self.

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18   This construct of the *not-yet* has been coined from Ernst Bloch (as cited in Hudson, 1982, pp. 19-30), in his principle of hope. For this proposal, the *not-yet* refers to the study that is yet to be conducted while it is already conceived as feasible.

In this chapter, I am going to divide the review of research methodologies into those used for classroom interaction and those for interactional identities in English-language education in Colombia. As a result of this panorama, I should set forth what is yet to be contemplated in depth regarding research methodologies. From this account, at the final section of the chapter, I will suggest a view of CA (Conversational Analysis) as an approach to study the relationship between classroom interaction and its participants' interactional identities in English-language education.

Leading Studies on Classroom Interaction and Interactional Identities in Colombia

Classroom Interaction Studies. The organization and structure of classroom interaction in English-language education have majorly been studied by following the principles of Conversation Analysis (Chappell, 2014; Gardner, 2014; Johnson, 2009; Kurhila, 2006; Rymes, 2009; Seedhouse, 2004; Sidnell & Stivers, 2014; Walsh, 2011), and Interaction Analysis (Inamullah, 2005; Li, Shouhui, & Xinying, 2011; Odiri-Amatari, 2015). By showing real-time transcripts of audio/video recorded lessons, the findings of these studies generally indicate that classroom interaction is organized in adjacency pairs, preferred responses, turn taking, repairs, and recasts, as well as in the interaction patterns of initiation-response-evaluation/feedback (IRE/F), requests, responses, code-switching, and regulatory turns.

Research studies about organization and structure of classroom interaction in English-language teaching in Colombia (see Figure 7.1 below) have shown that it also presents similar interactional structures to the ones mention just above. These are co-constructed between English-language teachers and students, being teachers mainly the managers of classroom interaction while students little by little would learn how to deal with it. However, unlike the studies mentioned above, local teacher-researchers studying the English-language classroom interaction in Colombia have used a more extensive variety of research methodologies. Figure 7.1 below lists the studies done in Colombia about classroom interaction in English-language teaching. For each study, the research methodology, data collection techniques, and main findings are shown.

Figure 7.1

English-Language Teaching Classroom Interaction Studies in Colombia

Classroom Interaction Research Study	Research Methodology, Data Collection Techniques	Main Findings
Balcárcel-Zambrano (2003) *Teacher Talk at Three Colombian Higher Education Institutions* Three schools – 11th grade – Bucaramanga	Interaction Analysis (recordings, transcriptions, and interviews)	English-language teachers commonly used communication strategies of giving information, asking questions, and giving directions; they did most of the classroom talk, thus impacting the students' participation process.
Muñoz and Mora (2006) *Functions of Code-Switching: Tools for Learning and Communicating in English Classes* One school – 2nd grade – Bogotá	Qualitative Case Study (video tapes, transcriptions)	English-language teacher's talk was permeated by code-switching strategies of Spanish and English combinations.
Fajardo (2008) *Conversation Analysis (CA) in Primary School Classrooms* One school – elementary –Bucaramanga	Conversation Analysis (video recordings, transcripts)	The kind of interaction promoted by a group of pre-service teachers showed highly restricted possibilities for their young learners to use English meaningfully in the classroom.
Gonzalez-Humanez, Arias (2009) *Enhancing Oral Interaction in English as a Foreign Language through Task-Based Learning Activities* One school – mid/high – Planeta Rica	Action Research (questionnaires, interviews, direct observation, student diaries, and audio/video recordings)	Teacher-student interaction was usually teacher-initiated and centered on providing explanations and requests.

Figure 7.1 (Continued)

English-Language Teaching Classroom Interaction Studies in Colombia

Classroom Interaction Research Study	Research Methodology, Data Collection Techniques	Main Findings
Herazo-Rivera (2010) *Authentic Oral Interaction in the EFL Class: What It Means, What It Does Not* One school – mid/high – Montería	Experimental Research (naturalistic line of inquiry, recordings, transcripts).	Teachers sometimes did not clearly understand the communicative approach in EFL education for authentic oral interaction.
Bohórquez-Suárez, Gómez-Sará, Medina-Mosquera (2011) *Pair Negotiation When Developing English Speaking Tasks* One school –7th grade – Bogotá	Descriptive Case Study (video recordings, transcriptions, and interviews)	Found patterned combinations in the negotiations of students when working in pairs for developing speaking tasks.
Rosado-Mendinueta (2012) *Contingent Interaction: A Case Study in a Colombian EFL Classroom* One school – mid/high – Bogotá	Multi- Case Study (audio tapes, transcripts, and ethnographic notes)	Teacher-student interaction with students contained learning-generating opportunities in traditional exchange patterns.
Montenegro (2012) *Analyzing EFL University Learners' Positionings and Participation Structures in a Collaborative Learning Environment* College – Bogotá	Qualitative Research Inductive Analysis (audio recordings, teacher's field notes, individual conferences)	Students' behavior on interactions with teachers resulted from mutual acknowledgement of their skills, rights, and responsibilities during group work. Thus, certain participation structures for collaborative learning were generated, such as cross-transactions and reciprocal acknowledgement.

Figure 7.1 (Continued)

English-Language Teaching Classroom Interaction Studies in Colombia

Classroom Interaction Research Study	Research Methodology, Data Collection Techniques	Main Findings
Serna Dimas and Ruíz Castellanos (2014) *Language-Building Activities and Variations in Interaction with Mixed-Ability ESL University Learners in a Content-Based Course* English-for-Specific-Purposes (ESP) College – Bogotá	Action Research (anecdotal records, sociograms, external observations)	College students displayed a variety of English-language skills while in acquisition activities and variations in interaction.
Lucero Babativa (2011, 2012, 2015) *Conducting Research on Classroom Interaction: Approaches, Studies, and Reasons* Languages College – Bogotá	Ethnomethodological Conversation Analysis (video recordings, transcripts)	Oral activities were mainly composed of interaction patterns of *asking about* and *adding content*, as well as requestes for the L2 equivalent of an L1 word (request-provision-acknowledgement – *RPA sequence*).

Source: Own

Studies listed above have mostly analyzed classroom interactions in English-language teaching at school level descriptively, including six studies focused on mid/high school and two on elementary level; three additional studies have been reported at college level. A variety of research methodologies have been implemented across all these studies, either with case study analyzes of interactional teacher/student actions, or by implementing oral interaction strategies. In general terms, findings reveal that classroom interaction in English-language teaching is organized and structured by interaction patterns that are usually initiated by teachers and subsequently co-constructed with students, mainly focused on improving English-language skills.

In regard to classroom interactions within the environment of teachers' education, five studies have been published to date in Colombia. Similarly to

the studies about English-language teaching discussed above, teacher education studies have also described interactions within the classroom; a common finding here is that teachers regularly come to be a model for students to follow regarding how to teach. Figure 7.2 below shows these five studies including research methodology, data collection techniques, and main findings.

Figure 7.2

English-Language Teacher Education Classroom Interaction Studies in Colombia

Classroom Interaction Research Study	Research Methodology, Data Collection Techniques	Main Findings
Álvarez (2008) *Instructional Sequences of English-Language Teachers: A Descriptive Attempt* Bogotá	Qualitative research, coding analysis. (Observation logs and interviews)	Five teacher's regular instructional sequences identified: practice, presentation, production, evaluation, and homework check. These sequences resulted from classroom administration of activities as well as interactions teacher/students.
Castrillón-Ramírez (2010) *Students' Perceptions on Development of Their Oral Skills in an EFL Teaching Program* Pereira	Qualitative research, categorization, Likert scale (observations, interviews, questionnaires)	Classroom interaction helped students improve their ability to express and understand their ideas by developing more fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, and intonation.
Castro-Garcés and López-Olivera (2013) *Communication Strategies Used by Pre-Service English Teachers of Different Proficiency Levels* Ibagué	Qualitative approach, categorization (audio recordings, transcripts, and interviews with an open-ended questionnaire)	Mid-undergraduate ELT students used a variety of communication strategies for interactions in a conversation course (e.g. message abandonment, topic avoidance, and code-switching, among others).

Source: Own

Figure 7.2 (Continued)

English-Language Teacher Education Classroom Interaction Studies in Colombia

Classroom Interaction Research Study	Research Methodology, Data Collection Techniques	Main Findings
Lucero and Rouse (2017) *Classroom Interaction in ELT Undergraduate Programs: Characteristics and Pedagogical Implications* Bogotá	Ethnomethodological Conversation Analysis (video recordings, transcripts, SETT interviews)	Three undergraduate ELT classrooms showed transactional episodes, interaction patterns similar to EFL classrooms', and instructional paradoxes.
Lucero and Scalante-Morales (2018) *English-Language Teacher Educator Interactional Styles: Heterogeneity and Homogeneity in the ELT Classroom* Bogota	Ethnomethodological Conversation Analysis (video recordings, transcripts, SETT interviews)	Three undergraduate ELT classrooms showed homogeneous interaction patterns in varied courses and class activities, as well as heterogeneous patterns in similar courses and class activities.

Source: Own

The analysis of data resulting from these five studies focused on two main aspects: how interactional practices occurred in undergraduate English-language teachers education classrooms, and, how these practices mediated the improvement of students' communication strategies. Findings revealed that teacher educators tend to organize their practices into instructional sequences and transactional episodes that coincidentally resemble the interaction patterns identified in no-teachers English-language classrooms. These findings emerged from applying two main approaches: a) a qualitative analysis where observations and interviews with the participants were categorized into interactional practices; and, b) a Conversation Analysis where transcripts

were analyzed to unveil the organization of classroom interactions. Unlike studies listed in Figure 7.1, classroom interactions on English-language teacher education in Colombia have been considered niehter a case study nor a context to implement interactional strategies when developing oral communication skills or enhancing diverse interactional practices.

A common issue among the studies cited in Figures 7.1 and 7.2, is that their varied research methodologies and data collection techniques were designed to find how interaction between teachers and students in these English-language classrooms is organized and structured. These methodologies and techniques were mainly focused on depicting what happens in the organization and structure of classroom interaction in Colombian English-language teaching. A closer view at these findings portray rather technical descriptions of how teachers and students' turns at speaking are classified into interaction patterns and organizations due to classroom activities. There are few explanations of when and why those patterns and organizations emerge within the described sets of interaction. This might give the idea that classroom interaction in Colombian English-language teacher education happens rather mechanically, thus following only planned interactional practices or orientations with pre-established pedagogical purposes of learning English or practicing how to teach it. As seen in Figures 7.1 and 7.2, the findings mostly display descriptions of how teachers' interactional practices from pre-planned pedagogical designs can build more accurate English-language speakers, develop more communication abilities in the students, and raise awareness of interactional practices in the classroom.

Other major studies outside the Colombian scholarly environment also show a descriptive analysis of classroom interaction in English-language education (see for example Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Mehan, 1979; Markee, 1995; 2004; Seedhouse, 2004; Markee & Kasper, 2004; Kasper, 2006; Rymes, 2009; Walsh, 2011; Gardner, 2014). Analyses of data from these studies majorly center on how teachers' leading instructional or interactional sequences organize interactional practices during class activities, and how those practices in turn contribute to either students' second language acquisition or involvement in the activities. A common finding is that ways of co-constructing classroom interaction are seen as if dependent on teacher's interactional practices. Regrettably, these studies may imply the belief that classroom interaction would be similar across any contexts of English-language education. Such belief may turn off intents to study the moments and reasons of classroom interaction within some other specific contexts in other manners.

All above mentioned studies, in and outside Colombia, depict a panorama where the research methodologies and data collection techniques have mainly been designed to piece together the organizational puzzle of how teachers and students interact within the English-language classroom. These designs follow a rather unique descriptive outlook of analysis. In my point of view, this perspective has yet to reach further explanations of three phenomena in the organization and structure of classroom interaction in English-language education:

- The situational moments when those interactional structures emerge and the interactants' reasons of their emergence within the interactional sets under study.

- The ways and reasons those structures emerged or are maintained in further interactional practices in the classroom.

- The explanations and descriptions of other forms of interaction in the classroom, as out-of-institutional-setting conversations (Schegloff, 1987), laminative talk (van Dam van Isselt, as cited in Richards, 2006), discoursal feedback (Cullen, 2002), off-task talk (Markee, 2004), off-the-record conversations (Richards, 2006), or extraordinary events of talk (Lucero & Rouse, 2017)[19].

The study of classroom interaction nowadays demands a broader view of the socio-contextual actions and practices that participants perform in interaction (Drew, 2005; Schegloff, 2005). This broader view should cover not only the sequential description of how social actions and practices happen, but also the reasons and moments they occur as part of the social organization and order of the context under analysis (Schegloff, 1987, 1992; Wetherell, 1998). Without any doubt, interactions occurring in the variety of English-language education classrooms around the world should help understand what teachers and students situationally do and are as interactants in this variety of settings. The manner how they deal with every interaction and the reasons for doing so, in and outside the pedagogical purposes of lessons, within their situational teaching context, should also be a concern in the study of organizations of classroom interaction in English-language education.

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19   Out-of-institutional-setting conversations, off-task talk, and off-the-record conversations refer to those oral exchanges that are not part of the pedagogical purposes of the classroom lesson. The laminative talk refers to comments that are understood as a frame-break of the pedagogical talk, discoursal feedback as the interventions that recall past explanations of content, and extraordinary events of talk to those oral exchanges that take place because of events that are not part of the class activities.

Studies on interactional identities. Research studies that directly focus on the interactional identities of classroom participants in English-language education, add major dilemmas to those exposed thus far. Although there are a number of published studies about teachers or students' identities in English-language education in Colombia (see for example Banegas, 2012; Fajardo-Castañeda, 2013, 2014; Quintero-Polo & Guerrero-Nieto, 2013; Ubaque, 2016), none of them consider the interactional identities that teachers or students may enact in the English-language classroom. They see other levels or facets of identity construction and constitution from other data sources as narratives and life stories. This fact opens a huge window of inquiry since teachers and students' interactional identities may be in need to be studied to see how they also help configuring English-language learning and teaching interactional practices in the classroom. With this statement, my intention is never to discredit these revealing studies on teachers and students' identities. On the contrary, my point of argument is that teachers and students' identity construction as interactants in the English-language classroom can also and complementarily be seen in the complexities of identity formations and interaction organizations in English-language education classrooms.

There are few studies on interactional identities in the English-language classroom around the world (see for example Duff, 2002; Martinez, Durán, & Hikida, 2017; Rampton & Charalambous, 2016; Rymes & Anderson, 2004; Thomas, 2013; Vetter & Schieble, 2015). By following descriptive research methodologies such as interaction analysis, conversation analysis, and linguistic ethnography, they examine the sequential organization of talk and the linguistic resources that the participants use during classroom interactions. These studies observe the realization of teachers and students' interactional roles in the emergent interactions of pedagogically-designed classroom activities.

Therefore, under a systematic application of descriptive research methodologies, plus a controlled view of classroom interaction, the cited studies on interactional identities in English-language classrooms have taken a rather structural perspective. Up-to-day research on interactional identities in English-language classrooms seems to focus regularly on the manner how teachers or students take on a series of interactional roles that come from either the pedagogical designs of the teacher-researchers doing the study (as in Duff, 2002; Rymes & Anderson, 2004; Thomas, 2013), or the doctrines of instructional designs of language teaching approaches (as in Martinez, Durán, & Hikida, 2017; Rampton & Charalambous, 2016; Vetter & Schieble, 2015).

Énfasis

Further studies on the matters also need to highlight the contextual aspects and factors that can openly play a relevant role in the way how interactional roles are constructed in English-language education. Those contextual aspects and factors can be class contents/topics, first language, L2 proficiency or command, power relations, classroom climate, students and teachers' conversational agendas, and the messiness of interaction, among others.

Keeping a subjacent structural perspective as in the works mentioned above, is something that, on my viewpoint, preserves the belief that studying teachers and students' interactional roles in English-language education could still be seen as constructed from predicted sequences or directions, where these participants just have to reproduce classroom interactional models and roles congruent to English language teaching methods or approaches. In other words, this perspective would keep on making teachers and students the type of individuals that mainstream English language education perspectives portray; here, any attempt to doing it differently may be seen as not having an effective[20] teaching-learning interaction or not being an effective teacher or student.

The study of interactional identities in English-language education may actually need non-orthodox examinations. These examinations would need to be not focused on depicting how pre-established interactional roles or sequences occur, but further explore the moments, reasons, and fluidity of the emergence of teachers and students' multiple interactional identities within the situational structures and organizations of classroom interaction, as well as in the diversity of English-language education contexts.

Specifically, in the Colombian context of English-language education, the review about up-to-day studies on classroom interaction and its participants' interactional identities[21] displays a rather structural view. It seems that, in the research designs, the real selves of teachers and students as classroom interactants have mainly been dispossessed by, and replaced or equated to, standardized roles and interactional models, which are generally inscribed in mainstream language teaching methods and approaches. Keeping studying English-language classroom interaction and its participants' interactional identities with this view might nullify, disapprove, or annihilate situated and

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20   This concept of *effective* is debatable. It is unclear for whom it is *effective*, under which contextual conditions, by doing what, how, why, and with whom in which English language educational settings.

21   See studies in Figures 7.1 and 7.2 above in this chapter and in the complementary manuscript about the state of art of classroom interaction in ELTE and its interactional identities in Colombia (Lucero, 2018).

divergent practices and identities in classroom interaction. Doing research on classroom interaction and its participants' interactional identities with more in-situ and inductive perspectives might then expand the understandings about what teachers and students may really be, become, and do as interactants in the dynamics of classroom interactions, and in the diversity of contexts where they can occur.

A Research Approach to Study Classroom Interaction and its Participants' Interactional Identities

In all the above studies, the manner how classroom interaction occurs for English-language education, is closely connected to what teachers and students do as interactants in this context. Certainly, this fact opens possibilities to study these two issues together from multiple angles. Classroom interaction researchers nowadays must indeed be able to scheme out varied research methodologies from novel views of seeing classroom interaction and interactional identities together within a context-sensitive/context-situated perspective. Emergent research approaches that intent to do that could incorporate a gradually blending mixture of defined principles and elements from correlated research methodologies, or a pertinent interweaving of multiple and novel perspectives of a research methodology across disciplines[22]. In either case, none of the principles, elements, or perspectives can be taken plainly from their origin, but need to be re-fabricated in consonance with the research purposes, context, and population under study.

A research methodology to explore the moments and reasons of classroom interaction in unison with its participants' interactional identities in English-language education, needs to be geared towards seeing interactional identities as what their participants are, become, and do as interactants in all the contextual and situated dynamics of classroom interaction. This type of methodology should not simply explore what the interactants may linguistically do within the mechanics of the interaction. The claim is then for a more kaleidoscopic approach for the analysis of context-situated classroom interaction where various positionings of multiple identities (interactional

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22   See for example the idea of a bricolage in research designs to study inequalities (Steinberg, 2015) or the ethnomethodologically-inclined discourse analysis to account for hybridity in talk-in-interaction (Tate, 2007). These two research approaches sustainably borrow principles and elements from other research methodologies to study socio-cultural matters correlated to situated discourses and identities.

identities in this case) can jointly be addressed within it. The questions on this regard may revolve among what types or interactions and which identities occur in classroom interactions, plus why those interactions and those identities emerge at a given moment, all of that to be investigated with no pre-established premises.

Studies on individuals' identities within interactions in other social contexts (see for example Appiah, 2007; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Richards, 2006; Schegloff, 1987; Thornborrow, 1999; Tracy & Robles, 2012; Wenger, 1998; Zimmerman, 1998) have found that:

- Identities are taken-on, assigned, enacted, and challenged within interaction.

- These actions make identities fluid, multiple, movable, over-lapping, multi-scale, multidimensional, multifaceted, and context-sensitive.

- Interaction is constructed from the individuals' occurring identities.

By considering these premises, the beliefs that classroom interaction can be structured and organized in similar ways, regardless contextual aspects, or that the realization of its participants' interactional identities could be pre-established, are difficult to conceive. Neither contexts nor interactional identities are static or pre-determined. In agreement with Antaki and Widdicombe (1998), Wetherell (1998), Zimmerman (1998), Bucholtz and Hall (2005), Richards (2006), and Tracy and Robles (2013), different realizations of multiple occurring interactional identities may construct varied structures and organizations of interaction, and vice versa. Hence, there may not possibly be pre-established interactional identities that construct defined structures of classroom interaction, as there may not possibly be repetitive structures of classroom interaction that construct the same interactional identities. English-language teachers and students' interactional roles (or identities) might not be relatively pre-determined from pedagogical designs as if always occurring the same way in every context; might classroom interaction be neither structured nor organized in determined interactional sequences everywhere[23]. It cannot happen this way. In concordance with Benwell and Stokoe (2006), Duff (2002), Gardner (2014), Richards (2006), Rymes (2009), Wetherell (1998), and Walsh (2011; 2013), classroom interaction always contains dynamic

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23   Leading studies on classroom interaction, such as Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), Johnson (2009), Gardner (2014), Seedhouse (2004), and Wong and Zhang-Waring (2010), as well as Colombian studies on the matter (see Figures 7.1 and 7.2), present repetitive interactional sequences, mostly in teacher's talk. These studies should be taken as foundations for further similar studies, but not as fixed truths of how classroom interaction happens everywhere.

and constant negotiations of meanings that may be oriented and interpreted differently by each of its participants, who in turn have different and fluid backgrounds and visions of the world.

As a result of all considerations discussed so far, I have developed my ongoing research studies about classroom interactions and participants' interactional identities in English-language education where the classroom is taken as a social context [24], upon the basis of the four foundational premises below:

- The research study needs to transcend any structural description of the organization of classroom interaction in English-language education. Thus, it needs an orientation towards encouraging the analysis of reasons related to the temporal and contextual fluidity of all types of classroom interactions that may happen in this context, without following any a priori structure or organization of classroom interaction in the field.

- The research study needs to outdo any categorization of teachers or students' interactional roles (or identities) in English-language education. Instead, it needs to highlight explanations on how and why their ever-emergent and genuine interactional roles are constructed within the turn-by-turn of the occurring interactions in the classrooms.

- The research study needs to refrain from observing interactions in English-language education classrooms separated from the enactment of its participants' interactional roles. In preference, the study should analyze these participants' interactional identities within the interactional practices of these classrooms.

- The research study needs to extend the understandings of classroom interaction in English-language education from simply seeing it as composed of types of talk and interactional structures. In addition, the study needs to see classroom interaction as also composed of ever-changing aspects of its participants' first language, target language proficiency, power relations, conversational agendas, interactional behaviors, socio-cultural impregnations, and conversational contents.

This challenging four-premise endeavor implies broadening the current perspectives about classroom interaction and its participants' interactional identities. Then, I suggest taking the principles of *Conversation Analysis* (CA) and use them with a more kaleidoscopic outlook. The use of CA for

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24   Based on studies from Schegloff, 1987; Weinstein, 1991; Duff, 2002; Seedhouse, 2004, 2015; Richards, 2006; Thomas, 2013; and Vetter & Schieble, 2015, among others.

the proposed study has a reason. Notwithstanding the importance of other research methodologies to study interaction[25], CA has primordially been the approach to figure out the structure and organization of talk-in-interaction, where identities are always in play, across different contexts and disciplines. A review of literature about research methodologies to study interaction in the classroom[26] situates CA as central to examine its organization and structure, and more recently its participants' multiple identities.

The constitution of CA as a methodology to study talk-in-interaction began with published studies by Harvey Sacks[27], Emmanuel Schegloff[28], and Gail Jefferson[29] about interactional sequences in context. They initially studied, for instance, discourse markers, timing, and gestures; openings, sequencing, and closures; routines and episodes; and telling jokes and stories, all in varied ordinary conversations. The foundational techniques of unmotivated inquiry, absence of presupposition, and conversation organization in these first studies positioned CA as a strong methodology to analyze interactional events across contexts and disciplines, which progressively made evident more and more aspects of interaction[30]. These new aspects added to CA further up its theoretical and methodological principles. Mainly, discipline-oriented analysis of talk-in-interaction started considering aspects of social roles, race, gender, class, sexuality, gestures, and body language as part of the interactional phenomena. In addition, contextual rule-based foundations of communication (such as turn taking, utterance units and sequences), cultural practices of language use, and situated language knowledge and attitudes during different types of conversation, provided CA with indexicality to the time, place, and contextual aspects of talk-in-interaction.

25 See for example the reviews done by Schiffrin (1994), Benwell and Stokoe (2006), and Wetherell and Talpade-Mohanty (2010), where scholars have used other research approaches to study interaction and identities such as interactional sociolinguistics, membership categorization analysis, narrative analysis, critical discourse analysis, and ethnography of communication.

26 See for example the reviews done by Hua et al (2007), Sidnell and Stivers (2014), and Markee (2015), where CA is the central approach to study interaction and identities in the classroom.

27 See for example Sacks's studies on conversational materials to study interaction (1972), sequences in telling stories in ordinary conversations (1974), and notes on methodology to study interaction in conversation (1984), among other studies that Harvey Sacks did on interaction in context.

28 See for example Schegloff's studies on sequencing on conversational openings (1968), routines in conversations (1986), the manner to analyze short episodes of interaction (1987b), among other studies that Emmanuel Schegloff did on aspects related to interaction.

29 See for example Jefferson's studies on error correction (1974), the use of 'yeah' and 'mm hm' as interaction acknowledgement (1985), and the organization of troubles-talk in ordinary conversation (1988), among other studies that Gail Jefferson did on aspects about interaction.

30 See a review of other scholars using CA and their main findings across contexts and disciplines in Sidnell & Stivers's (2014) *The Handbook of Conversation Analysis*. In Part IV, there is an account of CA studies in psychotherapy, medicine, classroom, courtroom, and news interview. In Part V, CA is considered within sociology, communication, anthropology, psychology, and linguistics.

In these CA studies across contexts and disciplines, four theoretical principles (Heritage, 1984; Sacks, 1984; Schegloff, 1987b, 2007; Seedhouse, 2005) are followed: (a) talk in interaction has a rational organization; (b) interaction is context-shaped and context-renewing; (c) no order of detail can be dismissed a priori as irrelevant; and, (d) interaction analysis is bottom-up and data-driven. These principles entail a series of methodological procedures (Drew, 2005; Maynard, 2014; Schegloff, 2007; Seedhouse, 2004): the analysis of interactional aspects in conversational events needs to begin with an unmotivated inquiry of talk-in-interaction in context; such inquiry must come absent of presuppositions of how it could be organized and structured, or what are the establishments to be found. Begininig the research study accordingly, should allow for a founding of instances of interactional organization and surrounded aspects of the conversational events for a detailed analysis of the phenomena.

Even though I adhere to these principles of CA to study the reciprocity between classroom interaction and its participants' interactional identities in English-language education, I suggest not using these principles under a unique perspective. The analysis of the interactional aspects and contextual foundations of the ever-flowing currents of interactions, along with with the multiplicity of interactional identities, requires multiple lenses if the situational moments, manners, and reasons of their emergences are to be found. This viewpoint abandons the structural perspective of seeing classroom interaction and interactional roles of its participants from standardized and predicted structures, sequences, directions, models, and roles that have been established in mainstream English-language education literature. I believe that, by keeping this kaleidoscopic perspective, I can explore what teachers and students may situationally be, do, and become as interactants in the co-constructing dynamics of classroom interactions and within the diversity of contexts of English-language education.

Recorded and transcribed data should be analyzed with each observed participant at a time, by also using notes taken during the observations/recordings. The establishment of collections of the transcribed instances of each discovered phenomenon in each observation/recording should have the validation of the observed participant as well. This validation looks for checking and recognizing interactional realizations and practices in the transcribed instances also from the observed participant. In this perspective, there should be a constant co-analysis of the transcribed instances of each phenomenon between the observed participant and the researcher with the

aim of exploring the participant's interactional identities and their enactments within the transcribed instances of each discovered phenomenon in each recording.

The collection of the participant's interactional identities should be presented to them so that to understand their *manners* and reasons for enacting in a particular way within each sequence. This is something that requires, from the observed participant, a constant check of the researcher's interpretations on the reported interactional identities and their enactments. This constant check should also seek to find out how the reported interactional identities and their enactments may relate to the co-construction of the classroom interaction in the observed sessions. These considerations to study interactional identities within classroom interaction in English-language education includes the participant, not only as the observed one, but also as a co-analyst of his/her own interactions and roles in the classroom.

Conclusion

As I have discussed above, during classroom interaction, teachers and students may take on, be assigned, and challenge fluid, multiple, and multifaceted interactional identities as they co-construct classroom interaction. At the same time, this co-construction of classroom interaction demands from its participants the enactment of interactional identities through multiple realizations. The situatedness, fluidity, and reciprocity of this phenomenon fill classroom interaction and interactional identities with different warps, interlaces, and threads. If this phenomenon were to be studied only under a structural perspective of CA, and only under the researcher's perspective, just the warps, interlaces, and threads of the fluidity and reciprocity of classroom interaction and interactional identities visible to those perspectives would be accounted. This situation would leave other aspects (such as characteristics, manners, and reasons of their situatedness, fluidity, and reciprocity, and the interactants' viewpoints), which are also part of the phenomenon, unnoticed. As if *they were not there*.

The overall purpose of this chapter has never been to institute CA as the unique research methodology to study classroom interaction in unison with its participants' interactional identities in English-language education. Following only one research methodology definitely cancels out other possibilities

to seeing these or some other matters under a different light. As discussed throughout this chapter, reciprocity has not yet been studied. The research proposal that I have outlined here intends to dig into it with the purpose to supporting that teachers and students' interactional identities (or roles) must preferably be seen from the *"who"* its participants are and do, in reciprocity with the manner how classroom interaction is co-constructed within varied situations and contexts.

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8. Towards A Decolonial Project: A Quest between ELT Colonial Ideologies in the ELTP[31] and the Interrelations among Its Subjects

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Introduction

In this chapter, I intend to describe and reflect upon the colonial mechanisms that are reflected in some ELT colonial ideologies and practices, which are also extended to the ELTP. I will also portray some of the tensions that arise when framing a decolonial research methodology as a result of the Western research practices where we have been immersed. Finally, I will advocate for a research path to collectively[32] understand and analyze the senses of the ETLP under a decolonial perspective and methodology. Such purpose might be accomplished through decolonial hybrid narratives (Díaz, 2015; Walsh, 2013); identifying the locus of enunciation of those who live the reality of the teaching practicum, finding contradictions, walking, dialoguing, and historicizing *possibles and plurals* of the pedagogical experience where I recognize myself as a teacher-researcher, all form part of what I seek to better understand.

After I attended some key graduate seminars offered by the Doctorate Program[33], including *Taking Stock on Decolonial Options* (Professor Castañeda), *Critical Pedag*ogy (Professor Guerrero), and *Subjects in Education* (Professor Méndez), and have listened to some of the most prominent decolonial thinkers nowadays, such as Linda Alcoff, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, Ramón Grosfoguel, Oyebumi Oyeronke, and Sabelo, at the *Decolonizing Knowledge and Power* summer school last year in Barcelona, I found myself shaked by

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31   In this chapter, ELTP stands for English Language Teaching Practicum
32   In this research study, pre-service teachers, school teachers and university mentors are my companion travelers.
33   Doctorado Interinstitucional en Educación, DIE.

deep emotions, insights and tensions. Some of my most pressing questions at the moment were: who I have become; who I am; and, who I will be as an English teacher educator-researcher [34] who goes through a continuous path to becoming more sensitive to the reality of our contexts, while at the same time faces those challenges related to critically seek for deeper understandings and reconceptualization of ELT from a more situated perspective, along with our students and colleagues and within our educational communities.

Constructing a decolonial project in the ELTP has become an arduous but valuable research endeavor. To me, as a teacher, research is a learning experience that has impacted our educational views and has provoked transformative actions which have transcended the mere academic exercises. It also nourishes and informs our educational, social, cultural, and political practices, as it embraces different forms to enrich our understanding of situations or events that take place in our daily encounters with students and colleagues in our local communities.

As a teacher-researcher who loves her work, I feel passionate about contributing to the formation process of both pre-service & in-service English teachers in our Colombian public universities. However, more importantly than that, is to contribute to my academic, personal, and familiar growth; such growth should be reflected not only in the alternative ways that I already have envisioned for language pedagogy, research, and challenges overcoming, but also on the person I am becoming, which according to Maldonado-Torres (2017) is the one of three major areas of decoloniality, *the who I am*: a person still working on my own constructing and reconstructing, which has taken me to self-reflect on what is implicated for an ELT arena that has been conformed and is still normalized based on Western practices. The remaining two key areas of decoloniality, i.e. executing scholarship and theorizing; and, community activism, are the areas that, from a Global South perspective, need to be put into relation to address thoughts, spirits, and practices, thus leading to understanding decoloniality as an attitude and as a project (Maldonado-Torres, 2017).

Based on the above, being a teacher-researcher becomes an enlightening and enjoyable process that at the same time is highly challenging because of

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34   I use the term <u>educator</u> to claim that we are language educators, because our profession goes beyond teaching a language. It embraces the holistic formation provided to our students along their academic processes at school and university levels.

the coloniality present today in our educational system[35]. To a great extent, coloniality contrives and develops an instrumental relationship between theory and practice, thus becoming something that we need to resist and react against. In this regard, Grosfoguel (2007, cited in Lamus, 2007) claims that the dominant ideologies did not disappear but remained subalternized, and that now, with the crisis of eurocentrism, are the source from which the subjects who have suffered the colonial wound are epistemically mobilized against the system. (p. 329). The above entails that a *research* coloniality that prevents us from the confrontation between the Westernized ideologies and our realities are startled by the contingencies that hang around our societies (Walsh, 2013).

As already mentioned, in this paper I intend to: describe and reflect upon the colonial mechanisms that reflect dominant ideologies and practices[36] in ELT, extended to the ELTP; portraying how these colonial situations could be addressed from a decolonial research perspective will form part of the discussion; also, throughout this chapter, I will share my views regarding some epistemological and emotional tensions within the process, the influence of critical pedagogy, and the decolonial turn in the construction and deconstruction of my research project.

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35   For Castro-Gómez & Grosfoguel (2007), "we attend to a global coloniality, a process that certainly has transformed the forms of domination deployed by modernity, but not the structure of center-periphery relations at a global scale that maintains the periphery in a subordinate position" (p. 13). Such coloniality is portrayed in the neoliberal framework in Colombia through the institution called COLCIENCIAS. It apparently supports research through the strengthening of a scientific, technological, and innovative capacity and competitiveness, while providing training to researchers in our country. However, it focuses its attention mainly on measuring research groups, their academic production and researchers while denying diverse formation processes that take place in our universities.

36   *Practices* dominated by a technocratic approach that emphasizes "mastering subject areas and methods of teaching well documented… that conceives the standardization of school knowledge in the interest of managing and controlling it … and which devalues the teacher work reducing him/her as an 'executor' of the laws and principles of effective teaching (Giroux, p. 123).

Towards a Decolonial Horizon: Recognizing ELTP Colonial Ideologies and Practices

Decoloniality is not a project of returning back to the past, but a present project looking towards the future. So when you try to think from 'traditions', what is happening is that you are using that 'Other' epistemology or cosmology to resignify the present in that 'Other' direction. There is no return to a pure pas"[37].
(Grosfoguel, 2007)

A decolonial horizon embraces the recognition of the coloniality expressed through the only valid knowledge recognized by Western thinking, thus abating those other ways of knowing pertaining to the local people and their contexts. It encompasses the deconstruction of our understandings of Modernity, which has been a historical expression of Western rationality. (Zavala, 2016). This entails that the research program Modernity/coloniality (Escobar, 2003; Castro-Gómez and Grosfoguel, 2007) as described by Díaz (2010), is therefore "a critical interest in understanding and questioning the historical processes that resulted in, and that still maintain coloniality as a logic of domination, exclusion, hierarchy,imposition and legitimization of certain subjects, practices and knowledges, on *others* whose nature has been historically segregated, and minimized"[38] (p. 219).

Coloniality[39]is a matter of power that controls individuals or groups in their own territories and over other individuals; it seems to be constant in Western practices. Such coloniality, as stated by Mignolo (2007), refers to the manner how some Western knowledge systems are privileged over some others. Western knowledge, thus, cannot be assumed as something good or bad; I would say that it should be seen as valid to some extent, but potentially

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37   My own translation from Spanish.

38   Ibid.

39   The term coloniality refers to the continuity of colonial forms of domination after the end of colonial administration (Grosfoguel 2007, Maldonado- Torres, 2007). As an example, for Quijano (2005, cited in De Sousa, 2018), "coloniality of knowledge (as of power) continues to be fundamentally instrumental in expanding and reinforcing the oppressions caused by capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy" (p.23).

restrictive, constituting blindness to the other forms of seeing, being and knowing in this Global South.

An implication of the above for our field, is the need to recognize the presence of coloniality as ideological foundation that is evident, as Phillipson (2003) highlights, in the pillars upon which ELT was built. It also expresses the colonial dynamics of the English language, specifically the unanalyzed experience of teaching it, and the theoretical disciplines that were considered relevant to language teaching in the endeavor of spreading out English language. This may represent a subalternity underlined on the neoliberal practices that are now ruling educational and —therefore— language policies in our context[40]; such, according to Jauretche (2008), are produced in conjunction with a legal statute of imperialist colonialism.

It can be said that English-language coloniality has manifested its presence in several ways: a) accepting that the language to teach and to learn is English over other majority and minority languages in our country as above mentioned; b) accepting only one English-language with the belief that there are few valid varieties of the language that are coming from the core English speaking countries[41]; and, c) understanding, from a cognitive viewpoint, that English learning (and teaching) is merely related to English proficiency, certifying a language level[42] and ignoring the sociocultural and political dimensions embedded when learning a second language. Coloniality also

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40   As an example, in our country these policies have imposed, since 2004, a bilingual program restricted to Spanish and English, with an only-foreign language certification focus, thus marketing standardized tests to demonstrate quality in the desired growth discourse; such practice mostly has been promoted by the neoliberal framework, associated to English as the language in, and for, a globalized world. This certification process is based on the Common European Framework of Reference (2001), which was adopted outside of critical and situated views of our contexts and has also been promulgated through the 2006 National Standards or "Estándares básicos de competencias en lenguas extran-jeras: inglés. Formar en lenguas extranjeras: ¡el reto!" (Basic Standards for Competences in Foreign Languages: English. Teaching in Foreign Languages: The Challenge!). These national standards have been called as of 2016, "Derechos Básicos de Aprendizaje de Inglés" (Basic English Learning Rights of English).

41   These countries correspond to what Kachru, (1985, cited in Phillipson, 2003, p. 17) has called 'the inner circle' countries where English is the native language: Britain, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand), the outer circle (countries where English is a second language), and the expanding circle (countries where English is learned as a foreign language). However, in the illustration Mackay (2009) makes of Kachru's model, our country Colombia is not considered yet in the expanding circle; in fact, just a few Latin American countries are.

42   This coloniality is present when ELT is reduced only to an instrumental practice that seems to be normalized in this contemporary age of "standardized" education (Magrini, 2014). What matters is English Certification, and curriculums and pedagogical practices rely on it. This is precisely what happens with the Basic English Learning Rights and suggested curriculum launched by the Minis-try of Education. This has to do with the form through which the government (I refer to Colombia) demonstrates and controls results.

includes following the teaching methods and textbooks that have intended to homogenize ELT classroom practices, learnings and interactions; such methods have been widely theorized and reproduced, and are still perpetuated as if all territories and their peoples were the same, had the same experiences, expectations and concerns[43]; it also entails believing in language certification as the only form to demonstrate that people speak a second language, expecting them to have a near-native like control. These situations have definitely maintained the limited and naturalized practices expanded by *Western* thinking.

In this context, the teaching practicum has also inherited a colonial legacy that regards it as a period for transfering knowledge and skills from the school context, hence reducing and normalizing the encounters with students and teachers within the didactic process in the ELT classrooms[44]; that is because such colonial legacy is mostly rooted on the theories that have been constructed by *experts* in the inner circle of the Global North. I would say that colonialist theories have had an excessive contribution to a profession that most of the time is taken for granted, while have clearly influenced second language teaching and learning policies, thus turning them into the technical discourses to which teachers in the field have been exposed.

Some questions that emerge when identifying the colonial legacy in ELT and ELTP, are: Are we controlling ELT? What are we controlling? Are we being controlled? How does it happen? Are we just marketing English and English teaching practices? Can we think about different ways of interpretation? While planning my research project, I came to identify some colonial mechanisms that need to be revealed when attempting to address these questions.

First, pre-service teachers' objectification in the ELTP relates to the ways how sometimes they are seen during this stage, when a monolithic conception of the ELTP and the school structures does not allow learning and teaching reflectively; the same can be said about school and university mentors who tell pre-service teachers what to do, how, when, and where to do it. ELT's voices are heard only to report on what they have been requested to do: lesson planning, materials design, assessment and evaluation practices in the classroom, report of classes, and reflections on these instructional practices.

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43   It is not my intention to deny the contributions of Western thinking. However, these contributions have been universalized without considering the particularities of our contexts. That has transformed those contributions into the creation of standard processes and actions that originate ineffective visions of what ELT should be and determine an only- method-perspective.

44   When addressing the didactic dimension, I value its contributions and the need to reposition it within pedagogy. However, in our field it seems to restrict the whole holistic process.

This objectification suggests the ELTP as a place devoted to didactic skills and operative aspects of ELT, inhabiting a space that restricts them from moving to alternative options, thus revealing a homogenizing purpose of learning and teaching English in the ELTP. Once again, coloniality is present to instruct us to be submissive, conformist and passive technicians (Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Crandall, 2000).

Second, teaching and learning, in and for a globalized world, deal with how the ELT field might be reduced to the instrumental practice of language certification. This instrumental rationality is also a concern in initial language teacher education programs, for which the educational policy[45] requires pre-service English teachers to demonstrate a C1 level in accordance with the Common European Council of Europe; that is extended to student-teachers in other areas, who will have to evidence an A2 level within a two-year timeframe, followed by demonstrating a B1 or higher level from the third year after implementing the Licensure Programs Restructuring Process. In addition to it, the technocratic conception of the pedagogical experience[46] imbued in this educational policy, clearly illustrates, as mentioned previously, the development of standardizations of knowledge[47] and practices with the purpose of controlling teachers' work, values and actions, i.e. how people in general think in the particular case of ELT.

A third key colonial mechanism are the contradictions that we, teachers, face on a daily basis, mainly because mentors claim to be involved in transformations that challenge these colonial practices; yet, sometimes the ELTP remains the same, maintaining a single focus on the instructional dimension of English-language teaching due to the demands of language policies in our context such as those already mentioned.

Fourth, Western textbooks, and Western practices included on those textbooks rely mainly on acknowledging their geographical contexts and

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45 *Resolución 18583 de 2017* emanated by the Ministry of Education.

46   On my view, the conception of the pedagogical experience in this educational policy relies only on the technical expertise (knowing only the what and how to teach). It denies the socio critical and cultural perspectives of education and pedagogy that public Faculties of Education in Colombia, such as the one at Universidad Distrital, have historically and contextually been constructing. This has taken place through the research, pedagogical, disciplinary, and ethical-political holistic fields of formation at Universidad Distrital, in the need to prepare future teachers to examine the real school contexts, going beyond the language of management and efficiency. This is what Giroux (1988) calls *management pedagogies*.

47   Standardized has to do with what Magrini (2014) calls *social effiency*: learning as something to be reproduced, demonstrated, and/or controlled, objectifying language, language teaching and our profession as stated in the global tendencies in education.

people idyosincracies, thus feauturing only a possible way of being as an English speaker, including how to look like, how to sound like[48], and most importantly depicting only few ways of living that hardly portray the reality of our contexts, our people, and our life practices. Unfortunately, such industry of textbooks dislocate our practices to perpetuate their use, forgetting that our country, our ways of transportation, our schools, our homes, and our ways of speaking are also valuable and give us meaning as Colombians.

Fifth, pre-service teachers are not alone in their teaching practicum. Both their school and university mentors influence the forms how the ELTP has been conceived and developed within the school context. For Medina (2015), the school is situated at a space where the educator plays out his/her dynamism and multiplicity of options, which are configured as part of the projects to educate the new generations. In this sense, school is a place of resistances and disputes, of articulations and differences, of cultural and identity transformation mediated by the word of the *other*. Henceforth, there are some individual and collective subjectivities[49] that often are trapped or denied because of the instrumental rationality assumed to educate pre-service teachers. Interpreting the senses of the ELTP and the intersubjective relationship between its subjects and its institutions has become my major concern. It is important to recognize how the coloniality of knowing, being and power in ELT has been reflected in the ELTP, so that to break the enduring structure of the Western thinking model that has been integrated into the neoliberal contexts we live in; yet, we also need to challenge that.

Based on the above, we cannot deny that to some extent, ELT has been reduced to a very technical and colonial field, where the purpose is to teach and/or learn English because of the socio-economic demands of neoliberalism[50]. This is evident in Tollefson's analyzes of the hegemony of English by means of introducing a paradox: "At a time when English is widely seen as a key to the economic success of nations and the economic well-

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48   Although it is not my intention to discuss racial issues in English-language teaching yet, I think that we need to reconceptualize the role and relationship of language, race, and coloniality.

49   On my viewpoint, subjectivities are intertwined in what the decolonial turn calls *different ways of being and doing* to understand the self, the lived experience and the world, while intersubjectivities are those interrelations between people to interpret the meaning of social situations. In this regard, Mignolo (2005) challenges the coloniality of being when claiming that "nothing else than producing the idea that certain people do not belong to history—that they are non-beings. Thus, lurking beneath the European story of discovery are the histories, experiences, and silenced conceptual narratives of those who were disqualified as human beings, as historical actors, and as capable of thinking and understanding." (p.4)

50   A neoliberalism that has focused on three fundamental aspects: Political economy of educational financing; links between education and work, and standards of academic excellence. (Mayo, 2015)

being of individuals, the spread of English also contributes to significant social, political, and economic inequalities" ((2000, cited in Pennycook, 2007 p. 17). This implies that, even though English has been seen as a language of global communication in several areas, the obstacle, most of the time, relies only on English proficiency and has serious implications for its teaching and learning process.

Identifying these issues leads me to affirm that we, English teachers, have been denied being ourselves, because the nature of our profession has been conceived by Western thought. We have forgotten about ourselves as we have been subjected to Westernized theories. We have not thought about English-language teaching from our local perspectives. Therefore, the ELTP replicates these models where the possibility for subjectivities and intersubjectivities of the actors of the ELTP has not been given the chance to be voiced[51]. In this regard, Alcoff (2007), suggests a White ignorance that undermines who we are in order to serve the Global North. This author also questions how ignorance[52], as an epistemic practice in itself, is present when it does not recognize: a) that the knowers in *subalternity* are situated in time and space, with specific social locations, specific practices that are consistent with their contexts, and the specific features of groups of knowers; and, b) that oppressive systems do not acknowledge themselves as oppressive. From these ideas, I would ask some other questions to be reflected upon in the ELT field: Who has the sovereignty over English and English-language teaching? Can we think about critical movements thinking of the subjects of the teaching practicum in a different perspective?

To dismantle these issues, we might start with the *possibles and plurals*[53] of the pedagogical experiences, where language is: a) a means for students and teachers to locate their understandings about the world; b) a pedagogical practice oriented more towards the recognition of diversity and aspects influencing students' lives and relationships, as we all feel, think and act differently; and, c) a pedagogical pluralism that empowers teachers to trust in what they do as new understandings, new ways of being, knowing and doing. There is not only one way, but multiple ones (Samacá, 2018).

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51 Voicing is not simply about giving voice to those who are invisible; it's about talking about me, us, them, and with them, because we have a meeting point and several partial connections.

52   This epistemic practice is called by Mills (2007) *White ignorance* and declares that it implies the possibility of a contrasting *knowledge*, a contrast that would be lost if all claims to truth were equally spurious, or just a matter of competing discourses. It is a White ignorance that is not confined to white people but is used by "No-Whites to a greater or lesser extent because of the power relations and patterns of ideological hegemony involved" (p. 22).

53   I use this term to refer to one's own pedagogies as different from the universal ones.

Thus, decolonizing knowledge, as the epistemological stance underpinning my research interest on interpreting the senses of the ELTP and the interrelations among its subjects, implies that the diversity of the world is infinite, and that there are multiple ways of knowing, being and doing both in our world or worlds that are not visible to Western thinking; it also states that coloniality of power, being and knowing, has been assumed as dynamics of the social oppression present in subtle ways; such oppresion is not easy to recognize and should be resisted against while in the processes of teaching and learning that play out in the lives of these *other*[54] students. (Kumashiro, 2000).

Devising alternative ways of knowing, being and doing[55] is something that implies dialogue and confrontation between the Global North and Global South, which bring us back to the possibilities of those *other* perspectives that remain subalternized; these *other* perspectives might become the inspiring source for those, including myself, who have suffered that colonial wound and mobilize epistemically against the system (Grosfoguel, p. 329). In the same line of thought, decoloniality for Mignolo (2012) "relates to the processes through which those who do not accept to be dominated and controlled do not only work to get rid of coloniality, but also to construct social, local and world organizations that are not submissive and controlled" (p. 148).

Then, the ELTP can not only be viewed as a period to transfer knoledge and skills acquired within the school context, but also as a process of understanding, teaching and learning; a time of formation; yet also a time of transformation. Pre-service teachers come to this stage with several expectations, where they make connections with their previous experiences as English language learners, the relations they engage in while attending university courses, as well as the kind of teachers they would like to become. Literature has placed attention on these processes; however, from my experience, understanding that the ELTP is co-constructed among its subjects, their subjectivities and intersubjectivities, is something that needs deep analyses and reflections in order to give meaning to their locations, relationships, and actions towards the ELTP. The process of dismantling power matrices of coloniality necessarily embodies a decolonial attitude that considers emotions, feelings, and our senses to decolonize our minds and practices.

54 Kumashiro (2000) explains that "the term *other* refers to those groups that are traditionally marginalized in society" (p. 26).

55 For Restrepo & Rojas (2010), ways of knowing, being and power connect with the decolonial inflection, understood in broad terms as the critical thoughts that seek to transform the conditions in which Eurocentrism and the coloniality in the world system undermine human beings *(coloniality of being)*, marginalize and invisibilizethe plurality of knowledge *(coloniality of knowledge)* and hierarchize human groups and places in a global power pattern for their exploitationfor the sake of the expanded accumulation of capital *(coloniality of power)*.

Towards a Decolonial Research Path: Mapping Hybrid Narratives

It is necessary to 'deconstruct' what has been thought,
to think what to think, to unravel the most endearing of our knowledge
and to give course to the unprecedented,
risking derailing our latests certainties
and to question the building of Science.
Enrique Leff (2006)[56]

In this second part of this chapter, I will describe and reflect upon some tensions in the Western research visions that I detected when attempting to locate and map out a methodology for my research journey. As an advocate of the decolonial perspective, I will also describe my initial conceptualization to develop decolonial hybrid narratives as a research path to collectively[57] understand and analyze the senses of the ETLP.

Noticing that sometimes our language-teaching practices have been limited to the discipline, i.e. to the linguistic dimensions of the language along with its didactic dimension, and consequently have responded to the standards of globalization that come from the outside, thus imposing Western ways of knowing and researching in ELT, I have come to identify what has become an emotional and epistemological tension when situating my research interest and the roles of those who would intervene in it. The quote from Leff (2006) at the beginning of this section made me engage in self-reflections about the qualitative research development in the last 20 years: it has moved from instructional aspects of teaching, to situated teaching and learning practices and social, cultural, critical, and political issues that emerge in our educational contexts. It has also moved from positivist to critical forms of conducting research studies, considering diverse frameworks that have been widely discussed and implemented across multiple research experiences in international and local contexts.

A handful of viewpoints have been developed within the qualitative research mindframe, so the actual tension sits on how to conceive a research path that could support the purpose of the decolonial project when we were and

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56 The translation is mine from the original text in Spanish titled "Más allá de la interdisciplinariedad, Racionalidad ambiental y diálogo de saberes" (p.2).

57   In this research study, pre-service teachers, school teachers and university mentors are my companion travelers.

still are questioning the Western paradigms. The apparent contradiction here is necessary to find common grounds for what the research literature has proposed and what decolonial perspective intends to unveil. This has been not a personal, but a collective concern shared by my PhD partners and professors at the Doctorate Program. We have held long and interesting dialogues, which might have fallen into controversies at times, regarding research, its purpose in education, the relationality between teacher researchers and those who will be involved in our projects, etc. Our field, a place for struggle and options, has a potential to become quicksand; yet, we did not want to get pulled under. Instead, this quicksand has timidly pushed us to unravel the great extend to which we had been submissive to the images of researcher/researched that Western tradition imposed, the rigor of its methodological protocols, and the linear times and neutrality to follow (De Sousa, 2018).

When I began working on this research project, I assumed that I would conduct a poststructuralist study. This meant that I had the expectation that the existing research frameworks pertaining to this perspective would be helpful to my study. Indeed, I devoted some time to document my research concerns, and spent long time conceptualizing and establishing theoretical relationships between such epistemological stance and research methodologies focused mostly on the complexities of the particular people, places, events and processes under the framework. However, since I had struggled to define the purpose of my research interest, I had not been able to establish the categories I wanted to analyze in my project. Therefore, unexpectedly I found myself moving more and more towards the purposeful insightful search for decoloniality. Through it, I started finding a deeper comprehension of what happened in the ELTP. I must say that as a language teacher educator I have been involved in teaching practicum processes in different universities and schools. I feel passionate about contributing to the personal and professional formation of pre-service teachers. Likewise, being at the school with English teachers and their students is what has provoked and nurture my views on the significance of understanding the senses of the ELTP through the experiences we live at the school contexts so that to start thinking about possibilities for an ELTP *other*.

The above is not to say that interesting and useful contributions could not have been achieved by focusing more exclusively and in greater depth on the poststructuralist framework, but tensions within this view remained unresolved. On an occasion when my partners, my professor, and I, were debating research issues in our research seminars, one of them made me realize that I was facing an emotional tension because I was closer to the

critical decolonial perspective than to the poststructuralist. I regarded her comment insightful. Along with the ideas of my research professors and my mentor, such insights led me to decide situating my study under the decolonial view, within a more relational, human and collective praxis that is dynamic and developmental, and should portray modes of being, doing and knowing that would remain undisclosed otherwise.

My inner voice advised me to continue my readings to guide my reflections about how the Global North invisibilizes and dehumanizes the possibility to be (for example) a decolonial English teacher in my own project. Such, because within Global North rationality, the relationality amongst ELTP subjects is often times regarded as no relevant in the process of learning, teaching and becoming a teacher, while its monolithic discourses around the ELTP objectify the voices and limit the practices of pre-service teachers, school and university mentors. Following Mignolo (2009), "a decolonial project should be participative, interactive and emancipatory, and of course, ethical."

As discussed, thinking about *research ways* from a decolonial perspective has been a struggle, as well as challenge to understand, from a local perspective "the possibility to dialogue about the Western epistemic traditions localized within their canons, with the local ones thought from a pluriversal epistemology that dialogues with the diverse ways how knowledge is constructed and co-constructed in extra academic and extra-scientific spaces" (Walsh, 2013, p. 449). Thus, the idea of conducting a qualitative research study with different lenses, entails an epistemological detachment from traditional to critical perspectives, confronting the intersections and tensions between the Global North and the decolonial alternatives; that should bridge a research path leading towards understanding the senses of the ELTP through the interrelations constructed in the experiences and practices of pre-service teachers, school teachers and university mentors.

Giving to ourselves (within my research study) the possibility to think about our own selves under broader and new perspectives, is something that would produce resonances to problematize the coloniality of the teaching practicum. Indeed, multiple frameworks should come from our locus of enunciation to retrieve the silenced, the denied, the trapped, thus re-envisioning the ELTP from its margins, and dialogically constructing decolonial ways to being, knowing, and doing within the ELTP. It should help us out of the system that has been imposed on us (Mignolo 2019), by the Western framed knowledge that has limited us to fixed categories.

I intend to use a decolonizing research methodology that is rooted on hybrid narratives. A collective participatory qualitative path will be developed through *relatos* as dialogical and reflective way to understand and analyze the senses of the ELTP. To approach decolonial narratives, I will start by asserting that I respect and value the contributions and reflections constructed through Narrative Inquiry so far. This perspective admits that through narratives we give accounts of the ways we experience and perceive our worlds. As Brunner (2000) has contended, "It is through our own stories that we mainly build a version of ourselves in the world" (p.15). Understanding that we construct meaning through language, Connelly & Clandinin (1990) assert that "human beings are storytelling organisms who, individually and socially, lead storied lives. Thus, the study of narrative is the study of the ways humans experience the world" (p.2). In this regard, Ricoeur (2001) affirms that "the narrative structures the experience"; therefore, it allows us to share both the lived experience and the meaning we give to what we have lived.

It is necessary to envision ways to mobilize the field, and to think of a more situated perspective of narratives (hybrid narratives as described by Díaz, 2015 and Walsh, 2013), "to decolonize our stories, situating our objectivity in a network of delocalized relationships and fragmented identities" (Balash & Montenegro, 2003, cited in Díaz, 2015, p. 57). This approach should lead us to expressing from a locus of enunciation where we recognize ourselves as a part of all what we intend to understand ("I am where I think", Mignolo, 2005). Narratives can be memories[58] to denounce the ELTP totalizing content; they can give an account of a territory, which in this particular case would be the school context. Some narratives may be refered to as silenced narratives, where identities and subjectivities are trapped or denied; some other narratives might historicize the intergenerational dialogue to experience the teaching practicum, the school, the subjects and subjectivities in these territories; yet, some others might be narratives of accuracy, exclusion, and marginalization that denounce silences. Rather than becoming a voice to make visible what is invisible, (Walsh, 2013) *relatos* are about listening to co-construct alternative ways of thinking the ELTP based on all the subjects that interact in this scenario. In the same line of thought, Haraway (1995) suggests *situated knowledge* to transcend the homogenizing vision of the Western hegemonic sciences, and to locate narratives as the possibilities to

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58   For Gómez (2015) "the memory of the community incorporated in the tasks of everyday life and thinking about it, opens the exercise of transmission to the reception of the legacy and the reinvention of inheritance without undermining the desire to be someone different, without ignoring or denying the other's demand" (p. 15). This enfolds the space for pre-service teachers, school and university mentors to subvert the coloniality of ELT represented in the ELTP.

build on the experiences constructing a memory that dialogues in silence with other memories.

It is through dialogues that *relatos* in my research study will be constructed. They should allow us, my companion travelers and me, to enter in a participative dialogue that would intend to compose a multidimensional narrative going and coming back from the individual to the collective. Thus, the partialities of our views indeed will be ackowlendging the need to interact with other partialities (Haraway, 1995). Hence, our *relatos* will be not only giving voice to those who are invisible, but will also talk about me, about us, about them, and with them, because we shall have found a meeting point and several partial connections, i.e. we all shall have been *knowing subjects* (Vasilachis, 2009). Accordingly, these relatos would have a *responsive* character; they will not speak to us *about* the subjects themselves but should speak to us *through* a network of stories arising from the relationships and partial connections of those who write them.

Relatos give an account of complex realities in a language that experiences *other* grammars to recognize the coloniality in daily encounters with the ELTP, as well as the power relations between who asks and who responds in a way that prevents relationships from domination. Narratives are a collective construction of mutual and distinct understandings, where the texts are rewritten and modified by their authors. As mentioned above, *relatos* articulate memory, with entries into the past as well as into the present and the future; they are stories that constitute us as subjects of our own stories, and lead us to understand our practices, knowledge, and uncertainties. (Guzmán, Delgadillo & Pérez, 2015).

For Balash and Montenegro (2003, cited in Díaz, 2015), "the narrative productions are a tool that allows us to decolonize our stories, situating our objectivity in a network of de-localized relationships and fragmented identities" (p. 57). Hence, narratives can be memories that denounce their totalizing content, rather than becoming the voice itself to make visible what is invisible; narratives are about listening to create lternative ways of thinking, which in the case of my research project, the ELTP, means creating such alternative thinking *from* all the subjects that interact in this scenario. For Vega (2001, cited in Walsh, 2013), the voice, the experience, the identity, and the history of the subaltern in the narratives is significant to vindicate the peripheral localities.

Decolonial Remarks

*Hemos sido colonizados por las narrativas de la exactitud, por la
linealidad de la existencia que se va desarrollando por etapas que deben
ser superadas a toda costa para poder llegar a ser. En esta medida, el
error es un sacrilegio que se paga a costos sociales elevados, bajo la mirada
ampliada por la lupa de la censura y el estigma que no escatiman
nada para adjetivar a quien falta a la norma. Los miedos nos rondan
a cada instante, desenvainando sin recato su daga de lo prohibido, es
decir, de la imposibilidad de faltarle a la certeza y a la estabilidad, de
cumplirle a lo previsible en desmedro de lo misterioso, de lo fantástico,
de lo irremediablemente desconocido…*

*We have been colonized by the narratives of accuracy,
by the linearity of existence that is to be phased and should be
overcome at all costs in order to become. To this extent, the
error is a sacrilege that is paid at high social costs, under the gaze
expanded by the magnifying glass of censorship and stigma that do not skimp on
nothing to adjectivize to those who break the norm. Fears haunt us
at every instant, unscrupulously drawing his dagger from the forbidden, that is to
say,
from the impossibility of lacking certainty and stability,
from fulfilling the predictable at the expense of the mysterious,
of the fantastic,
of the hopelessly unknown ...
(Katherine Walsh, 2013)*

Conclusion

As mentioned in the first part of this paper, engaging in the project of decoloniality entails both an attitude and a project. It implicates two basic premises: colonialism as a fundamental problem, and the decolonial as an imperative task. The decolonial attitude is an orientation that promotes re-formation of decolonial understanding, including decolonial critique in the relations with others. Attitude and a collective project encompass a change in the way we ask questions, an attitude to let us be involved in work towards the others, to encounter others, to start with the individual but to continue with the collective (Maldonado-Torres, 2017). Thus, it is significant to think of hybrid narratives as options to address the multidimensionality of the subjectivities and intersubjectivities of the ELTPC.

I intend to construct an understanding of ELTP narratives, from the *possibles and plurals* of the cultural, social, linguistic experiences, and within those *possible other* methodologies that we cannot recognize but might reinterpret hybrid narratives as alternatives to comprehend the visions of the world in a way that co-constructs and reconstructs subjectivities and intersubjectivities. This decision should clearly reflect my research position and my commitment as a teacher–researcher and university mentor who intends to deconstruct critically ELTP *from and within* all ELTP subjects. This research path should enable us to transform knowledge in an attempt to break with the generalizing patterns that, ignoring our particularities, we might have used to refer to the English language teacher and English language learner as a kind of drawer where we all should fit. It also constitutes an insightful way to uncover teachers' subjectivities constructed from their experiences and practices and how they might transform their views and practices in the ELT profession. Using Professor Castaneda's words, convergences and divergences can bring complexity and richness to the construction of new forms of meaning regarding our realities as English language educators. I am starting a journey I believe in, and I will defend my right to be myself as well as to believe in who I am as a Colombian English teacher educator and researcher who advocates for a professional yet sensitive view towards language education praxis.

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9. *Palabrear* the Colombian ELT Field: A Decolonial Approach for the Study of Colombian Indigenous EFL Teachers' Identities

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Introduction

I believe in the pursuit of building up a bridge to overcome the knower-known epistemologic separation nested in positivism (Semali, & Kincheloe, 1999). I also believe that historicity can be the rigth tool to build it. Historicity plays a pivotal role in identifying the locus of enunciation of either, an individual who might be interested in conducting research or a person interested only in sharing an informed opinion. Under the umbrella of these two foundational beliefs, I do not adhere to the idea of *mere* historicity of the concepts (Grünner, 2006), while I do not consider history as a lineal and progressive thread that brings us naturally to the present. On the contrary, I regard it as discontinuous and multiple. Perhaps most importantly, I do not believe that universality is an atribute of history; in fact, I see it as rather particular to the cultures of human beings (Moreno, 2000). In this chapter, I intend to establish my locus of enunciation with the hope that it could also add meaning to who I am as a researcher, similarly to how their loci of enunciation allowed Semali and Kincheloe's (1999) to ethically commit to their research study. However, aspects that seem to be as evident as my ethnicity, have become untraceable within the determinism of what Chaves and Zambrano (2006) called *la nación mestiza* (the mixed nation), as well as within the dominant collective imagination of the Colombian population and its genetic and ideological construction that still leads positioning and contestation practices around race and racialization. The *mestizo* identity conveys the supra-ethnic homogeneity, and, simultaneously, heterogeneity and conflict; that is because of the many ways of being *mestizo*, as well as the

practices of exclusion and subjugation in the (re)construction of *the other*, be it women, the Indigenous, the black/dark, or the poor (Olarte & Díaz, 2014).

Following this still-blurry ethnic positioning, which is already surrounded by all kinds of uncertainties, I would need to resort to the professional dimension of my identity in order to intertweave *the narrative* with *the positioning of the self* as a locus of enunciation. I am an English-language teacher and teacher educator pursuing a PhD degree in education. I am well aware that the discourses of academia have traditionally pretended to be color-blinded, and have been positivistic with the intention to show objectivity and universalism. I am also aware that my professional field, the ELT (English Language Teaching) can be instrumentalized as a mechanism of colonial difference, as López- Gopar and Sughrua (2014) have claimed for the case of México, and that even well-intended constructs in education (such as the case of minority education), can play a role in perpetuating social, linguistic, and ontological asymmetries while also becoming accomplices of linguistic genocide (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2001). I am, too, aware of the fact that, as Cajigas and Rotundo (2007) discussed, scholars political positioning of solidarity when conducting ethnographic research with non-dominant ethnic groups, would welcome the alternative ontologies and epistemologies of the *border beings* (Dussel, 2013) a term used in decolonial literature to refer to beings that embody apparently oppositional identities. In this sense, it is pivotal to listen to *the others*, acknowledging both, their epistemic rights (Mignolo, 2009), and their epistemic priveleges (Dussel, 2013), while committing the self to decolonial research projects about life and its problems.

I work as an English-language teacher, and teacher educator in Colombia, a country where at least 70 languages or dialects are sopken: Spanish (Castillian), and 69 native languages. About 65 of such native languages are Indigenous; two are Creole (Palenquero from San Basilio and Creole from the San Andrés Archipelago); and the others are Romani, and Colombian sign language (ONIC, 2018). Despite of this diversity, bilingualism is often conceptually treated in the country as an excluding binary practice, mostly reduced to Spanish-English. Binary and exclusive essentialisms *de facto* seem to construct indigenous linguistic diversity as something that is expendable for the nation. That is, in part, because indigenous languages embody the epistemology of the *anthropos* (indigenous cultures), while appear to be of no importance to the modernity of the country, whereas in the particular case of Spanish-English, the mainstream bilingualism becomes linked to the *humanitas* (Modernity), and entitled to dictate the biopolitics of coloniality (Mignolo,

2013). Here, it is imperative to recognize that the binary approach is the result of colonial major narratives in the nation project that, by instrumentalizing the learning of English to the insertion of the country into the global village, generate constraints to the being, the knowing, and the doing of Colombian ELT teachers.

Some of the main narratives in the Colombian ELT field can be understood as paradigmatically framed within positivism and post-positivism that, as De Sousa (2009) claims, result from applying the epistemic principles pertaining to the study of natural phenomena to the study of social phenomena. Examples of such dominant narratives include:

- Quantification as a principle of scientificity. There is a practice of reducing teachers' language knowledge to the *measurable* trait of language proficiency, which allows for the adoption of a quantifying attitude towards teachers, both individually and collectively. Such attitude implies that something as complex as a language is seen from a reductionist and standardizing perspective where the test score is taken as the signifier of a signified (English language) filled with multiple traits that are never going to be embraced by a test.

- A deductive approach where theory informs practice. Often within the field, a determinism of Modernity can be detected, which would favor the recipe, the method, and the technological transformation of reality. There is less emphasis in understanding and more emphasis in transforming.

- Focus on formal cause-effect relations. An inmediate consequence of this is an oblivion of the intention and the agents behind the practices in the field. This implies the reduction of complexity by means of analysis and specialization, the formulation of laws, and the prediction of future phenomena (Aristotle's formal causality), among others, all of that given prevalence to the study of how things work instead of focusing on who is the agent or what are the ultimate goals of actions in the field.

- Ontological configuration of utopic and docile bodies. The practices of learning and teaching English often resort to an ideal speaker. Hence, often times English-language speakers from core English-speaking countries are the ones who become the model from which the norm is constructed to dictate standards of what the usage and the teaching of the language should be. Such establishing of standards is manifested in many different ways, including favoring prototypical English speakers and guaranteeing them better hiring conditions in language-teaching jobs, based only on their *being native*, even

over people who are not English-native but have acquired the formation and experience needed to be English-language teachers.

In the Colombian ELT field, the state of language-teaching policies also favor Anglo-European epistemologies, as much as those discourses and practices that privilege the native English speaking instructions over the non-native speaking teachers (Gómez-Vásquez, & Guerrero Nieto, 2018). The result is a subtle ontological configuration, because teachers might end up trying to sound like the *constructed* idea of a standard native speaker, and resemble every aspect of the native-speakers being, which is utopic. A second consequence to keep in mind, is a symmetric crisis of knowledge-representation; that is because in those countries where English is learned as a foreign language, the knowledge about English-language teaching is often rather consumed than produced; that is, it is imported from the core English-speaking countries, and dictated to the non- native English-language teachers. Tuned with this dynamics, the Colombian ELT teachers are often constructed, even from the official bilingual policy discourses, as deficitary or not fully reliable in terms of their language competence, their language usage, and their teaching. That is something that forces Colombian ELT teachers to permanently attempt to counteract the official and dominant discourses that construct them as unprepared (González, 2007) by means of either being docile to the foreign discourses about English-language teaching or highlighting and strengthening their professional profiles (often also dictated by those Anglo-European epistemologies).

My experience as an educator in the ELT field has allowed me to personally meet (and get involved with differing degrees of interaction) four different English-language teachers who could have been considered a challenge to dominant narratives in the sense described by Mignolo (2013). Actually, they seem to be an embodiment of those epistemic and ontological obediences and disobediences that are often found in our field.

These teachers are: a) an English language teacher who is a member of the Uitoto, Murui- Muinanne native tribe from the Colombian Amazon; after attending school in Bogotá, this teacher returned to his hometown to teach English at the local school. b) a second English-language teacher who is a member of the same Uitoto tribe, who moved to a mayor Colombian city upon completion of his education in Bogotá, where he now teaches English-language to elementary-school children. c) an English-language teacher yet to obtain his degree, who is a Wayuu native, a tribe from Guajira, and has lived most of his life in Bogotá; and, d) an English-language, Muisca teacher yet to complete her education, who is dedicated to contribute to the vindication of

her peoples' rights, while in pursuing such goal she exerts active leadership in re-indigenization, and actively participates in initiatives to rescue her tribe's original language (Muysc Cubun) that originally was spoken in what is now Bogotá and was among the first ones to suffer the factual policies of linguistic genocide of the colony and the republican nationhood. In my view, the existence of English-language teachers who belong to native indigenous tribes, can be understood as resulting from the nationhood project of modernity, and the obediences and disobediences that challenge the homogenizing ontological asymmetries of the nation, which offer horizons to understanding the societal projects and the individual selves that have been just invisibilized. Here is precisely, as Mignolo (2013) proposes, where spaces for the reflection of *border thinking* and *border epistemologies* can be found.

What could do, a person who was not born speaking one of the privileged languages of the world and who was not educated in privileged institutions? Either such person accepts his/her inferiority, or makes an effort to demonstrate that he/she is a human being equal to those who placed him/her as a second class person. That is, two of the choices are to accept the humiliation of being inferior to those who decided that you are inferior, or to assimilate. And, to assimilate means that you admitted your inferiority and accepted to play a game that is not yours but that has been imposed upon you. Border thinking and border epistemology *is* the the third option here (Mignolo, 2013, p. 134).

A study with indigenous ELT teachers (and ELT teachers to be) requires the decolonial inflection (Mignolo, 2009; Grossfoguel, 2006; Maldonado-Torres, 2007) as the lens through which to look at the stances of epistemic violence exerted towards their ontologies. Such lens should as well uncover the epistemic obediences and disobediences that oscillate in their ontological and epistemological agency, i.e. their practices of resistance and (re) existence that challenge the colonial invisibilization of these border beings in the Colombian ELT field.

By resorting to what De Sousa (2009) called the *ecology of knowledge*, I, as an ELT field scholar, intend to join my voice to the voices that vindicate *other* forms of knowing and *other* forms of being, so that together we may contribute to document (and enact) the practices of existence, resistance, and re-existence. The search for totalities is to be rejected. Acknowledging the hybridity, the agency, the difference, the *border thinking* and *border theorizing* is a step forward towards the de-articulation of the colonial binaries. Such step is necessary for the understanding of the identities of indigenous

Énfasis

ELT teachers as the materialization of multifaceted concepts of languages, cultures, and learning experiences framed between their agencies and the determinisms of the nationhood projects. Ultimately, it is a call to admit that peoples, languages, and cultures "have the right to be different precisely because *we* are all equals" (Mignolo, 2000, p. 311).

Reflections on Ethnicity and Ethnicity Contestations within ELT

Colombian indigeneity, despite contributing to the survival of a Colombian nationhood project once the Europeizing *mestizaje* failed (Ariza, 2004), is often constructed from the otherhood. A disciplining *differential homogenization* resulted in non-indigenous State agents shaping indigenous into "subjectivities, subjects, and social groups that are believers in, and productive parts of, the national political and economic system while, at the same time, are also *othered* or considered culturally distinctive" (Ferrero, 2015, p. 294). The *othered* indigeneity has become a supra-ethnic dreamed homogenizing nation-state metaphor that fails to acknowledge their diverse in-group identities as distinct peoples (Anderson & Uribe-Jongbloed, 2015); it also might reduce their social, cultural, and political life to a scheme that could perpetuate the continuity of coloniality (Rojas- Curieux, 2019).

Otherhood is framed within an essentialist continuum established by the constitutional reform of 1991, and the ulterior sentence SU-510, which used "scientific criteria of anthropology and sociology" (Corte Constitucional, 1998), thus establishing three kinds of indigenosu communities: a) *Traditional indigenous communities* as the ones that have attempted to avoid the contact with the *white* people at all costs and consequently are subjected to the strict rules of their traditions, while and are granted total autonomy (for example the Kogis of the Sierra Nevada); b) *Semi-traditional indigenous communities* who have experienced mestizaje and have a permanent contact with the hegemonic society, but give a great value to their indigenous identities; and, c) *Uprooted indigenous communities* who have been uprooted from their indigenous ancestry and inserted in the *white* society. An example are the indigenous children who were separated from their parents and educated by catholic and protestant communities.

The political and economic agenda of the country, led by globalization and its free-market education, recognizes the strong historic indigeneity and its mobilization, while at the same time it privatizes, decentralizes, and promotes natural resource extraction (Rey-Martínez, 2011; Ferrero, 2015). Framed within the contemporary capitalism, and neoliberalism at large, extraction and extractivism do not only target the dispossession of ancestral territories due to the mass-scale industrial extraction of non-renewable natural resources (e.g. oil, minerals, or country biodiversity), but also enable deeper logics of exploitation and subjectification (Junka-Aikio, & Cortes-Severino, 2017).

Ethnicity and race are also dispossessed and racism is always present in policy and pedagogy by means of discursively-entrenched commonsensical conceptualizations such as *ability, aptitude,* and *the right attitude* (Gillborn, 2005). Color blindness and invisibilization of colonial practices in the establishment of language educational policies, are often disguised by discourses of multiculturalism and diversity as mechanisms that intend to show that racism and colonialism no longer exist. Nonetheless, "in that case, the unequal power relations evoked by the language of race are flattened out into a mere multiplicity of diverse cultures to be celebrated and affirmed" (Sullivan, 2006, p. 127).

The dispossession of the border beings' selves promotes a socially-constructed ignorance resulting in "epistemic blank spots that make privileged knowers oblivious to systemic injustices" (Bailey, 2007, p. 77). The practices of epistemical and ontological extractivism (Grossfoguel, 2016), align with the re-enactment of a history-long doctrine of Eureopean discovery of America, which paved the way for the dispossession (Robertson, 2005), while instead of pursuing the horizontal dialogue with the border beings, extract their ideas as raw materials to colonize and subdue them by means of the looting and marketing of their knowledge as commodities that can be traded and accumulated as some form of symbolic capital.

However, rooted in the often not self-acknowledged counter hegemony, Colombian ELT scholars are also often finding peripheral anthropological approaches that contest the subaltern role ascribed to their identity, thus recognizing that *the other* is simultaneously subject and object of knowledge (Cajigas- Rotundo, 2007). Being able to recognize indigenous populations beyond the traditional othering impositions as ahistoric, primitive, and in need of protection (Menezes, 2005), would not just be an epistemic shift but also a response to the ontology of knowing subjects and its epistemic privilege of objectifying *the other* (Correa, 2007).

The adoption of *epistemologies others* (Cariño, 2013) propels the acknowledgement of other forms of knowing, and in that sense, other forms of constructing the identities of Colombian ELT identities with the specificities of Colombian ELT teachers of diverse origins, which might have been formerly denied within the discursive coloniality. In that sense, scholars such as Escobar & Gómez (2010), Jaraba & Carrascal (2012), Arias (2014), Anderson & Uribe-Jongbloed, (2015), and Arismendi (2016), to mention a few, have problematized elements of *race*, ethnicity, or pluri-culturalism as units of analysis in the Colombian ELT field. Works from these scholars have focused on contesting the discursive constructions of ignorance or invisibilization of race that have historically been used to transform racial minorities into colonial subjects (Bonilla-Silva, 2005).

The decolonial thought might need to make visible the ethnic minorities even within the ELT; there is a need to recognize epistemic, colonial, and racial injustice and join the voices that claim for a shift in terms that can be used as units of analysis regarding pluri-ethnicity, thus moving from acceptance to respect. "While acceptance of differences calls for changes in the legal arrangements of society, respect for them requires changes in its attitudes and ways of thought" (Parekh, 2000, p. 2). Such changes in ways of thought might also imply acknowledgment of that indigenous peoples might think of themselves as being owed a recognition of their human dignity, which has de facto been put to question while they have been vernacularized. It is the collective apology, the recognition, and the respect what should accompany the land, monetary, and political reparations (Robertson, 2005). An attitude of respect would be aware that, by reclaiming race and land, the indigenous are also helping the oppressors recover their humanity (Sullivan, 2006). Although reclamations do not wipe out centuries of racism and subtle whitening in the form of *mestizaje* (prompted ethnic mixing), as an act, reclamation does not mean just confronting economic and social injustice, but also the unconscious habits of white privilege, including the very colonial hierarchies that have perpetuated injustice (Robertson, 2005).

Challenges in the Epistemic Dialogue Between Bilingualisms

The invisibilization of others knowledge, and the practices that promote color blindness, generate an epistemic violence and epistemologies of ignorance (Mills, 2000) towards indigenous bilingualisms, and the knowleddge they have

about themselves. Studying the conflux of ethnic bilingualism and mainstream bilingualism clashes with the tenets of the paradigms that traditionally have nested the Western academia in general, and the EFL field in particular. The uncertainties are exacerbated when we bring into consideration the need to dialogue with a body of epistemologies of which little is known, and where knowledge has been often the result of intercultural translation into Western eyes. Some of the uncertainties that a dialogue with indigenous ways of knowing might bring, should include: the risk of commodification of indigenous knowledges; the risk of a paternalistic and condescending attitude towards their voice; and, the unpredicatability of what languages and bilingualisms might mean for the identity of indigenous EFL teachers

The risk of commodification of Latin America indigenous knowledge. The academic gatekeepers have deemed indigenous knowledge on bilingualism irrelevant and unfittable within the dominant epistemologies of Western knowledge production. However, indigenous people of Latin America might be the population that historically most have lived bilingualisms despite of the colonial attempts to reduce their linguistic diversity. Their knoweledge of bilingualism is not just epistemological, but it is rather a constituent of their identities and consequently a part of their ethos and their ontologies.

The interesting turn of events is that, in a contemporary colonial mechanism (following the recognition of pluriculturality of indigenous populations in the constitutions of Latin American countries in the 1990s), the Latin American region has strived towards Spanish-English *bilingualism* in the 2000s, based on neoliberal principles of globalization and competitiveness. Thus, it seems that their concept of bilingualism, similar to what has already happened to indigenous populations' lands and ancestral botanic-medicinal knowledge, has been snatched from indigeneity, where it originally belonged. Now, when the term bilingualism is used in the policies, academic, and pedagogical discourses in the region, it is often unproblematically equated in the collective imagery as Spanish-English.

The maisntream bilingualism in the region is often more discursive than experiential, and often falls short in its attempts to accomplish the goals of its educational and linguistic policies. Resorting to acknowledging the reality of bilingualism practices in indigenous groups, might be useful as a referent that shows the historical, social, and political ethos of bilingualism beyond a device that is simply institutionalizing and imposing, as it is the case with the contemporary bilingual education policies.

The uncertainty here lies in the pursuit of establishing dialogues between mainstream and indigenous bilingualisms, while at the same time intending to protect indigenous knwoledge from its commodification by the Western counterpart. Knowledge, thus, should be reagarded as a vital non-comodity that is often subjected to the commodity fiction, similarly to what happens to land and labor when subjected to the market doctrine of capitalism. Precisely, considering the effect of the doctrines of capitalism regarding the Western contact with indigenous peoples, Jones (2009) acknowledges that by the creation of sophisticated legal mechanisms where *conservationism* is the driving discourse, globalization jeopardizes the traditional development of indigenous peoples around the world. Factors of globalization like the capital's need for the ownership of productive lands for the purpose of industrializing agricultural production, the extraction of natural or mineral resources, and the massive cattle ranches, to just metion some examples, have threatened the territory of the native populations causing the dispossession of their lands, as well as their first-hand knowledge of plants, animals, fungi and other living organisms. Besides, "the intrusion of Western styles in their traditional cultures and the exploitation of natural resources in their territories —a typical behavior of the Western actor, have produced emigrations as well as the consequent subsuming of indigenous peoples as a whole" (Jones, 2009, p. 196).

A risk lies in the Western regulations of knwoledge ownership and accessibility by means of a legal system (the patenting of intellectual property), which commodifies knowledge production and transforms it in information, as well as in ideas that can be capitalized and transacted as a commodity. This separation between the human being and the human being's knowledge (Whitt, 2009), might be conflictive with indigenous populations' conceptualizacion of knowledge and its purposes, despite the fact that the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous concedes to indigenous populations the right to maintain their own cultural and educational institutions, and the protection of their cultural and intellectual property (Wessendorf, & García-Alix, 2009).

For indigenous people, knowledge is understood as handed down by their sacred ancestors, thus instrinsic to the existence of the individuals and the commmunity, which needs to be passed on to each successive generation of families, tribes, and indigenous nations; thus, it cannot be the property of individuals, and cannot be privatized and should not be profited. Conversely, the Western commodification of knowledge poses a threat to their way of knowing, since "intellectual property laws serve as means of transforming

indigenous knowledge and genetic resources into profitable commodities and of advancing the commodification of nature" (Whitt, 2009, p. 139).

The risk of a paternalistic and condescending attitude towards indigenous voices. The rights of indigenous people in Colombia have been the result of their own constant battle for recognition, while their movement has contributed greatly to the recognition of cultural diversity in the country. The inclusion of etnic groups within the social and economic life of the nation has been worded as a pursuit of some of the national policies: "At the same time, however, these policies have been based on governmental administrative structures', own concepts and appraisals of indigenous people's social problems, interpreted from the standpoint of indigenous economic disadvantage". (Borda & Mejía, 2005, p. 185).

The socio-political role of sciences that ends up hierarchizing knowledge production and making it lineal, and (de)legitimizing knowledge (De Sousa, 2006), has drifted subordinated cultural beings to develop their subjectivtities in the margins of the dominant narratives of modenism (Macedo, 1999). However, when the anti-racist and indigenous inclusion has been embraced by the Western epistemologies (which continues to deploy its illusion of objectivity, neutrality, universalism, and cartesian division of the knower and the known within a framework of unbiased truth), such efforts have often landed upon the historical preference for rhetorics over transformative practices (Sieder, 2002; Gillborn, 2005).

Indigenous communities in Colombia have been subjected to paternalistic attitudes by which they are regarded as being different, disadvantaged, and in need of integration into mainstream society; hardly was their active participation considered necessary for the stability of the nation, and "at present, even with the overt recognition of diversity, and constitutional mechanisms permitting a degree of administrative autonomy for indigenous groups, the goal of the State remains to reduce diversity to homogeneity" (Borda, & Mejía, 2005, p. 186). An example of how the rights acknowledged by the Colombian Constitution and the attitudes of the State, fail to conflux, is the fact that indigenous university formation is lower than any other social group in the country; the existing tertiary education offer detaches the student from his/her culture, the programs fail to be really bilingual, and more than 50% of the indigenous population that enrols in tertiary education abandon their studies with the certainty that the schooling contents respond to the

needs of urban sectors and do not relate at all with rural indigenous realities (Mato, 2009).

Given the disadvantageous conditions for indigenous communities inside the schooling system, and within the concept of nationhood at large, one might expect that either they resist the national identity (or that the institutions and authorities at the national level represent them), or that they redefine the national identity by reclaiming their features as constituents of the nationhood, which is the result of their permanent struggle in the pursuit of the recongition for diversity (Fleisher, 2001). Borda & Mejía (2005) have identified three examples of how, in (and in spite of) a globalized world, Colombian indigenous have found the elements to strengthen their cause: a) new leaders of the indigenous movement gained formation by accessing formal education; b) the involvement of outsiders was allowed to join the indigenous movements to encourage the revitalization of their cause; c) the constitution of alliances with political parties friendly to their causes; such was the case with the ADM-19 with whom the indigenous opened space for their delegates to participate in the assembly that allowed the National Constitution of Colombia 1991. It was this alliance what prompted the declaration of Colombia as a multi-ethnic and multicultural nation.

Thus, it is this historical referent that I should bring to mind in each of the moments when I, as a researcher, might feel tempted to succumb to the romanticism of translating or (co)authoring indigenous knowledge, or when the paternalistic attitude drags me to the reductionist binaries between Western and indigenous knowledge.

Talking about language from a different place of enunciation. The unwritten discoursive practices that equate *indigenous* with the primitive, the wild, the natural (Semali, & Kincheloe, 1999), have driven the nationhood understandings of indigenous languages and the value ascribed to them (Anderson & Uribe-Jongbloed, 2015). Mule (1999) has already warned us about how the teaching of a non-indigenous language in an indigenous context clearly curtails the learning of individuals. Things seem to be even more dramatic when English as a foreign language is privileged by the school curriculum, which seems to homogenize the learners as monolinguals who would just add up a foreign language to their repertoire. This underestimates or totally ignores the linguistic capital of learners and their particular cultures.

In the case of Colombia, where ethnoceducation, recognized as early as 1985 (based on the support by the national Minsitry of Education,the

partnership with universities, research groups, and indigenous organizations), includes bilingualism as one of its tenets (Patiño, 2004), it seems that it is the epistemological approach towards language what generates conflicts with the indigenous understandings and livings of it. The following principes could be used to exemplify the constituents of the invisibilization and epistemic violence (Sousa, 2006) towards indigenous linguistic capital: a) language as an instrument to objectivization: authorities conceive it as a regulator that allows the objectification of the existing nature, and constitutes a finite realm of possible transformations (Escobar, 2000). b) language as cultural artifact that can be reduced to an structure that can be quantified and controlled: efforts seem to revolve around the idea of establishing grammar rules, linguistic codes for the writing, and linguisitc corpuses; c) language as an instrument for acculturation and homogeneization: when teachers who are bilingual in Spanish and an indigenous language are hired, they are not given the right to teach, but actually used as translators of the mainstream teacher (Moreno, 2011); and, d) language is considered from a limiting terrotorial logic: the States, with their mindsets still framed within the colonial and missionary thoughts, conceive languages as cultural artifacts that can presuppose linguistic mappings of monolithic languages demarcated onto concrete physical boundaries, thus confining ethnolinguistically homogeneous groups that can be localized, apprehended and naturalized (Errington, 2001).

As a counter-part, indigenous ppopulations seem to regard nature as possessing an essence that goes way beyond the human control (Escobar, 2000); this is something that immediately debunks the belief of language as an instrument to apprehend nature. The models of culture and knowledge are based on historic, linguistic, and cultural processes that, although are not entirely isolated from larger historical narratives, are however much more bound to the specitity of the culture's territory and the anthropology of the experiences of the indigenous groups (Escobar, 2000).

The indigenous land is not the manifestation of a potential possession in terms of Western private property, but, as it also happens with traditional knowledge, it has a collective nature and is undetachable from the ancestral territories (Lander, 2000; Lander, 2002). Unlike non-indigenous, the indigenous people refer to mother-nature as the provider of fruits, montains, rivers, valleys, but also of the secrets of the territoires, and sacred knowledge as resulting from the harmony with the forces and spirits that animate nature (ICCI, 2002). This premise takes Noboa (2006) to suggest language more as the product of a corpus of nature, instead of a linguisic corpus.

The word, the language, and the symbolic construction of reality and their cosmovision, constitutes the essence of the indigenous movements that claim for their visibilization and their trascendence and respect beyond the hegemonic discourses (Lamus, 2006). Language (overlapping with the spiritual realm, and their history) becomes a cultural distinctive trait when defining a group as a *people* that is entitled to the legal principle of self-determination (Hendrix, 2008) —a principle also acknowledged by Wessendorf, & García-Alix (2007) as essential constituent of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the United Nations.

Thus, the understanding that "the whole of humanity is enriched (or impoverished) by the survival (or loss) of its languages and culture" (Anderson & Uribe-Jongbloed, 2015, p. 137), drives the claims of indigenous movements and their dialogue with a critical and/or decolonial community of thought. As the CRIC (Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca) claimed, as early as in 1973, defending the history, the language, and the indigenous customs, allowed indigenous populations to remain united and strong. Their own writings, their own documents, the stories of their ancestors, their own drawings did not just boost them to understand and feel the life, but also constituted their defense and taught them to not be humilliated and to fight.

As Paulo Freire and Antonio Faundez (1989) argue, indigenous knowledge is a rich social resource for any justice-related attempt to bring about social change; intellectuals should, then, "soak themselves in this knowledge . . . assimilate the feelings, the sensitivity . . . " (p. 46) of epistemologies that offer epiphanies of what is unimagined by the academic impulses of Western knowledge. A particularly informing case, in regards to how indigenous knowledge manifests its novelty is the linguistic, pedagogic, and anthopologic scientific development with indignous participation resulting from the Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca CRIC and its Programa de Educación Bilingüe (Bilingual Education Program or PEB—, which is linked to the community projects of the indigenous communities yanacona, coconuco, totoró, guambiano, nasa, eperara-siapidara and inga (Patiño, 2004).

The openness to the prospective epiphanies of what indigenous know about bilingualisms, is based upon the belief that, in the colonial mindset, cognitive injustices have traditionally set the ground for social injustices (De Sousa, 2006); however, justice will not be based on more equal distribution of academic knowledge on mainstream bilingualism, but rather on acknowledging that the scientific/academic mainstream has constructed

bodies of ignorance (as opposed to bodies of knowledge), as well as disdain towards alternative ways of bilingualism and alternative knowledge about languages and bilingualisms, due to their unwillingness or incapacity to treat them on equal terms.

As Sastoque (2006, p. 30) narrates below, mother nature is also credited with having a language of its own. Such idea poses an example of the narratives written on the margins of the hegemonic epistemologies, and challenges deeply the Western idea of territory as the container and boundary reference of languages:

> During my time in the Sierra Nevada I had new and strange experiences. Hiking on the nature I felt how she started to talk to me, and I saw how the natives of the Sierra communicated with her.

Besides, Sastoque's quotation below (2206, p. 30) can also give a hint of what learning a language for communicative purposes can mean within the epistemologies/cosmovisions of indigenous populations:

> Among the many experiences I had in the Sierra, there is one very interesting that occurred to me in July 2006 in Nebusmake (the Arhuaca capital) on the way to Kochukwa. We were under the effect of the coca leaf, and when we sat down to rest and meditate, I felt how the river started to talk to me and I clearly understood his language.

Can one person, then, be bilingual by talking to the elements of nature in harmonic spiritual dialogues? Does such version of languages still allow the manifestations of learning by means of social interaction? Is social interaction limited to the human beings peer level? Here, Sastoque (2006, p. 30) continues:

> The air, the water, the fire, and the earth, like us, handle a language through which they express their knowledge and indoctrination of life for the mental, corporal, and spiritual evolution of the human being.

Regardless of the honest uncertainties of what will emerge as knowledge out of the linguistic identities of EFL teachers, my research study focuses on some form of ecology of knowledge that refrains from being blind to the social and cultural realities of societies on the periphery of the world system, "where the links between modern science and the designs of colonial and imperial domination are more visible, and where other non-scientific and non-Western forms of knowledge prevail in resistance practices (De Sousa, 2006, p. 21).

The ignorance of these elements, as referential to what Colombian bilingualisms are, becomes evidence that, despite the ground-breaking recognition of ethnic diversity in the Colombian constitution of 1991, policies targeting bilingualism have not been informed by a perspective of ethnic diversity. Rather, the State has targeted general and abstract indicators of achievement, poverty, and economic potential within programmes with specific time-frames and efficiency criteria that are different to the realities of diverse communities. Such policies demonstrate a lack of awareness or a conscious blindness to the fact that these political actions alter the collective life, threaten the cultural diversity, and create resistance which generally leads to the failure of such programs.

Against the Essentialism:
Who are 'Colombian Indigenous ELT teachers'?

For the purpose of this study, there is not a strict binary or essentialist distinction of what it means to be a Colombian indigenous English-language teacher; therefore, defining participants ends up being a rather complex challenge. Indeed, I fear it because of the a priori readings that can be counterproductive to the idea of letting participants themselves construct the ontological reference. Another factor playing a roles here is the anticipated complexity of those ontologies that make me fear that I could fall in unfairness when describinG them. The participants' border being is the result of unusual identity configurations that conflux, including features such as being Colombia, being in the ELT field, and being indigenous, all of which can be constructed in conflictive ways beyond essentialism, as I will intend to elaborate on below. In this study, indigeneity of the participants is constructed on their life events, recounts, and reconstruction of their lineage, as well as in group indigenous leadership.

In fact, if there were some dimensions of such complexities that could seem less problematic, those would be the condition of being Colombian, and the condition of being an English-language teacher. Needed is to say here, additionally, that even those seemingly unproblematic dimensions are not fully transparent given that, on the one hand, indigenous communities like the tribes of Awás (who live in the border territories between Colombia and Ecuador), Wayuus (who live in the border territories between Colombia and Venezuela), and Muina Murui and Tikuna (who live in the triple border

between Colombia, Perú, and Brazil) could be entitled to double nationalities (Ley 43, 1993).

On the other hand, the condition of being an English-language teacher is intrinsically linked to the discourses of Modernity of the nationhood project, therefore, discursively constructed within the frame of the humanitas (Mignolo, 2013), which dictates the academic formation in the ELT field as well as the the career path following such formation. At any case, participants in my research study, who by definition are ELT teachers, made a decision when choosing such career path, which should be contemplated against the backdrop of the ontological nature of their particular border-beings (Dussel, 2013). Such border beings might move within certain continuum of subjacent epistemic obediences and disobediences (Mignolo, 2009), comformism and rebel actions, thus destabilizing subjectivities and conflicting against a historically ascribed marginality. Despite sharing the conflux of identities that move between the humanitas and the anthropos, there might be particular identity and cultural factors that will offer elements of reflection for which the fact that they are few participants adds up to the possibility of going more in depth in the dialogues and their polyphonies. Thus, being flexible on the criteria of being an ELT teacher, which concretely means that both, indigenous ELT teachers in formation and indigenous ELT teachers performing their careers (either in or out of their indigenous communities), could facilitate the *palabrear* with more participants, which could be benefitial for the intersubjective understanding of the practices that formerly had been invisibilized by scholars production within the field.

The most problematic element is, indeed, what constitutes the *being indigenous*. In that sense, I need to first resort to a certainty before moving onto a tangle of uncertainties: the certainty is the rejection of the stance that we are all indigenous (Sium, Desai, & Ritskes, 2012). Participants in my research project need to have traceable links to their indigenous cultural heritage, even if they might have been denied their identity by the supraethnic binary distinction of indigeneity of insitutional discourses. So, the distinction made by the Constitutional Court (1998) between Traditional indigenes, Semi-traditional indigenes, and Uprooted indigenes, though interesting as a point of reference, does not work as the sole determiner of the population, precisely because of its essentializing nature, which can conflict deeply with participants nature as border beings. Instead, the sense of cultural, social, and ethnic belonging, the experience of their ingroup cosmovisions (however close they might be), and indigenes participating or even leading processes

of reindigenization (like in the case of the members of cabildos Muisca in Bogotá), might be insightful ontological features for the participants.

This study is framed in the understanding that there are also guiding elements, beyond the supraethnic binary distincion indigenous/non-indigenous that will depend on the particularities of the indigenous group of belonging, and identify and distinct such given indigenous groups, and consequently the participants. Elements that used to be more prototypical, not only of the supraethnic concept of 'indigenous' but also of the different particular peoples, might (because of conditions like violence, social and cultural vernacularization, the idea of progress, the contact with devices like schooling, and the like) be less essentializing. And that, which might at times be considered (not necessarily wronfully) threatening to the cultural diversity, might, as well, constitute the border being element, the dissonance, the ontologic and epistemic privilege to re-signdify the ELT field, but also the undersanding of the diverse identities that need to be acknowledged in our being Colombians, and being humans.

Examples of such formerly monolithic features can include factors such as territoriality and/or language. To instantiate, territoriality was considered as one of the main coiners of indigenous in-group identity of the Embera family, which meant that by moving away from the territories of their ancestors they ceased to be considered *indigenous* by their own relatives (Piñeros, Rosselli, & Calderon, 1998). It is in their territory where they recreate their culture, weave their history and sense of belonging to their motherland, which is the center of their education and their identity development (Tapasco, 2008). However, the dynamics of the Colombian armed conflict (which has often been linked not just to the historic fight for land, but also to current legal and illegal perspectives of exploitation of the territories in the pursuit of profiting from the insertion in the globalized world), obliged them to add the adverbial clause *embera in condition of displacement* to their identity, and their subalternized voices still show belonging and resistance (Sabogal, 2014).

A specific case that is worth to mention here, is the case of the Wayuu people, whose language is considered a key component of their body of culture. Wayunaki, is indeed a distinctive trait; however, the conditions of exploitation and empoverishing of their territories due to exractivism and abandonment from the State, might have taken many Wayuu families with very young children to migrate to the urban centers away from their Wayuu territory. This phenomenon, which corresponds to what the Colombian Constitutional Court (1998) calls an uprooted indigeneity, might have

hindered the development of their fluency in wayunaiki. If that was the case, the in-group-matriarchal lineage would work as a key element in the distinction of Wayuu people. Belonging to a matri-lineal clan (e'irükuu) e.g. the uriana, sapuana, uraliyuu, jusayu, ipuana, epieyuu, and having a Wayuu lineage (apüshi) accounts for the ancestral vinculation with common genetic ancestry (Puentes, 2009) even if disperse because of migration. An indigenous English teacher with such heritage might probabbly have links to the Wayuu cosmovision, thus *palabrear* could become an element to retrieve and reconstruct experiences as border-being and the identity interfaces on his conditions as indigenous, as Wayuu, as Colombian, and as member of the ELT field.

As a way to instantiate the multiple and complex shades of identity that are embodied in the indigenous ELT teachers, I will include actual verbatim from one of the prospective participants in my research study (Nicole), who is a leader in the reconstruction of the Muisca indigeneity and has understood that her formation in the ELT provides her with elements that help her construct the history of her pueblo and contribute to the re-consruction of their identity:

> There was a series of historic events that in the case of my people were forgotten because making people forget was precisely one of the pillars of colonization. So, one of the strongest instrumental mechanisms that they used was precisely forbidding the languages. In 1774, Carlos IV forbided the indigenous languages in La Nueva Granada, and the first language that felt the rigor of that law was of course the pueblo Muisca's, because it was located within the nearest vicinity to the town where these statutes where being signed. So, if they disposses you from your language, they are not just removing how you speak, but also the form, the thought, and so on, because languages are all that. That means that languages are not just a tool for communication, but also embody a bunch of beliefs, traditions… languages even reflect the way people envision the world, that is why they have so many analyses; yet, when the language is removed, what happens? People start to have another way of thinking, and consequently they also start to forget many things because there is no use of the language.

This excerpt does little justice to all the awareness, agency, and activism that has made of Nicole a young leader in her community. However, it does give account of the kind of reflective and informed tone that she uses when talking about her cause. In the excerpt below, there is a reference to Nicole's formation process.

> We know a bit of everything, at least the ones in languages, but in terms of pedagogy we know whole lot. Let's say we know a lot about methods, techniques, strategies, didactics . . . It is nice. And I took the path of literature and pedagogy, articulating both things, and of course, the linguistic field, I like a lot like the whole linguistic field, those three. But then what is English, French, and other languages like Latin and Greek, that we are also taught? those are languages that I learned a little, and in fact, if I am frank to you, I did not visualize myself teaching them, because my livelihood has always been to teach my language by means of the oral traditions.

Palabrear to Challenge the Colonial Silences and Allow for Pluriverses in the Colombian ELT

The fact that this study is located from a Global South does not only represent the unification of territoriality against eurocentrism; it rather expresses that my research study is located on a pluriverse, a world made of many worlds (Escobar, 2017). The act of a positioning the selves to counter the colonial silences, has taken scholars to join the indigenous, the peasants, and the afro-latin communities to construct conscious political symbolisms such as the situated territoriality resulting from the adoption of the term *Abya Yala*. This name comes from the Panama's Cuna language, and means *land in full maturity* or *flowering land* the name that original populations gave to the Americas (Walsh, 2014). Escobar (2017) has acknowledged, in that regard, the more inclusive *Abya Yala/Afro/Latin-America*, which (though not fully accountable of other identity axes like gender, generation, rural and urban living, social class, sexuality, and spirituality) denotes an identity construction that, grounded in conscious positioning, problematizes even further the naturalized Latin America.

Similarly, I have adopted a specific identity position to call myself a *solidary* or a *militant* scholar; so that to see myself as such, throughtout my research endeavors I have made deliberate and consistent efforts to counter the extractivist approach and avoided following traditional methodologies. Additionally, I will to set limits to any potential author's hierarchy while conducting my *Palabrear* research study, by means of yielding to the narrative polyphony, which is a more heterarchical writing in two (or three, or more) hands (Corona, 2007).

This methodological choice is constructed around the concept of *palabrear* which I have borrowed from Beltrán (2016a)' interaction with the Murui (wuitoto), to refer to a political view towards the intersubjectivity intrinsic to the qualitative studies. Similarly to what has been called the *epistemology of the knowing and the to-be-known subjects* (Vasilachis, 2011), *palabrear* is a methodological approach that vindicates the ontology over the epistemology; it is, indeed, a pursuit of a more horizontal dialogue between the multiversalities of paradigms, epistemologies, and forms of representing that go beyond binary distinctions (Vasco, 2007).

The act of *palabrear together*, appeals to the conviction that there are histories, narratives, knowledge, comformities and resiliences that make part of the itinerary of the decolonial and inter cultural research (Gómez, 2015). The certainty here is that that traditional paradigms used to validate knowledge on education, ELT, bilingualism, identity, territoriality, alterity, and even research, could be left behind not only because of their vulnerabilities as stepping ground, but also due to a basic principle of rejection to injustice.

Figure 9.1 below represents the isolated dominant grand narratives as isolated threads preceeding the act of *palabrear*. The three threads on this figure are: a) the major narrative of the Colombian ELT; b) my identity as an English teacher and teacher educator; and, c) the narrative of a participant (a Colombian indigenous English-language teacher).

Figure 9.1

Isolated Narrative Threads Preceding the Act of Palabrear
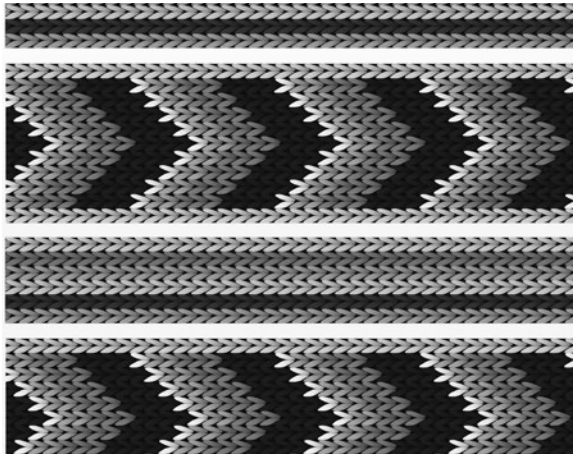
Adapted from Galafassi et al (2018: 10)

Palabrear is a decolonial methodological approach nested in the Global South that is intrinsically counterhegemonic. Contrary to positivistic ethnography and anthropology, which until recently were used to conceptualize *the other* from an *etic* (outsider) perspective but ignored the *emic* indigenous epistemologies thus objectivizing them, *palabrear* as a methodology and ontology that belongs to the murui-muina themselves, promotes the dialogue of intercultural knowledge and compels the rupture of the asymmetries of power. *La palabra* (the word/ the story) is not conceived any more as a mere transmitter of data from the known subjects, but as a performative practice of construction of the selves and their vindications, as depicted in Figures 9.2 and 9.3 (Beltrán, 2016b).

Palabrear is, thus, an alternative to the monological and colonizing standards used as frameworks in the production of knwoledge. The resulting pluritopic hermeneutics opposes the idea of one single universal historical culture with new meanings, and instead proposes the pluriversality or "the determination of meaning to multiple possibilities even within the same historical horizon" (Alcoff, 2007, p. 89). These hermeneutics and pluriversality work as the conceptual reference that offers hope in the pursuit of freeing the representation of the colonized *others* from the burden of hegemonic Eurocentric concepualizations.

The use of this methodology does not mean having to answer pre-fabricated questions by the researcher, but rather a focus on listening that instills in the researcher the need to reformulate, ground, and/or generate new questions that need to be situated within the contexture (Vasco, 2007). It also implicates an inherent acknowledgement of the need to listen to *the others*, the border-being, and embrace their epistemic rights and their epistemic priveleges to construct a collective weaving that re-creates the world by means of *la palabra*, as said by indigenous leader Harold Rincón (cited in Beltrán, 2016a).

The goal when applying *palabrear* as a methodology involves being able to narrate the injustice of the epistemic extractivism and its practices, which are addressed by Chilisa (2012) as:

- Adscribing a primitive, barbaric identity to colonized societies and considering them as incapable of producing useful knowledge.

- Denying other knowledge systems incljding philosophy, academic, pedagogy, methodology.

- Unwilling to consider epistemologies (mainly the Western one) as situational and suitable to particular geographic locations (Mignolo, 2000; Alcoff, 2007).

- Excluding and dismissing as irrelevant the knowledge embedded in the cultural experiences of the people.

- Appropriating indigenous knowledge systems without acknowleding copyrights of the producers of this knowledge.

- Adopting a deficitary perspective (focusing on what they lack instead of what they have); deficiency maintains power in the hands of the ones that control academic knowledge.

- Allowing the filter of gatekeepers of knowledge over what can be said or published.

As an outsider participating in this research study, my chances to build relationality with the participants can only be framed whitin the ethnography of solidarity (Vasco, 2007), propelled by the pursuit of similar interests that demand an empathetic and heterarchical (Castro-Gomez & Grossfoguel, 2007) intersubjectivity. *Palabrear*, then, should not just be another methodology, but a collective attempt to rescue the human encounters resulting from decolonizing ethnographic research. *Palabrear* is more than the act of representing reality, it is a verb that weaves the thoughts, the actions, the reconstructions, the transformations with *la palabra*. The act of *palabrear* conveys an interpersonal relationality that is being constructed around the time spent together, which means being able to meet, share food, share thoughts, share life projects.

Harold Rincón, an indigenous leader participating in Beltrán's study (2016a p. 47) defines *palabrear* below[59] (the translation is mine):

> *Palabrear* comes out of the use of the *palabra* as a verb. *La palabra*, for the Murui-Muna (who are peoples of sweet yuka, coca, and tobaco) has a meaning that is related to the sacred, the word that was pronounced by the padre creador (which some could associate to God) to create what is perceived daily in their surrounding: organisms, natures . . . life. The elders speak of *la palabra de la palabra*, which is the creating *palabra*. This means that it is not that the word was thought by the man, because that *palabra* was in the world before the man arrived . . . that is the origin of things. And *palabrear* is the exercise that drives us back to her. Therefore, *mambear* is a challenge. A challenge that involves the mambe and the ambil as vehicles that lead us to the *palabra* of origin. One can *mambear* alone, but one can also *mambear* in company because it is also a matter of all consrtructing together. What I mean is that *palabrear* is synonymous with *mambear*: to reflect, think, say and organize ideas and face everyday challenges. We understand that the *mambear* is a

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59   My own translation

ritual-challenge where one speaks and listens; the basket is woven through the exchange of ideas and opinions. And I want to say that as a methodology for the purposes of your work and ours, the *mambear* with us was the most concrete thing he could have done, because our thinking is doing and our doing is thinking. But remember that in the *mambeadero* we do not tell lies. Everything is as it flows . . . the word is the soul-voice of reflection and listening, understanding and discernment. In addition, it obeys to a cultural and geographical context, typical of our culture of the *mambear* of the Murui-Muina.

Palabrear is a creating act; it is described by Beltrán (2016a) as weaving (Figure 9.2), which means doing-constructing the palabra dialogically (ideas, questions, interpretations). It demands from the the entire research projects recognition of being the *hermano menor* (younger brother) who listens to aprehend the *palabra*. Listening is to weave the word all together, thus re-creating it to the rhythm of the earth, and for the benefit of all. *Palabrear* is, therefore, not any given method, but the manner of surviving as culture. *Palabrear* leads to coexistence among human beings, and coexistence between human beings and the environment with which we live, as well as coexistence of multiple universes of thought on the same planet, and respect to the pluriverse (Figure 9.3) and the relational interaction with the earth for the benefit of all (Beltrán, 2016a).

Figure 9.2

Palabrear as the Performative Act of Finding Alternative Spaces
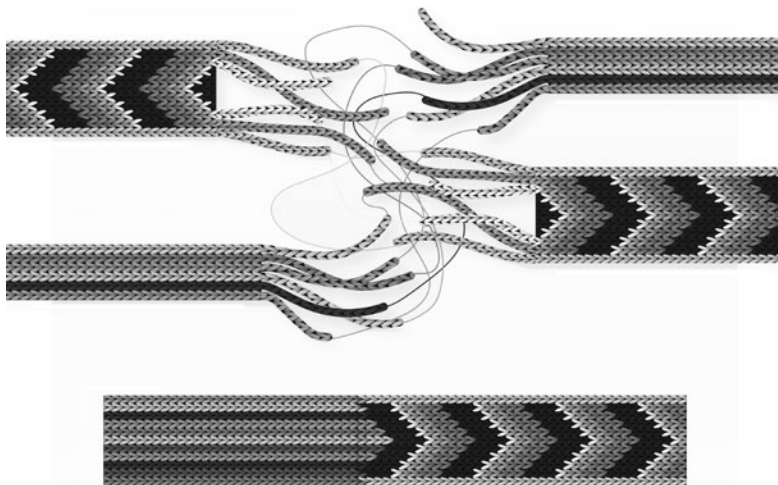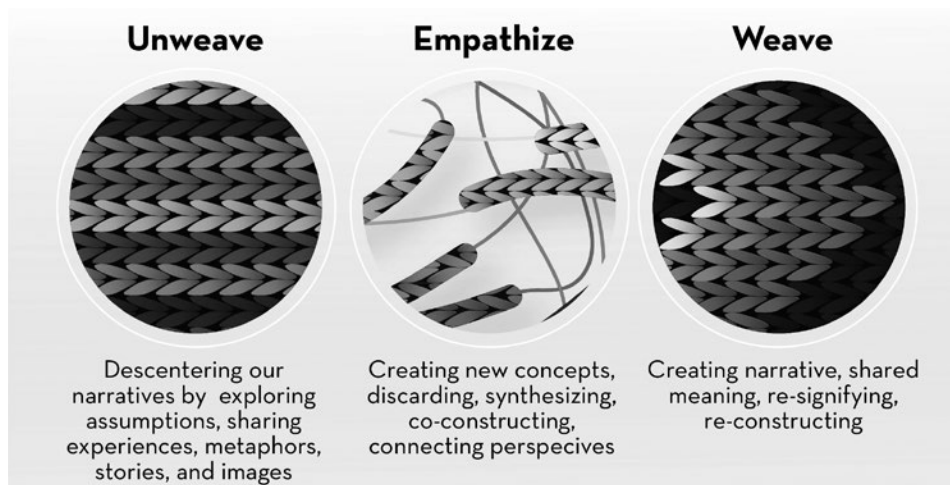

Adapted from Galafassi et al (2018: 10)

A serious challenge for this research study is to avoid the mono-presence of the researcher, attempting instead to arrive to a co-presence where the researcher needs to avoid acting as the authority who translates the social interactions into his/her own perspectives. This *anomaly* on the inquiry of this study, might atract academic gatekeepers interested in being the ones who *purify* the exotic knowledge to make it fit into the canons of the *normal* own society. Therefore, co-researchers must commit to all efforts involved in avoiding such type of *exorcism* of indigenous knowledge (Kaltmeier, 2012) with the purpose to prevent that this study ends up objectivizing *the other* in a re-enactment of colonialism. This objectification would be a brazen act of epistemic violence.

Figure 9.3

Palabrear as the Act of a Collective Weaving of Meaning

Adapted from Galafassi et al (2018: 10)

It is essential to resort to self-reflection on the issue of author-ity as a researcher, and to the member checking and the co-authoring. Besides, if a PhD thesis and the resulting dissemination articles are focused on contributing to the ELT field, should it include any artifacts or practices other than those inscribed within the pursued equal basis for the indigenous teachers who are participants in this study and their communities? The intention is to go against the totalizing approaches to knowledge, and defend the *in-between- spaces*; this purpose should allow to read from the marigns, from the limits of the formally constituted discourses, thus mulitplying the possibilities of reading, recognizing the existing (formerly invisbilized) practices, and expanding

the spheres of action of both traditions of knowledge by means of dialogue (Masiello, 2001).

Conclusion

To conclude, *palabrear* is, I must admit, a conflux of *a priori* intentions to align with the nature of decolonial projects I believe in. The nature of the project itself, however, is still uncertain and will be fully established upon the basis of more solid contacts with the indigenous EFL teachers participating in the study. Dialogue will be the key piece here, as it is, actually, the space for the narratives and the voices to encounter. Ultimately our voices will not be only a resource but also a performance where the authenticity of the dialogue will come to be what empower us all. (Rufer, 2012).

The construction of a collective voice will constitute not only a methodology itself, regardless of how distant from the canon of research methodology it seems, but also, as an act of protesting against the grand narratives, thus finding alternative spaces and allowing for the intercultural and collective healing. Such expectations related my research study are aligned with the act of participating on decolonial initiatives from the nest of what is considered a given premise of the Modernity (the construction of a homogenizing discourse about bilingualism). The contradiction of being decolonial, while being English-language teachers can be embraced from the alternative spaces, from the border-beings, from the border epistemologies. In is in this regard where I, as a researcher, as well as the participants on this research study, will have promising opportunities to reflect about which epistemic obediences and disobediences constitute our ontologies, thus helping pave the path to a more decolonial ELT field in Colombia.

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10. Untangling Initial English Teaching Education from Pre-Service Teachers' Collaborative Autoethnographies

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Telling our stories is a way
for us to be present to each other,
provides a space
for us to create a relationship embodied
in the performance of writing and reading
that is reflective,
critical,
loving,
and chosen in solidarity
(Holman Jones, Adams, Ellis, 2013)

Introduction

In this chapter, I will introduce Collaborative Autoethnography (CAE), framed within *bricolage* (Kincheloe, McLaren, & Steinberg, 2011), as a valid methodological option to narrativize the meaning and implications of being a pre-service English-language teacher (PELT) and becoming a professional English teacher. In doing so, I will discuss (from my own story) the importance of having a critical position while examining PELTs' selves within the Initial English Language Teacher Education (IELTE) context, and the role they have as *knowing subjects* participating in research projects (Vasilachis de Gialdino,

2009). Before starting the discussion on this methodological option, I will explain my current research query.

Historically, IELTE has responded to agendas determined by specific organizations, such as the British Council and TESOL, which intend to establish ideologies about *how to teach*, *when to teach*, *what to teach*, and *who teaches whom* (Pennycook, 1998; Canagarajah, 1999; Phillipson, 1992). These ideologies establish a *pattern of actions* in IELTE that *constitute practices* maintained through regulations (Schatzki, 2002), thus leading to continuity and perpetuation of ways of being and doing.

In Colombia, for example, the National Ministry of Education - MEN (for its acronym in Spanish) provides the normativity that regulates IELTE programs. A governmental key regulation called Acuerdo 18583 (MEN, 2017) establishes that bachelor programs must provide pre-service teachers with knowledge in four main areas: general foundation, specific and disciplinary knowledge, pedagogy, and didactics. Regarding IELTE programs, Acuerdo 18583 decrees that a PELT who wants to receive his/her diploma and become a professional English teacher must reach a C1 proficiency as described by the Common European Framework (Council of Europe, 2002). Apparently, there is nothing wrong in having a desirable level of proficiency in the language; however, accepting such regulations and ideologies, and establishing them as *the law,* is something that has problematic implications. According to Guerrero Nieto (2010), this acceptance produces an adverse image on English-language teachers, who are usually portrayed as clerks, marketers, or technicians, yet not as professionals. This way of portraying the *must be* of the English teachers maintains a social order: knowledge is produced from a top-down approach and it is accepted as the only truth; then, PELTs become passive receivers (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). These passive receivers are embedded and constrained by normativities that respond to political and economic interests, thus producing apparent stability (Canagarajah, 1999; Pennycook, 1998; Phillipson, 1992).

This fact has also permeated the field of research in IELTE. Some Colombian scholars have shown an interest in investigating the intersections between theory and practice, with no intention to validate the theory but rather to promote greater participation of the PELTs (Méndez & Bonilla, 2016; Posada & Garzón, 2014). Some other scholars have used these reflections as a device to better understand the social and educational reality, so that to help PELTs improve their practices in the classroom (Aguirre & Ramos, 2011;

Camacho et al., 2012; Samacá, 2012). Some others have recognized PELTs as knowledgeable subjects (as stated by Vasilachis de Gialdino, 2009), and have heard their voices using narratives that express opinions, expectations, dreams, regrets, and fears, among others (Castañeda-Peña, Rodríguez-Uribe, Salazar-Sierra, & Chala-Bejarano, 2016; Fajardo Castañeda & Miranda Montenegro, 2015). Yet, many other scholars conduct research on the basis of individuality, sometimes detaching from, or denying, the social nature that is integrated into this social activity; for the most part, research papers from this group of scholars assume the PELTs as informants (Aguirre, 2014; Cardenas & Suarez, 2009; Durán Narváez, Lastra Ramírez, & Morales Vasco, 2013); they are assigned a role that is limited to provide data to be collected and interpreted by researchers upon the basis of established principles, theories, and researchers' apparent objectivity; in the end, PELTs are not involved in the research finding analysis process or conclusions writing.

As a scholar, I believe that it is necessary to open spaces where PELTs can establish a dialogic relationship with the context where they are involved, so that they construct their own understanding of what has meant, for them, to be members of a dynamic social activity (teaching English-language) while conucting investigation about it. In this sense, I will propose a collaborative research process where PELTs will play a role as researchers, with the purpose of understanding their transition from being PELTs to become professional English-language teachers.

In this chapter, I will discuss how my reflection about my experiences as a teacher-educator became the main reason why I decided to become a researcher. Then, I will discuss my critical position in research and will explain my using *bricolage* in this process. Connecting the two previous topics, the third section of this chapter will discuss why and how I intend to position PELTs as research partners instead of mere participants in my research study project. Finally, I will introduce Collaborative Autoethnography as the methodological alternative that would allow us (research partners) to intertwine our own personal narrations with their cultural interpretations.

How My Own Story Led Me to PELTs Research on IELTE

When I started my career as a teacher educator, back in 2012, I was assigned as a mentor[60] for a group of ten PELTs in the teaching practicum (TP). I need to confess that when I started performing in such role, I did not know exactly what to do because it was my first experience as a mentor. To make things even more complicated, my own experience in the TP as PELT had not been as successful as I expected due to a variety of reasons: it was an experience that lasted only four months (one academic semester); my own mentor visited me only twice during the time when I worked at the school assigned to me; I received no supervision in my classes, so I had to make my own decisions based on what I considered correct; I even needed to develop all my classroom materials in accordance with every specific topic in consideration, mainly because it was a public school with limited resources. I hardly paid any attention to the social context of this specific learning/teaching process, which was full of social issues including violence, insecurity, poverty, and child abuse, due to poverty of the community.

During my first semester as a mentor of the TP, I provided my students with clear directions about how to teach the English language and helped them to develop classroom materials according to the principles of the communicative approach. Additionally, my students and I developed shared plans and policies related to how to manage classroom groups based on rules enforcement, how to evaluate teaching/learning processes based on students' competences, and how to better organize contents on the blackboard, among others. Our decisions on these matters were based on our readings of authors considered fundamental for English-language educators.

Language teaching programs usually resort to canonical literature as the basis upon which syllabus are developed. As an example, Douglas Brown (2000, 2001, 2004), focused his work on explaining the principles of language teaching and language assessment; Harmer (1998; 2001), centered his work on presenting techniques to teach all the skills in an English-language class; Richards worked mainly on explaining language teaching methodologies (Richards & Renandya, 2002), as well as on exploring language teaching practices (Burns & Richards, 2012); Oxford (1990), while also examined language learning strategies that have been considered essential for language teachers for many years. Following ideas from these canonical authors, while in my role as a mentor I used rubric provided by my doctorate program to

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60   In this paper I use the term *mentor* to refer to the teacher supervisor of the PELTs' processes during their teaching practicum, as defined by Pennycook (2004)

evaluate each of the aspects considered essential for training of the PELTs. This rubric allowed me to determine the level of compliance with the program, although its scope was restricted to observation of technical issues, thus ignoring those related to teachers' human development.

Under such circumstances, I felt compelled to start collecting PELTs' reflections about their particular classroom situations, with the intention to better understand them, as well as the uncertainties, expectations, doubts, and problems that arose within their TP process. However, the only outcome of these efforts was a compendium of detailed descriptions of activities but nothing else. I ended up not having anything helpful to learn what my PELTs thought about their experiences or how they felt during their classes. That was the moment when I decided to change the way I approached them. This time, I started with providing my students with some specific readings[61] for them to reflect about and comment, which began a deeper process of reflection about their TP.

This attempt to gain deeper understanding of PELTs' experiences within their TP, was helpful to uncover some situations that had a direct impact on their performance and their process of becoming professional teachers. I detected the presence of some colonial traits that were perpetuated throughout the speeches, standardized through practices, spread throughout the language teaching programs, and, hence, exerted a strong influence on the performance of the PELTs in their teaching practices (Castañeda-Trujillo, 2018). In order to gain further insights that were in alignment with this specific viewpoint, I resorted to authors such as Philipson (1992) and Pennycook (1998), who had explained the implications of linguistic imperialism and colonization of English-language teaching on ELT education. Kumaravadivelu (2003) was another key author leading me to realize that thinking beyond established methods was possible and necessary, given his viewpoints regarding the need to also take into account those personal and social factors that might have an impact on language learning and teaching.

Colonial situations have to do with oppression, dispossession, and an unbalance of powers that produce inequalities, discrimination, injustice, violence, exclusion, and silence, among others (Grosfoguel, 2011; Kumashiro, 2000; López-Calvo, 2016; Walsh, 2013). After my initial recognition of the coloniality traits above discussed, I ended up realizing that coloniality is a

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61 The readings were focused on a variety of topics related to the teaching practicum (Lucero, 2016; Morales Cortés, 2016), pedagogical knowledge (Díaz, 2006; Pérez & Fonseca, 2011; Tezanos, 2007) and the systematization of experiences (Torres, 1999). PELTs read all the texts, wrote a critical comment, and selected some quotes to discuss in class.

practice that diminishes *the other*, which is made evident on how English-language teachers are portrayed in some key documents issued by the Ministry of Education, among other examples. Guerrero (2008; 2010), shows how colonial linguistic policies see EFL teachers, and how these policies perpetuate three images: *teachers are invisible*, *teachers are clerks*, and *teachers are technicians/marketers* (p.35). Although these images are not always visibly shown, they are normalized by universities' practices and discourses.

The fact is, coloniality is rooted in common sense. It is established through strong ideologies that have been perpetuated by means of specific colonial mechanisms; coloniality is also well and cautiously articulated to the social, cultural, and educative context to the point that they become imperceptible (Grosfoguel, 2011; Kumashiro, 2000; Kumashiro, 2009; López-Calvo, 2016; Estermann, 2014).

Nevertheless, I would be mistaken if I considered that PELTs were uncritical in analyzing what happened in their TP. As several scholars have discussed through many research articles, PELTs express their opinions, positions and actions towards teaching and learning through highly englihtening reflections (Castañeda-Peña, Rodríguez-Uribe, Salazar-Sierra, & Chala-Bejarano, 2016; Cote, 2012; Durán Narváez, Lastra Ramírez, & Morales Vasco, 2013; Gutiérrez, 2015). These authors have found evidence of different levels of personal agency among PELTs. Vallacher and Wenger (1989), have identified two basic levels of personal agency, high and low. Under their viewpoint, a high level of personal agency represents "the tendency to understand one's action in terms of its consequences and implications." In contrast, a low level represents "the tendency to see one's action in terms of its details or mechanisms" (p. 662).

In addition to my personal concerns regarding the influence of coloniality[62] on the training of English teachers, I grew interested in finding a research approach that could have a potential to uncover how colonial mecanisms exert such influence, while at the same time assuring that the interpretation of

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62   There is a clear distinction between coloniality and colonialism.Grosfoguel (2011), states that coloniality helps us to "understand the continuity of colonial form of domination after the end of colonial administrations, produced by colonial cultures and structures in the modern/colonial capitalist world-system" (p. 13); this author uses the term coloniality to refer to *colonial situations* in the current world "where colonial administrations have almost been eradicated from the capitalist world-system". Colonialism refers to the ideologies that justify and legitimate the asymmetric and hegemonic order established by the colonial power (Estermann, 2014); Grosfoguel uses the term "*colonialism* to refer to *colonial situations* enforced by the presence of a colonial administration such as the period of classical colonialism" (p. 14).

PELTs realities included their voices. Consequently, I focused my attention on clarifying my epistemological position. I learned that, if I wanted to empower and help PELTs free themselves from these colonial influences, I needed to take a critical stance.

The Need for a Critical Stance in IELTE

At this point of my journey as a scholar within the field of English-language teaching, I started getting interested in what other Colombian scholars had written and published about PELTs. I also wanted to learn if and what aspects from those studies could contribute to my understanding of IELTE (Castañeda-Trujillo, 2018; Castañeda-Trujillo & Aguirre Hernandez, 2018). Inquiries about PELTs in Colombia have mainly followed qualitative approaches, where case studies are the most frequently published research studies. One of the reasons for using case studies as a preferred research method is that it allows to focus on the phenomenon during a specified period and on a determined context (Merriam as cited in Aguirre, 2014 and Camacho et al., 2012). Other scholars prefer the exploratory case study arguing that the topic of the study has not been sufficiently explored in Colombia (Cote, 2012; Gutiérrez, 2015). A few of them have used narrative approaches to explore what happens with PELT (Castañeda-Peña, Rodríguez-Uribe, Salazar-Sierra, & Chala-Bejarano, 2016; Durán Narváez, Lastra Ramírez, & Morales Vasco, 2013). Some other authors have used methods like phenomenology (Cardenas & Suarez, 2009) and grounded theory (Fajardo, 2013). Some of the instruments and techniques to gather the data that scholars used in their studies were field notes, reflective journals, autobiographies, narrative events, surveys, questionnaires, and interviews, among others.

Although the research approaches that other scholars used in their inquiries led me to gain some understanding of IELTE, as a scholar I advocated that we have to create "conditions for empowerment and social justice while inquiring with others" (Kincheloe, McLaren, Steinberg, & Monzó, 2018, pág. 421). My viewpoint implies that researchers must announce their interest in pursuing emancipation through "conscientização (following Freire's ideas), which is assumed to emerge from resulting dialogues where mutual respect and trust should lead to social transformation" (Kincheloe, McLaren, & Steinberg, 2011, p. 422). This critical research approach entails assuming language as the means to contribute to constructing realities through

discursive formations. Those discursive formations would be neither objective nor neutral so will not contribute to regulation and domination of such realities. On the other hand, it is possible to unveil such domination and to act towards a critical consciousness from a critical approach (Foucault, 1972; Granados-Beltrán, 2018).

In the same line of thinking, bricolage is an emancipatory research construct that is rooted on critical viewpoints. Bricolage guides researchers (also named bricoleurs) to see research not as a unique procedure where certain predetermined steps should be followed in order to reach the objective. Instead, bricolage has the intention to involve different approaches, thus contributing to the acquisition of a conceptual distance that leads towards a critical consciousness. This distance can be achieved by rejecting the passive acceptance of externally imposed research methods, which tactically certify ways that justify decontextualized, reductionist, and inscribed knowledge based on dominant modes of power (Kincheloe, McLaren, Steinberg, & Monzó, 2018; Kincheloe, McLaren, & Steinberg, 2011).

In my inquiry, I intend to implement a bricolage by means of selecting approaches from different disciplines that specifically could contribute to an in-depth understanding of how PELTs experience the transition from being PELTs to becoming professional English-language teachers. To this end, I will need to assume the role of a bricoleur, who "becomes an expert on the relationships connecting cultural context, meaning-making, power, and oppression within disciplinary boundaries" (Kincheloe, 2001, p. 684). For that reason, it is essential to revise the role of participants in this research study.

Understanding The Participants or Understanding With Participants?

On my view, each study published by academics on the topic of ELTE or TP is valuable and fulfills the purpose of informing about what happens with the PELT. Researchers have used the voices of PELTs to support what they found, as well as to explain the phenomena they are investigating. According to Merriam (2009), under a qualitative research approach, "researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (p.5); by doing so, investigators adopt different positions and methods for conducting their

study (case study, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, narrative inquiry, etc.).

Nevertheless, Vasilachis de Gialdino (2009) recommends paying careful attention to the possible ontological ruptures that may happen when the investigator focuses mostly on the *what to know* instead of on *who knows*. Seeing the researched subjects as finished products who do not have their own epistemology, leads to an objectification of the participants in a research study. This fact causes an epistemological gap between the researcher (knowing subject) and the subjects investigated (known subject) where researchers observe and listen to the researched subjects from what they consider to be the correct angle (methodology and instruments) and try to interpret the reality from their eyes objectively. Such a gap causes the investigator to become an impartial observer while the subject under investigation becomes a passive receiver of his gaze (Savage, as cited in Vasilachis de Gialdino, 2009). Such view entails that, to a degree, the PELTs' voices are not heard entirely and, consequently, PELTs become invisible, alienated, and sometimes objectified, which constitutes a form of oppression. The presence of this oppression becomes a colonial mechanism, which in terms of research methods and processes leads to the normalization of research methods and the standardization of how to interpret reality and present research findings. (Grosfoguel, 2011).

As Vasilachis de Gialdino (2009) proposes, a close epistemological relationship between the researcher and the subject under investigation, is needed for an active participation in the research process where both epistemologies, voices, and subjectivities interact to build knowledge. Within the same perspective, bricolage highlights the relationship between a researcher's way of seeing and the social location of his/her personal history (Kincheloe, McLaren, & Steinberg, 2011). That means that in my role as a bricoleur, my story also counts and has an influence on the development of the research project, as stated by Kincheloe, McLaren, Steinberg, and Monzó (2018 p. 435) citing Smith (2012):

> Researchers in bricolage are also deeply critical and reflective of their own research practice and scholarly activities, recognizing the power embedded in, and the legitimacy granted to, knowledge stemming from the academy.

Being critical in research implies adopting a democratic approach, which demands an active and responsible role from all individuals. Then, the ethic

dimension involved in this way of acting is understood as "consideration for the others in our social interactions through the inquiry," meaning "to embed a social ethical of care into everyday experiences as educators (and) researchers" (Phillips & Zavros, 2012, p. 53).

Critical and democratic research approaches, support that "interrelationality, agency, interconnectivity, and evolving creative processes of researchers and participants forming knowledge together, offer scope for reimagining participants" (Phillips & Zavros, 2012, p. 62). Under these premises, participants become co-investigators and share places with researchers throughout the process of data collection, data reduction, data organization, and concluding data, which encourages the authentic inclusion of voice, authorship and signature, and not rhetorical statements. This process of empowering research participants advocates addressing the injustices they encounter in a particular social context, which allows them to reconstruct experiences in a more fluid, mutual, complex and nuanced way (Probst, 2016).

The new positionalities of researcher and participants above discussed, demand a research approach that allows for a multiplicity of connections, which can be mapped and intertwined to create a story related to the *selves* within differentiated contexts. Here, Collaborative Autoethnography (CA) comes to be a valid research approach that should lead to the achievement of this purpose, which is discussed below.

The Path Towards Conducting Collaborative Autoethnography

Some academics resist the idea that autoethnography can be taken as a valuable research method because of its strong emphasis on the *self* (Méndez, 2013). They assert that this characteristic converts autoethnography into a controversial, even self-compliant genre that seems to be closer to the autobiographical narrative, lacking rigor and ethically weak. (Allen-Collinson & Hockey, 2008).

Regarding the ethical issue, Ladapat (2017) mentions that, due to the lack of distance resulting from the fact that the participant and the researcher are the same person, it becomes difficult to translate a personal experience into sociocultural and political action, and consequently the study foci is very

limited. Winkler (2017) explains that some scholars reject autoethnography because it does not rely on objectivity while resorts to memory as the only source of data. However, despite the complexities encountered in autoethnography, it has gained increasing popularity, which allows us to find more advantages than challenges.

As Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011) state, autoethnography is a research method to have researchers' voices heard. One inspiring example can be found in Archana Pathak's (2010) article where she describes the autoethnography of her journey towards having her voice heard. While I was reading this essay, I could not help but envision myself doing my own autobiography as an English-language teacher, a TP mentor, a scholar, a Ph.D. student, a religious person, a husband, a father, and so on, while at the same time doing a "cultural interpretation of the connectivity between self (my self) and others" (Chang, Ngunjiri, & Hernandez, 2013, p. 18). This method should allow me to start a research process where I should be in position to articulate the interplay among the self (auto), the culture (ethno), and the research process itself (graphy) (Chang, Ngunjiri, & Hernandez, 2013). In Pathak's essay, she explored her *self* and looked for the moments in her life when she had experienced new beginnings as a scholar and as a racialized woman (Pathak, 2010).

Something relevant here is to acknowledge that "reflexivity involves being aware of one's backgrounds, contexts, and predilections and realizing how it affects the way we research" (Mitra, 2010, p. 14). This reflexivity takes the autoethnographers to an understanding of the particularities of their own stories. As Pathak (2010) mentions about herself, "as an autoethnographer, <u>my story is unique</u> because <u>it is mine</u>; it is a lived experience, and also because <u>I have the academic training to examine it critically</u>"[63] (p. 2). A unique story written by the person who lived it, that is analyzed by the same person, should allow to show his/her passions and struggles while creating a "sense-making situations" that embodies life (Holman Jones, Adams, & Ellis, 2013, p. 433). "That serves as a foundation for future scholarship . . . to disrupt the colonial mindset that method exists a priori, without the need to articulate its roots, its assumptions, and its origins" (Pathak, 2010, p. 9).

An interesting contribution to better understand the potential of autoetnographies as a research approach, can be found in Hernandez, Sancho, Creus, and Montané (2010) article, which describes how more than one voice was integrated in an autoethnographic study. These authors concluded that, by

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63   My underlining.

doing an autoethnography in isolation, a researcher would be risking alienation of *the other* because *the other* is fundamental to the construction of the self. Also, as Ellis and Bochner (2006) discuss, an autoethnography helps to position the author, but this positionality cannot happen if *the other* is not included; only by "including the author doesn't make something autoethnography" (p. 432). Furthermore, Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011) state that "autoethnography is both process and research", since researchers use principles of "autobiography and ethnography to do and write autoethnography" (p. 1).

In addition, Roth (2009) explains that the term autoethnography advocates an ethical commitment because the composite name has a particular implication. According with this author, *auto* denotes *one's own*, i.e., that whenever the author writes about himself/herself, it is not another person writing; there would not be a writer/protagonist dichotomy but rather a writer-him/herself. The second part of the term, *ethnography*, is composed of *ethnos* that means *nation*, and *graphy* that means *describe* (writing). Thus, the etymological meaning of this word is a *description of a nation*. Autoethnography "is the writing of a people where the writer is himself/herself a member; it is, actually, the people writing the people, similarly to an autobiography, which is where the author and protagonist are models of each other" (Roth, 2009, p. 3).

Winkler (2017) calls the attention to the relation above discussed regarding *auto* and *ethno*. The author explains that a balance between these two aspects of autoethnography is required in order to avoid potential ruptures. On the one hand, an emphasis on the component of *auto*, might make the writing excessively person-centered, thus converting it into an autobiography that would account for only personal moments and would violate ethical conditions by neglecting to acknowledge *the other*. On the other hand, by placing the emphasis on the *ethno* component, the essence of the person would vanish, thus transforming the writing in a series of general events without the evocative aspect of autoethnography so that the writing could become an ethnography[64]. Consequently, according to Winkler (2017, p. 2):

> The crux to the matter, however, is to determine how to balance the study of personal lives, on one hand, and the focus on how these stories are embedded in an informed by a cultural context on the other hand.

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64   Ellis and Bochner affirm that ethnography refers to the connection between ethnographers and the people in the communities, so ethnographic studies entail *coactivity* and *co-performance*; however, this relation takes distance from autoethnography because it looks for "the embrace of intimate involvement, engagement and embodied participation" (Ellis & Bochner, 2006, p. 433).

Winkler's quote clearly presents a key challenge to researchers who might be interested in conducting autoethnographies: finding a balance that may allow the author's voice (evocation[65]) to be informed by the culture (society).

Finding the balance in autoethnography permits "undercut conventions of writing that foster hierarchy and division that have been caused and preserved by the elite class of professionals who wittingly or unwittingly divide the world into those who see the light and those kept in the dark." (Ellis & Bochner, 2006, p. 438). Nonetheless, autoethnography, in itself, does not allow me to connect my *self* with my participants' *selves*. It was only after reading Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011) when I found that community autoethnographies "facilitate *community-building* research practices" and "also make opportunities for 'cultural and social intervention' possible" (p. 7).

Community autoethnography is another name to what Chang, Ngunjiri and Hernandez (2013) called collaborative autoethnography (CAE). According to these authors, CAE allows a group of researchers to work collectively and cooperatively to interrogate themselves about a phenomenon they live in common. CAE "position(s) self-inquiry at a center stage" (p. 22), so that researchers would gain a deeper understanding of society and self (Ngunjiri, Hernandez, & Chang, 2010), by keeping *self-focused, researchers-visible, context-conscious and critical-dialogic*.

In CAE, *self-focused* implies that the researcher has an additional role as a participant, which Andersen (as cited Chang, Ngunjiri and Hernandez, 2013) called "complete member researchers." Additionally, the researcher becomes the instrument and the data source at the same time. This self-focused leads to critical self-reflection, which permits the "researcher to turn the lens inwards to make personal thoughts and actions visible and transparent to the audience." Consequently, autoethnographers can "make the inner workings of their mind visible" (p. 22), i.e., make *researchers-visible*.

Context-conscious in CAE happens when the researcher, as part of a broad social context, can shape the context through the autoethnography by "focusing outward on social and cultural aspects of their personal experiences." Simultaneously, autoethnographers also shape their self by "looking inward. In this way, they expose a vulnerable self that is moved by and move through, refract, and resist, cultural interpretations" (Ellis and Bochner cited in Chang, Ngunjiri and Hernandez, 2013, p. 23).

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65   Ellis and Bochner (2006) explain that one of the goals of autoethnography is evocation, but an evocative text is not necessarily an autoethnography.

Finally, CAE is *critically dialogic* since it permits "the researcher to become an active instrument and participant in creating meaning and structuring values" (p. 23). It should be possible to develop, through autoethnography, a productive dialogue from the perspectives of both, the researcher and the participant; such dialogue is to be enriched by "each member's occupation of these dual spaces as well as the dialogue that is created in community," which leads to "create a rich space for meaning-making and analysis" (p. 23).

At this point, I need to acknowledge that embracing this research path seems not easy; I understand that there is much more to explore, but I also believe that this is a good start. CAE has many advantages such as: this research method permits a collective exploration of researcher subjectivity; it helps to reduce, to a certain extent, the power tensions that can happen while researching in collaboration, so the researchers-participants share the power; it produces an enrichment in the investigation process since researchers-participants can benefit from the different insights the others provide, given that theses insights possess different characteristics and knowledge in themselves; it consolidates the sense of community since each researcher-participant shares personal accounts that become part of the social construction of the community.

However, there are two key disadvantages that autoethnographers have to overcome. The first one is trustworthiness, which might be at risk when participants are not willing to be transparent with each other. A second key disadvantage is related to logistical issues that could interfere with the moments when all the participants must get together for sharing, since face-to-face communication is vital in this exercise. These two aspects are essential to be taken into account before starting the process of collaborative autoethnography (Ladapat, 2017).

CAE allows me to see PELTs' not as participants but rather as co-researchers, where we will work together to denounce what has caused oppression and dispossession of the self along our process of becoming English-language teachers. CAE also permits to find a synergy between the experiences that people involved in the process live, and the context, culture, and other factors that affect them and adds a multidisciplinary lens to the research inquiry. Those attributes permit the reduction of criticism about the lack of rigor, narcissism, and self-indulgence (Ladapat, 2017; Roth, 2009; Winkler, 2017).

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, I intended to bring CAE closer to English-language education research discussions. Across several sections, I also discussed some personal experiences when illustrating the process that led me to select CAE as the best approach for my research interests, a process that took place within a specific context that ended up determining my preference. CAE offers the opportunity to gain knowledge through the co-construction of stories located within a particular context, thus allowing for integration of the evocative and the analytical dimension of the human experience. On my view, there is not doubt that when using CAE, it will be possible to advocate for a freer way of doing research. It should also allow to open spaces where to exercise the right to write about what is right, and to inquire about oneself and the other, through a horizontal, fluid and relational dialogue (Yazan, 2018). However, using CAE also brings over uncertainties related to what the co-researchers bring to the floor, their particularities, and ways of being and doing. These, and any other ethical challenges must be solved along the co-research process.

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"It has been very satisfying for me to know that research is being done on this issue of decoloniality, in which interculturality is at the center as it is also this complex world full of traditions defined by diversity and conflict. This book questions the ethical/political dimensions derived from the documentary and contextual investigation to develop a situational and cross-situational ethics of research activities. This means assuming the role well defined by Denzin and Lincon (1994) of "a researcher shaped multiculturally" by class, gender, race, ethnicity, culture and/or the scientific community."

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