Promoting the Use of Local Literacies among EFL University Teachers: Sources to Connect Curriculum and Teaching

Yuly Andrea Nieto Gómez

Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas

School of Science and Education

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Yuly Andrea Nieto Gómez

Thesis Director: Amparo Clavijo Olarte, Ph.D

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Note of acceptance

Thesis Director: _____
Amparo Clavijo Olarte, Ph.D.

Jury: _____
Name

Jury: _____
Name

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This project resembles a huge gratitude for my parents, Carlos and Juliana, this is my way to say thank you for staying by my side despite the distance. Your love makes me brave, it takes me home! And your support gave me the strength to dream on and fly. I also wish to thank the love of my life, David Roa, for always believing in me, never doubting all the extraordinary paths we can walk together, and for giving me your unconditional love every day. Finally, I dedicate this thesis to my soul mate, my brother Carlos Nieto, you have always been there for me, thank you for trusting me, and showing me I count on you! I know. I promise we will keep on working on our heart-based view of the world.

Stay hand in hand, stay with me, love is the key to believe, in our hearts, in our minds, in our souls.

ABSTRACT

This qualitative interpretive study describes the links that four EFL university teachers establish with local resources to connect curriculum and language literacy teaching. Thus, through professional development workshops, the teachers were invited to become enquirers of students' realities while participating in professional group discussions, conducting asset-mapping with their students, and engaging in curriculum construction by addressing student-led inquiries from the assets identified in their context. Using a grounded theory approach, I analyzed the data that emerged from the discussions, curricular units, semi-structured interviews and class observation.

Findings revealed that teachers use local literacies for curriculum and teaching when they rethink the sources of curriculum with their students (getting out of their comfort zone, and engaging in innovative pedagogical practices) to promote situated literacies, through an exploration and interaction with community resources and members. They valued students' voices, encouraging them to question, propose, and engage in text production using insights from their professional fields as local assets.

Moreover, the teachers situated local literacies within students' professional fields in ELT by renovating a skill-based curriculum for one that was founded on local inquiry, including both the linguistic and social needs of the learners. The institutional standards served as the assessment criteria. Therefore, teachers viewed evaluation as reflecting the teaching and learning processes that represented students' reality. Finally, the teachers promoted interaction with the outside community, in order to take action from the academic community by potentiating individual capacity to work towards desired solutions to community issues.

Key words: local literacies, local inquiry, teacher professional development, community-based pedagogies, context-sensitive curriculum.

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Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I present the introduction, problem statement, and justification of this research that I carried with four EFL university teachers from a private university in Bogotá. These teachers have students from different professional programs in their classes, such as social communication, industrial engineering, marketing and trade, environmental engineering, law, economy, digital marketing, psychology, and systems engineering.

This qualitative interpretive study serves as a reflection on the exploration of local literacies in their teaching context to widen their understanding of socially embedded pedagogies. It focuses on the identification of the links the teachers establish with local resources to make decisions about their language literacy teaching. Then, through professional development workshops the teachers were engaged in the renovation of a skill-based curriculum, for one that considers literacy as a practice that needs to be developed critically through the interaction with local structures.

The focus of my project was on the exploration of the local resources that influence the life of both teachers and students, so that the curriculum emerges from the teachers' enquiry of students' realities, and their willingness to adapt the teaching practice, for one that innovates in a contextualized way, which appreciates the knowledge students bring from their everyday context.

In this study, the main finding reflects that the teachers started to awake their interest in examining of their role and practice, while looking for local realities. For this exercise to evolve, teachers re-thinking the sources of curriculum was a determinant factor that meant taking professional risks towards understanding and acting together new

pedagogies that require social exploration. They moved away from a static skill-based curriculum, materials and textbooks provided to teach to the construction of context-embedded opportunities for learning using students' realities and local resources.

Building from Kreztman & Micknight (1993), assets are understood as powerful and valuable resources presented in the community, which can become visible by getting involved in a critical reading of the community, in order to inspire local investigations. Therefore, teachers' constant inquiry and exploration of students' realities allow them to connect and contextualize the EFL class. This is supported by Murrell (2001) who invites teachers to be knowledgeable of their students' community.

In this fashion, by raising awareness on social issues, they can encourage text production from the different disciplines of study that converge in their classes. Thus, the English language is used to reflect, pose problems, and be participants of social transformations from the academic environment. The subsequent justification develops the main tenets that build the objective of this study, which allow to foresee its impact in ELT professional development, by exploring and enacting socially-situated pedagogies that connect the classroom with students'

Justification

The transformation of the role of the English Language class has become a relevant discussion among teacher-researchers, since views on language have considered the social practice as a defining way to construct reality, as well as to create meaning from a contextualized and local exercise (Pennycook, 2010). Therefore, from theses perspectives, teaching a foreign language should aim at evolving from traditional concepts of literacy, and one way to do this is to include the community as a text that can be explored, through wondering and pursuing personal inquiries. It allows becoming critical of sociocultural issues, providing a context-sensitive value to the English language learning process in the classroom.

Accordingly, the research objective of this study is to guide the teachers through the enquiry of different local and sociocultural literacies in their students' context, with the intention of designing curricular units that meet educational requirements, and portray their students' realities, values, and background, personal and individual needs within socially-embedded pedagogies. Also, the project analyzes their implementation of curriculum though which teachers critically reflect on their role, reaffirming their perspective about education, language learning, and critical literacy, to continue problematizing social issues, by planning and fostering further personal inquiries with students.

In terms of the impact that is expected on the participants, it contributes to the teachers' continual professional development, by encouraging them to explore their own views to language teaching, and using them to construct a curriculum that addresses local values. Moreover, getting involved in this exploration allows the teachers to rethink their

practice to makes decisions based on the dynamic interconnection of language and reality (Freire & Macedo, 1987), which represents a way out of standardized practices of language learning, since teachers are not only concerned with language acquisition, but also with its use and applications to enhance their students' lives outside of the classroom setting.

To illustrate to previous point, the problematization, presented in the next sub-section, sheds light on three concerns identified that encouraged me to carry out this project, through working the participant teachers. They involved linking social issues with the EFL content, meeting institutional standards when addressing local realities in the class, and the use of a deficit discourse when referring to what students were capable of doing in class.

Problem statement

My motivation to conduct this study evolved from the teachers' self-evaluation, and co-evaluation. As the coordinator of the department where I work, I meet with the teachers to close every semester. In that meeting, we talk about their perceptions towards their practice, the materials they use, the projects, the challenges, and innovations for the semester. In this formal encounter, I found three common patterns among the four participant teachers: 1) their willingness to engage students in a way that they would no see language as a requirement. In their classes, they showed a commitment when designing activities that came from what students reported as their everyday experiences. They had worked with projects such as drug consumption at university, a campaign to improve mobility in Bogotá, a research about the diet and nutritional components in the food provided for free to the students from low-strata at university.

2) They argued that sometimes they felt restricted by the standards of the level they were teaching, and they could not fully develop their classes and group projects, because they had to be in accordance with the institutional agenda. 3) Although they were opened to working on topics of students' realities, they sometimes used a deficit discourse, stating that most students did not have the linguistic skills to conduct a project, that they lacked grammar structures or strategies to read or write, which made it difficult to engage all of them in a project that required them to express themselves in a different language.

These three concerns allowed me to propose a project through which EFL university teachers rethink curriculum and teaching by conceptualizing socially-situated pedagogies as the social structures that guide personal beliefs (Short & Burke, 1991) The possibility to construct a context-sensitive curriculum was based on how it can raise curiosity, awareness,

a search for questions, and critical reflections; through making use of local texts that motivate students to enquire about their realities, so that the EFL classroom reacts to them by integrating such needs into the language content.

Throughout the decades language education has been concerned with an exploration of foundations that respond critically to social and cultural challenges, in order to approach meaningful and life-long learning experiences that result from considering students' environments as a way to foster sense making, not only by maximizing opportunities inside the classroom, but understanding and transforming possibilities outside of it (Kumaravadivelu, 2001).

Furthermore, for the practical realization of this research study I want to involve local inquiry as the educational perspective that guides the pursuit for new substantial questions, opportunities, and insights gathered along the process; through which teachers can grant value to students' meaning construction and engage them in an examination from different viewpoints. This stance regards learning from the need to develop problem posing, rather than just problem solving skills (Freire, 1985). In other words, teaching evolves from the problems that inquiry awakes in students, which emerge from the reality they feel committed and related to; that is why knowledge needs to be co-constructed from the social activities that occur not only within the individual, but between individuals (Wells, 1992:8)

Considering the aforementioned, one of the challenges EFL University teachers ought to critically respond to is the consideration of language as a means of discovering, describing, and transforming reality rather than a decontextualized practice that focuses on developing skills to read, write or speak. Also, they need to get involved in the critique of official models, standardized and imposed curricula, that perpetuate overgeneralizing

realities that do not fit in locally produced knowledge, causing the reinforcement of social inequalities (Gonzalez, 2007) which refrains the teacher from being considered a valuable member of decision-making, teaching effectively, as well as becoming agents of their development

Then, by questioning dictated practices, the teachers reflect on their professional development as critical participants of their own interventions, assumptions, practice and theories. That is to say, they start to explore ways to connect the local texts with the content and institutional requirements; which stimulates a new pedagogical repertoire that takes apart deficit views and discourses of social problems, and encourages them to increase their expectations, own the curriculum, improve relationships in the classroom, and seize textual practices that eventually have an effect in successful outcomes (Comber & Kamler, 2004).

Research question: How do EFL university teachers use local assets as sources for curriculum and teaching?

Research objective: Identify the links EFL University teachers establish with local resources to make decisions about their language literacy teaching.

The next chapter displays the theoretical constructs that supported my research project, and enabled the analysis of data.

Chapter 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter accounts for the theoretical justification of my study of involving teachers in the exploration of students' realities in order to build a curriculum that helps to develop literacies from socially embedded pedagogies. To achieve so, I support my project by introducing three main constructs. Literacy as a socially constructed practice, considering as main sources the work of Freire & Macedo (1987); Luke & Woods (2009); and Comber (2013,2016). Local literacies and community-based pedagogies, conceptualizing from local studies, such as those proposed by Sharkey & Clavijo (2013) and Sharkey, et al, (2016) to broader concepts suggested by Canagarajah (2005); Greenwood (2013); and Demarest (2014).

I propose a community-oriented vision as a continual process of teacher self-development, building from the view of teacher disposition towards their professional development proposed by Mills and Ballantyne (2009) Finally, I take the concept of community teacher (Murrell, 2001) to promote a contextualized EFL teaching professional development.

Literacy as a Socially Constructed Practice

When literacy is approached from a socially-situated perspective, the context becomes the starting point for teaching and learning as a process of interacting and negotiating with local texts. It shapes an individual's perception of their own reality. This occurs by teachers fostering a sense of agency in students, as they reorganize and transform their environment with the production of new texts. All uses of language are directly related to reality; therefore, literacy, as proposed by Freire & Macedo (1987) refers to "how to

write and re-write reality, transforming it through a conscious work" (p. 23). Thus, literacy constitutes a framework to contextualize and raise awareness from the EFL classroom.

Then, considering literacy as the ability to read and write or as skill development (Barton, Hamilton, & Ivanic, 2000) to acquire a target language, restrains a meaningful cultural appropriation. To illustrate this argument, I can refer to Freire's (1987; 1998) call for the need of a critical spirit in teachers, in order to perceive and intervene actively in reality; otherwise individuals would be submerged in the contradictions that change brings into society, without discerning the challenges that characterize such transitions. Therefore, the curriculum can invite students to be participants of social readjustments to the epoch, by integrating historical-cultural events.

Valuing the historical and existential experiences of the sociocultural context is considered as an integral way for people to produce, reproduce, and transform meaning. For instance, Woods, Comber & Iyer. (2015) argue that approaching literacy as a standardized practice that focuses on repeated test preparation, challenge-free, time-filling and thoughtless activities, offers fickle literacies that do not encourage students to construct their capacity for academic learning and for achieving complex literacies. This results in reduced opportunities for innovation, creativity, and a culturally-embedded classroom experience.

Thus, an EFL teacher that explores of local cultures to integrate them in the language arts curriculum can promote the development of literacies among his/her students. In this perspective, EFL students' learning experiences are centered on the analysis of issues which they find personally significant: their cultural context, community problems,

and aspirations to rename and reconstruct their own version of the world (Luke & Woods, 2009).

In this sense, literacy as socially-constructed practice, accounts for an exercise that evolves from the analysis and interrogation of the historical and cultural context of places (Comber, 2016). It problematizes social and classroom textual practices, through granting teachers and students the possibility to move from awareness to action (Pandya & Ávila, 2013) while becoming researchers that use language to question and produce texts informed by their own reality.

In my project, teachers explore and learn about the local resources they can use to build the curriculum. This, according to Comber, Thomson, and Wells (2001) is a way to negotiate critical literacies, since these practices represent a teachers' commitment with ethical and pedagogical values that respect students' ways of knowing, as well as cultural and political histories. That is to say that the local context in which teachers are immersed has an impact in curriculum, pedagogy, and theory.

To sum up, critical literacy as a practice in the classroom encourages teachers and students to attempt to disrupt taken-for-granted normality, practices, and texts (Comber, 2001). Thus, teachers start to ask themselves how things could be done differently, as to mobilize students' knowledge and experiences, by engaging, researching, and analyzing local realities that allow them and their students to redesign texts with social intent and real-world use.

Through my theoretical discussion, I propose local literacies and community-based pedagogies as the curricular perspectives for teachers to foster context-sensitivity and

awareness, in a way that the academic environment deals with the sociocultural reality. To expand on this discussion, I present the discussion below.

Local literacies and community-based pedagogies (CBP)

Why do I present community and local knowledge as key concepts when discussing language literacy teaching? According to Canagarajah (2005) "local knowledge has to be veritably reconstructed—through an ongoing process of critical reinterpretation, counter discursive negotiation and imaginative application" (p. 12). This notion suggests that teachers are involved in the exploration of the relevance and complexity of local knowledge as to create a curriculum that integrates values, perceptions, and diversity within the community by fostering a continuous reflection that leads to a search for an alternate reality.

From this perspective, the practice of teaching and learning is concerned with collective and community actions that allow their members to make their own choices to deal with social processes, to exercise their citizenship. Accordingly, the local, as political, cultural, economic and identity reality, provides the individual with the basic instruments to construct a relationship with the global. For this reason, local knowledge acts as the essence of every educational action by fostering a cultural negotiation through a constant dialogue (Mejía, 2011).

Furthermore, local textual practices are resources that influence the everyday life of both students and teachers; therefore, when they are positioned in the EFL classroom, they evolve into a cross-disciplinary dialogue (Smith & Sobel, 2010) which inspires teachers to explore problems and projects beyond their area of knowledge. This view of literacy

upholds stronger connections, contributions, and engagement with the student's community.

It is suitable to take into consideration the fact that a pedagogy that is founded on place and community is not detached from the national or global. In fact, as Smith & Sobel (2010) explain, through learning about what students are familiar with, they can get closer to phenomena that are invisible to them. An example of this argument can be taken from a research project, which aimed to position the place as the object of study (Comber, 2013), in which two professors from an underprivileged area engaged their students as researchers of the urban renewal process in their neighborhood. Cases included the demolition of old buildings, eviction, and new infrastructure, among others.

Throughout the process, students produced multimodal artifacts and texts (reports for school assemblies, field trips, interviews with extended family, biographies, and descriptions of the places in school and neighborhood). Then, through visual photographs and diaries, they became analysts, which allowed them to share places where they belong, question the renewal, as well as to think about their desired school and neighborhood by exploring their own views and those of their peers.

This critical action research presents us with an alternative classroom dynamic, one which focuses on sharing experiences, and working with a common, rather than personal, goal to create own versions of community. According to McInerney, Smyth, and Down (2011), when teachers and students examine their community and school from a critical perspective, they elicit questions about features within it, actions for betterment, monuments and heritage, invisible groups, quality of the local environment, socio-economical distribution, as well as the achievement of a just and democratic society.

The previous foundations present a way to evolve into critical literacy practices, which fosters a sense of possibility, agency, and transformation by recognizing the assets in the place and space of study (Comber, 2017). This idea is mirrored by Rincón & Clavijo (2016) who report on their qualitative study focused on analyzing the ways in which community inquiry provides students with opportunities to discover socio-cultural issues in their neighborhoods through a multimodal experience. These authors carried out a project in a low-socio economic public school with a socio-critical research lens. The study began by mapping the community for the identification of an issue which continued with documentation through interviews, note-taking, and questionnaires.

Finally, students created multimodal texts to present their findings creatively in a blog that fostered peer discussion regarding possible solutions to the problematic situations. The findings reveal that students were intellectually and emotionally engaged when they critically reflected on their role within the community, engaging in resiliency practices to overcome social issues experienced in their barrios.

Such local inquiry justifies that the EFL classroom experience can respond to students' world by disengaging from the view of texts as isolated from context. When teachers expose their students to challenging settings, based on a pedagogy of place, they envision the emancipatory role of language practices in their lives. This opposes the assumption that teacher, student, and school achievement can be measured by isolated, individualistic, and quantifiable classroom routines (Greenwood, 2013; Gruenewald, 2003a).

With all the components mentioned above, Gruenewald invites teachers to demonstrate that places are pedagogical; that is, acknowledging that "as centers of

experience, places teach us about how the world works and how our lives fit into the spaces we occupy" (p. 10). Thus, to understand our relationship with the world, we need to value place by exploring it through ongoing social inquiry. This, in turn, becomes the principle for and education practice that appreciates researching for cultural well-being (King, 2008).

Additionally, pedagogy of place invites teachers to get immersed in a constant exploration of the following dimensions: perceptual, sociological, ideological, political, and ecological. (Gruenewald, 2003b). Perception suggests that schools have to come up with strategies for teachers and students to perceive and establish connections with their surroundings. Now, to say that places are sociological is to recognize that we have to become aware of our role as citizens and participants in the sociopolitical process that a place constitutes; leading to the ideological dimension, when finding out about the interdependent economic, political, ideological, and ecological relationship among places near and far.

Teachers and students must enter the context of their regions, cities, neighborhoods, and schools to inquire about marginalization, the multiple forms of oppression, the possibilities for resistance, and transformation. As such, they may begin to move toward a concept of justice in education, perceived in a community with possibilities to the marginalized, while regarding the ecological dimension from the exploitation of people, and the exploitation of their environment.

Furthermore, when place along with cultural issues acts as the core of the curriculum, teachers and students can immerse themselves in the investigation of their society with a broader view by including different disciplines. Sharkey, Clavijo, and Ramirez (2016) conducted a study of community-based literacies in language teacher

education which included experienced teachers from social studies, chemistry, Spanish language arts, and English from three public schools in Bogotá. They aimed at discovering how the teachers developed and implemented community-based pedagogies, after designing projects that emerged from their students' problem-posing of their community. This way, teachers could meet the institutional standards by valuing local knowledge as a curriculum resource.

Projects such as understanding the semiotics of graffiti, the analysis of the socioeconomic reality of the students' neighborhood, interviewing workers and families, and finding out about Colombian history from their own and their families' voices, display, as described by the participants, that appreciating local knowledge as a curriculum resource increases teachers' autonomy and ownership, as well as students' motivation, engagement, and family involvement.

Thus, I conclude that CBP focuses on assembling the local context of interaction outside the classroom to construct a teaching practice and curriculum that is informed by researching the community assets. Sharkey (2012) defines CBP as follows:

> Curriculum and practices that reflect knowledge and appreciation of the communities in which schools are located and students and their families inhabit. It is an asset-based approach that does not ignore the realities of curriculum standards that teachers must address but emphasizes local knowledge and resources as starting points for teaching and learning. (p.11)

Through place-based learning, meeting the standards becomes a collaborative task of both teachers and students who involve the community as partners in the curriculum design (Demarest, 2014). For this to be accomplished, the teacher needs to envision part of

the outcome and provide a space to create assessment tools together. The assessment criteria that he or she proposes can include literacy skills, interpretation of place, collaboration, action taking, and reflection.

Accordingly, Demarest (2014) suggests that community-based experiences require the following curricular elements of local learning: "personal connections are the foundation of all learning, local investigations deepen subject understanding, build holistic understanding of places, as well as an opportunity for civic engagement" (p. 43).

To approach an awareness that emerges from place-based explorations, I refer to the study carried out by Sharkey and Clavijo (2012) on promoting the value of local knowledge in ESL/EFL teacher education through community-based field assignments. In this project, the authors found that through mapping, visiting, and interviewing people and places that students regularly meet (parks, cafeterias, discos, grocery stores, shopping malls), the participant teachers could later discover resources for integrating and rethinking community literacy practices that became central in the curriculum.

As a result, the field experience fostered creativity and expanded teachers' resources about how to connect students' backgrounds with the curriculum, as well as to enhance the interactions between teachers, students, family, and community. Moreover, they raise awareness on identifying assets that enrich curricular content, and allow the teacher to change their deficit view on language teaching to promote student agency.

In my study, teachers identified links with local resources that helped them build innovative curriculum and teaching, through which students feel that their lives are worthy the representation in the academic space. Thus, teachers become aware of their self-

development process by appreciating the assets they can find in the community around students' lives. This is exemplified in the construct below.

Community-oriented vision in a continual process of self-development

EFL teaching from a community-oriented vision generates possibilities to organize the curriculum collaboratively through the establishment of a bond between the classroom experiences of teachers and students, and the exploration of community resources and members. This view stimulates sympathy towards curiosity, by creating an inclusive learning environment which stands for a negotiation of experiences that value students' voices, encouraging them to question, propose, and imagine the path to contribute to transformations from their disciplines of study.

Teaching and learning, in this sense, is understood within the different collective contexts in which students interact to construct knowledge (Schecter, Solomon, & Kittmer, 2003). Thus, teachers need to be immersed in a continual process of self-development through accepting and being aware of the sociocultural reality that influences classroom practices, while including both the linguistic and social needs of the learners (Kumaravadivelu, 2001). Accordingly, the language teacher becomes attentive to their practice as an opening not only to maximize learning opportunities in the classroom, but, at the same time to understand and transform them outside the classroom.

When developing sensitivity towards a situated curriculum, the language teacher can get involved in an exploration of their roles as a community teacher (Murrell, 2011) who contextualizes the knowledge of the community, culture, and identity of the students and families they work with, in order to build a successful teaching practice in diverse settings. This standpoint questions the separation of the academic environment from the

everyday world of students, since the interaction of situated learning and practice allows individuals to engage in a purposeful activity.

Within this perspective, teachers build knowledge and analytical capacities by: Undertaking an analysis of the population they work with, learning about students, their families, incomes, and educational histories; exploring students' funds of knowledge; developing linguistic knowledge; revising what they know about pedagogy; and re-thinking about literacies in this time and the new literacies teachers and students need to learn (Comber, 2001).

That way, the conception of teacher development based on considering capacity only from the dimensions of knowledge, skills, and dispositions is challenged to integrate sociocultural theories and practices, as argued by Grant and Agosto (2008), given that teachers need to be ready to become informed by the particular community that will allow them to pose questions and take action from curriculum. That is, becoming conscious about their role as agents of change in the institutions the will contribute as an opportunity to become critical educators (Howard & Aleman, 2008).

Teachers' readiness to face socially-embedded pedagogies is based on dispositional as well as experiential factors that enable them to tech being aware and sensitive of their population. Mills and Ballantyne (2009) argue that two dispositional factors lead to commitment to social justice from the classroom: Self- awareness/ Self reflectiveness, which encompass thinking critically about one's own beliefs and attitudes towards the teaching practice. This exercise helps move to openness, by being attentive to other's experiences, getting to appreciate diversity.

In terms of the experiential factors, teachers are concerned with getting involved in experiences to interact with different cultural groups, leading to value and make sense of group experiences. By taking these actions the teacher finds ways to bring them into the class, as the starting point of every educational experience.

This can be achieved by carrying out field investigations that allow understanding the dynamics in a community, through the consideration of its physical spaces, individuals, local economy, institutions and associations (Kretzman & McKnight, 1993). Such local recognition permits the teachers to critique official standardized models or imposed curricula which perpetuate overgeneralizing realities that do not fit in locally produced knowledge. On the contrary, they may lead to the reinforcement of social inequalities (Gonzalez, 2007) restraining the teacher from being considered a valuable member of decision-making, teaching effectively, as well as becoming autonomous of their development.

Clavijo et al. (2004) refer to teachers adopting critical curricular perspectives in the way they think about their students' needs, as well as reflect on their curricular innovations and how they adjust their pedagogical practices. In their interpretive qualitative study, they identified the process of innovation, in terms of intervention, planning, and implementation, of 19 teachers from public schools in Bogotá through professional development programs on literacy. In this way, the teachers became involved in research experiences with their colleague participants from the same schools.

The outcomes of this project reflect that the innovative pedagogical actions proposed by the teachers were addressed to enhance learner's literacy development by including students, parents, and teachers in the different practices. In addition, they planned

and managed their curricular innovations by working collaboratively on the adjustments to the curriculum.

This professional development experience increases teachers' autonomy and ownership. Boyle-Biase & McIntyre (2008) propose a community-oriented setting to professional development schools (PDS), acting as reforms to the traditional models in which theory is separated from practice. In this fashion, community-oriented experiences affirm diversity, build community, and question inequity by recognizing places from an asset-based approach. Hence, local interaction provides opportunities to gain cultural insight from future students' values.

On the other hand, PDS stand for principles that allow teachers to master content, read their students' needs, collaborate with peers on inquiry, gain expertise in constructed learning, and use valid forms of assessment to determine what students learned—all of which leads to the development of a culture of academic expertise. As a result, the authors introduce a framework that would help develop a practice for: *teachers with heart,* who consider local issues as their own; *teachers with connections*, who participate in community committees; and *teachers with knowledge*, who manage to shape local knowledge into the curriculum.

The three constructs developed along this theoretical discussion oriented the process of professional development with teachers. They allowed me to position myself as a researcher that problematizes classroom practices isolated from the sociocultural awareness, and assets that make part of the everyday experience of both teachers and students. Through this study, my intention was to foster teachers' immersion in culturally-responsive practices, promoting the analysis of local literacies, interrogation, and

transformation of students' realities through contextualized text production, which, in this project, became relevant aspects of the TPD.

Hence, local literacies and community-based pedagogies are presented as the core of the pedagogical experience that acknowledges the assets that influence the life of teachers and students. Finally, a community-oriented vision in a continual process of self-development leads teachers to self-reflect on their profession beyond subject-matter specialists by fostering their own development form the commitment to research about local assets and issues.

The next section explains the framework that supports the research methodology with a qualitative descriptive and interpretive approach.

Chapter 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this section, I explain my decisions in terms of the research methodology of this study. Thus, it describes the question and objectives that support this project, in terms of the identification of the relation that the teachers found in the local assets as the resources they can use to build the EFL curriculum and for the teaching practice. To accomplish the goal, the type of research that suited this study was a descriptive-interpretive approach. The context and participants are also presented, as well as the reasoning for choosing the setting. Finally, I justified the selection of the data collection instruments, such as field notes, interviews, and curricular units.

Research question: How do EFL university teachers use local assets as sources for curriculum and teaching?

Research objective: Identify the links EFL University teachers establish with local resources to make decisions about their language literacy teaching.

Type of study

This qualitative study is aligned with the descriptive and interpretive paradigm, since the aim is to analyze the phenomenon previously proposed from the participants' views, as well as from their lived experiences in a real setting. The aim is to understand how they experience and interact in a particular context, as a way to make sense of their everyday world (Heigham & Croker, 2009). Hence, in this research, the voices of the teachers are the most prominent as they become critical researchers of their own community, by using local resources as the foundations for their teaching practice.

Then, the interpretation of data was based on what the teachers themselves presented as their language literacy perspective, curricula construction, and their role to get involved in a recognition and understanding of the context that surrounds students' realities, in order to renovate the EFL curriculum. This information was gathered from their interaction within a specific social setting (Hatch, 2002) that they explored through doing local inquiry with their students, as well as participating in professional development workshops.

According to Holstein & Gubrium (2005) (in Denzin & Lincoln, 2011) an interpretive practice accounts for the *hows* and *whats* that construct social reality. Therefore, these situated interpretation required the teachers to pose questions on assets they discovered with students in their contexts, as to plan a community project that allowed them to explore such *hows* and *whats* as the starting points to think about ways to transform their pedagogical practices, and build a contextualized curriculum.

Context of the study

I carried out this study at the language center of a private university in Bogota, where I work as the academic coordinator. This is the place where students from all the programs that they university offers come to fulfill their English language requisite to graduate. The students are between 17 to 22 years old. The vast majority belong to a middle-class socioeconomic level, and a minority of them belong to rural areas.

Students are required to take six English levels, distributed by the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), from A1 to B1. The levels are structured within a project-based approach, through which students are expected to work collaboratively with students from other fields. Each one is composed of 50 hours of class

(2 hours from Mon-Wed) and 20 hours of autonomous work.

The language center provides the syllabus for each level, according to the pre-established outcomes by skill, proposed by the CEFR. In class, teachers do not follow a textbook, they are encouraged to create autonomous lessons, materials, and activities that focus on learning through a real use of the language, such as using discussions, debates, games, and interactions that evolve from students' interests. In terms of the evaluation, the center provides the percentages for formative and summative assessment, and the teachers create the exams and activities, framed within the competences set for the level.

This context encouraged my study, since the fact that teachers were motivated to work with a project-based approach, creating innovative classes, which addressed students' motivations, acted as field the teachers could explore more, in order to deal with the issue of students' being reluctant to participate in the English class, as they seemed detached from their realities.

Participants

Four teachers accepted my invitation to participate in the professional development workshops. They are form 28-35 years old. The participants were 3 female and one male teacher. They all hold a B.A. in foreign language teaching and have an overall experience with university students of more than 7 years. In this project they worked with the following levels and study programs: Teacher #1: Level 5 (B1) Social communication, Industrial Engineering, environmental Engineering. Teacher #2: Level 2 (A2) Marketing and trade, systems engineering, psychology. Teacher #3: Level 6 (B1) Law. Teacher # 4: Level 4 (B1) Economy, marketing and trade, digital marketing. Along the level, teachers

and students are required to work on a project that is presented at the end of the semester in a project fair for the rest of the students at the center.

This group was selected according to convenience sampling (Given & Saumure, 2008), considering that they belong to the English department and that I am in constant communication with them and their students. Moreover, these teachers had expressed their eagerness to learn about community-based pedagogies, and inquiry-based learning. So, before joining the project I shared different articles and studies that called their attention. These articles attracted them since they were interested about finding out ways to innovate in their classes, and were concerned about making them contextualized, this was reflected in the previous projects that had worked with other levels. Finally, in their teachers' evaluation they were recognized as very committed teachers. This criterion facilitated their response towards the exploration and conceptualization of the local assets that could be brought to the curriculum. Their eagerness to participate in the project was crucial to become engaged in a retrospective exercise of reflecting upon their practice, in order to re think their class, and be willing to pose and solve the challenges of including situated pedagogies in their teaching exercise.

Data collection instruments

This study considered four data collection instruments: Field notes of group discussions and class observations, curricular units of community projects, an initial and final semi-structured interview. Along the workshops, there were guided discussion on topics from the articles I proposed before the encounters. Then, the field notes intended to depict teachers' reflection of articles such as: Getting out of deficit perspectives:

pedagogies of reconnection (Comber, 2013); funds of knowledge for teaching (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992).

The discussions were conducted in the first two encounters of the professional workshops, in order to provide a space for teachers to examine the role of students' realities in their practice, and value the contexts that surrounds the teaching and learning practices. Teachers' participation was encouraged by my presentation of different excerpts from the texts, which recalled their experiences in the classroom. I selected this tool, since, as Flick (2009) states, group discussion uses the dynamic of developing a conversation as the central source of knowledge. This instrument was a means to observe their perspective on literacy teaching, teachers' awareness of their students' world, and teachers being willing to transform their practice.

The primary source of information to attain the research objective was gathered from the implementation of the curricular units that teachers designed during three guided workshops. They were constructed first individually with my guidance, and then reviewed collaboratively with the other participant teachers. The purpose of these units was to observe teachers' decision-making when organizing a project that promoted community-interaction, local inquiry, and students' collaborative work, to meet the objectives proposed by the institutional standards, according to the different levels they were teaching.

Regarding the first semi-structured interview (See appendix 1), it happened on the fourth workshop. The intention was to engage the participants in a purposeful conversation by allowing them to develop naturally so that they do not feel that they are simply replying to questions (Richards, 2001). The purpose was to delve into teachers' insights about constructing the curricular unit, and identify the links the teachers set with the local

resources, and the way in which they bring them to the curriculum. The interview focused on finding out about the local resources they used; their strategy to do enquiry on social issues; their views on literacy development; the relation among local knowledge, text production and institutional standards; as well as the teachers' role when involving local realities into the curriculum.

Considering the field notes for class observation, they are powerful tools for gaining insights on a situation (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2002). I attended three sessions in the three weeks per group to check the project development. The aim of this tool was to identify the way in which teachers and students were using the community knowledge, their field of expertise, and contextualization through an inquiry process, in order to construct their projects.

Finally, the last semi-structured interview (see appendix 2) happened a week after students finished and presented the project. I wanted to find out about teachers´ considerations of the pedagogical experience, the connections among their role as teachers and their students' results, what they believed made the results possible, the extent to which they think they will use resources from students' context into their future teaching, as well as how students' texts reflect their local realities into their community products.

Ethical issues

Heigham & Croker (2009) establish that gaining informed consent from the participants can be achieved through informing them about the purpose and procedures of the study, which allows them to acknowledge what their participation entails, in order to make decisions to get involved in the project willingly. Therefore, before starting the professional workshops, I had a meeting with the director of the language center, in which I

explained all the steps of the process, the schedule for the professional workshops, and the spaces we would use from the university. She gave me her written consent (See appendix 3), the only condition was to protect the anonymity of the university, and the participants. Additionally, I ensured that participant teachers would not receive special treatment in responsibilities related to their contract at the language center. I also committed to share the outcomes of the project with the rest of the academic staff at the language center with all the teachers, once I finished the analysis and revision of the findings with my tutor, before presenting it for the defense at my master's program.

Finally, I ensured confidentiality by using a consent form signed by the teachers (See appendix 4) in which they were notified that the information they provided was only used for research purposes, that it did not interfere with their contracts, or course assignation by the university. All their personal details, including their names remained private, and therefore, no video recordings were used in this research. Along the study, they are referred to as teacher 1, 2, 3, 4. In sum, ensuring the well-being of the participants was key for the ethical considerations of this study.

The chapter that follows portrays the practical realization of the study, introducing the visions that allowed me to generate the objectives and planning of the instructional design, carried out through the professional development workshops. They aimed at involving teachers in field experiences that help them explore the local resources they could include in their curriculum, in order to carry out a community project with their students.

Chapter 4. INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

This chapter presents the justification and planning of the four professional development workshops that aimed at helping teachers conceptualize socially-embedded pedagogies. They were designed with the purpose of involving teachers in group discussions about community-based pedagogies, local and funds of knowledge. Engaging teachers in local inquiry first with their colleagues, and then with their students to identify the resources they could use to create curricular units. Guiding the teacher into the construction of the contextualized curricular units. And supporting the teachers during the implementation of the community projects.

I begin by illustrating the vision of language, curriculum, and teaching that shaped the professional development workshops. Afterwards, I describe the general and specific objectives. I explain the structure of each encounter, its objectives, which included professional reading discussion on concepts and projects related to socially-situated pedagogies, field exploration, the consideration of the standards to connect them to their, the construction of the curricular units. Finally, the outcomes show the different assets they encountered with their students, and the ways in which they develop them in their unit.

Vision of language

This study regards language as a social practice that allows to become aware of sociocultural reality in order to be able to transform it. Pennycook (2010) describes that language should no longer be perceived as a preordained system product of the brain, on the contrary, it needs to be considered a social practice that engages users, permitting them to construct reality and meanings.

Therefore, to understand the relationship between languages and that social environment, one needs to recognize local language practices, and the way they relate to other social practices. In this view, language does not carry a fixed meaning, instead it is the contextualized, political and social practices that account for its production; therefore, by taking into consideration a notion of local practice "we can move towards a more dynamic understanding of the constructions of place and language together" (p.9).

Vision of curriculum

In my study, the EFL curriculum is renovated, dynamic, and contextualized by the teachers who engaged in local inquiry, in order to make it place-based. Within this view, the teachers get involved in finding ways to orchestrate an authentic engagement with the people, places, and things inside and outside of the classroom (Demarest, 2014) while addressing institutional standards and being aware of students' backgrounds.

This projects supports that to build a context-sensitive curriculum, the teachers work together with students' funds of knowledge, and are responsive to the sources the local contexts provides to the class, such as, community-interaction, acknowledging students' field of study, and at the same time addressing the linguistic needs of the groups they are in charge of. This idea of curriculum is based on Dewey's (1938) perception of the responsibilities of the educator:

> A primary responsibility of educators [is to] recognize in the concrete what surrounding are conducive to having experiences that lead to growth. Above all, they should know how to utilize the surroundings, physical and social, that exist so as to extract from them all that they have to contribute to building up of experiences that are worthwhile. (p.41)

Furthermore, a place-based curriculum perspective promotes involvement in an inquiry experience. This creates new alternatives and functional understandings that create diversity, open up creativity, thinking, and address even more complex questions; as a result, inquiry promotes appreciating confusion as a source for getting meaningful reflections that are figured out and analyze from posing new questions, which plays a crucial role to center the curriculum on the learning itself.

Vision of teaching

This vision is shaped within the different collective contexts in which people interact and construct knowledge (Schecter, Solomon & Kittmer, 2003). Thus, in this study, teaching means being open-minded and resourceful, in order to promote context-sensitive experiences for students to use their reality as a source for learning. A successful teaching practice occurs when teachers contextualize the knowledge of the community, culture, and identity of the students and families they work with (Murell, 2001).

Having these visions in mind as the starting point of the practical realization, I established the following objectives.

General objective: EFL teachers will explore, enquire and include local resources into their EFL curriculum through field experiences and professional development workshops.

Specific objectives:

- To reflect upon the local sources available through an exploratory field exercise in order to design a curricular unit.

- To carry out a community-field project with their EFL university students.

Description of the professional development workshops

The purpose of the workshops was to provide a space where teachers could reflect on their role, language literacy teaching, as well as the ways in which they can promote awareness on the local reality, by identifying the resources they can bring into the EFL curriculum, as to foster sensitivity on social issues from the academic culture.

Thus, they were planned in a way that evolved from group discussion of professional readings, as well as conducting asset-mapping through the consideration of the physical spaces, individuals, local economy, institutions and associations (Kretzman & McKnight, 1993) around the university. Each workshop lasted four hours, they were distributed as presented in the following chart (Table 1).

Workshop	**Date**
1. How do we get out of deficit pedagogies?	**(Sep 12th)**
2. What's the culture around university? How do we work with local resources?	**(Sep 26th)**
3. What are the standards that guide our curricular units? How do we build a curricular unit?	**(Oct 10th)**
4. Let's polish up curricular units	**(Oct 25th)**

Table 1. Name of workshops and time distribution

After the four workshops I supported teachers' implementation of the units by going to three classes and attending to the final project fair. The observations were conducted from November 12th-December 03rd. Along the observations, there were constant conferencing, informal conversations with each teacher, where we addressed key moments in their process of teaching, and professional tensions they may have experienced. Below, I proceed to specify the objective and procedure for each workshop.

Workshop # 1. How do we get out of deficit pedagogies? (September 12th, 2018)

This workshop aimed at providing a space for teachers to examine their role in valuing students' realities in their practice. Before coming to the workshop, they were assigned two texts: Getting out of deficit perspectives: pedagogies of reconnection (Comber, 2013), and funds of knowledge for teaching (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992).

The idea was first to hear the comments on the texts, and then, I extracted passages, so that we could start a group discussion that brought their experiences working with university students. Afterwards, we did a brainstorming of questions that evolved from the discussion that related to the connection of socially-embedded pedagogies with the EFL curriculum (They will be developed in the next chapter about data analysis and findings, p.62.Illustration 6)

For the second part of the encounter, I distributed them in couples, and gave them two local research articles: One by Rincón & Clavijo (2016) about Fostering EFL learners' literacies through local inquiry in a multimodal experience. And the second by Sharkey,

Clavijo, and Ramírez, (2016) on developing a deeper understanding of community-based pedagogies with teachers: Learning with and from teachers in Colombia. Finally, after reading both articles, the teachers created a mind map (see Illustration 1) to explain important moments when conducting a project using community-based pedagogies. After these activities, I wrapped up the workshop with a formal power point presentation of concepts such as, community-based pedagogies, funds of knowledge, and local knowledge.

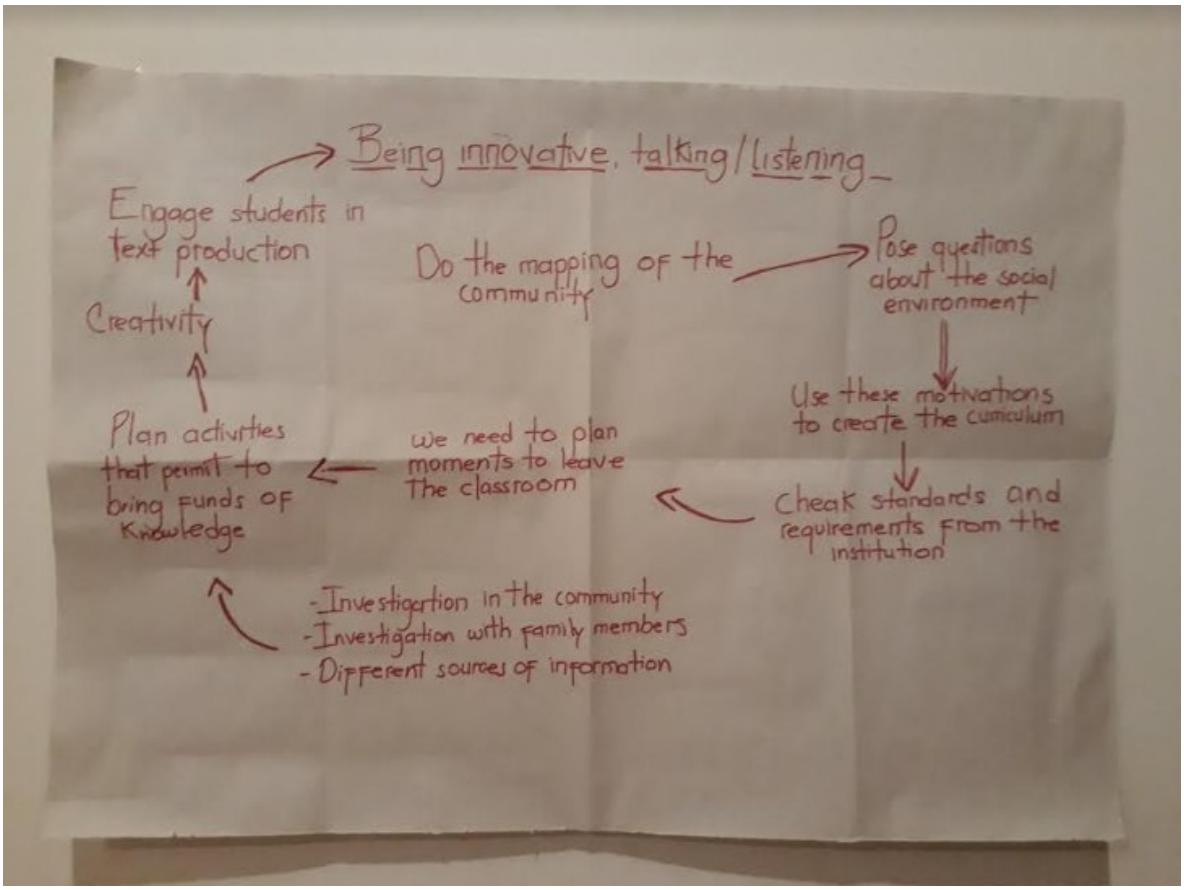


Illustration 1. Mind-map created by the teachers to conceptualize CBP

Workshop #2. What's the culture around university? How do we work with local resources? (September 26th, 2018)

I started this workshop with a presentation of the concept of asset-mapping, previously mentioned (See Illustration 2).

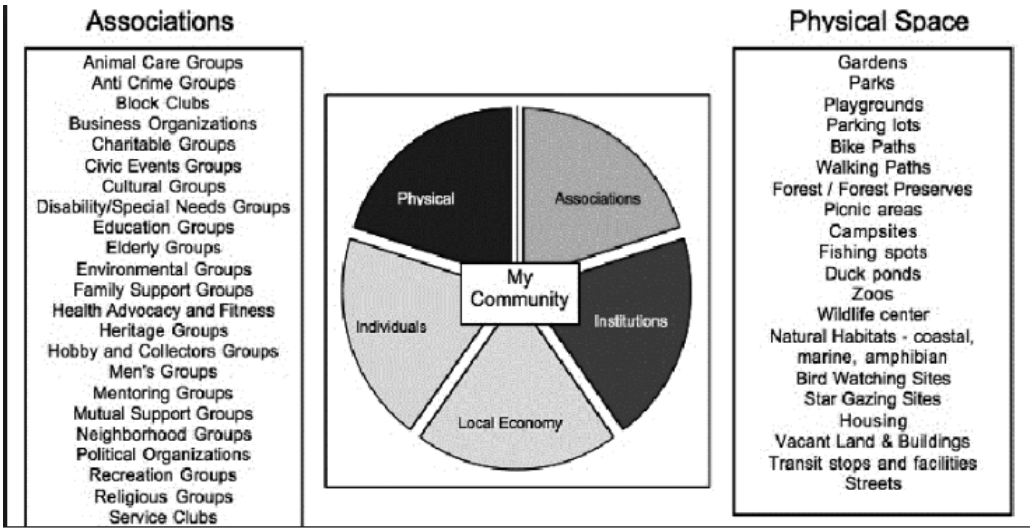


Illustration 2. Asset-mapping Kretzmann and McKnight (1993)

To design the workshops, I followed the professional development, as previously

done by Sharkey, et al (2016) . So they worked in the following manner. We went out, and

took pictures, with their cellphones, to everything that called their attention, surrounding

the university (They went around 10 blocks). Once we were back, each teacher projected

their pictures, and explained why that had made an impact on her/him. To finish this

activity, all of us created a pie as the one in figure# to describe the context around

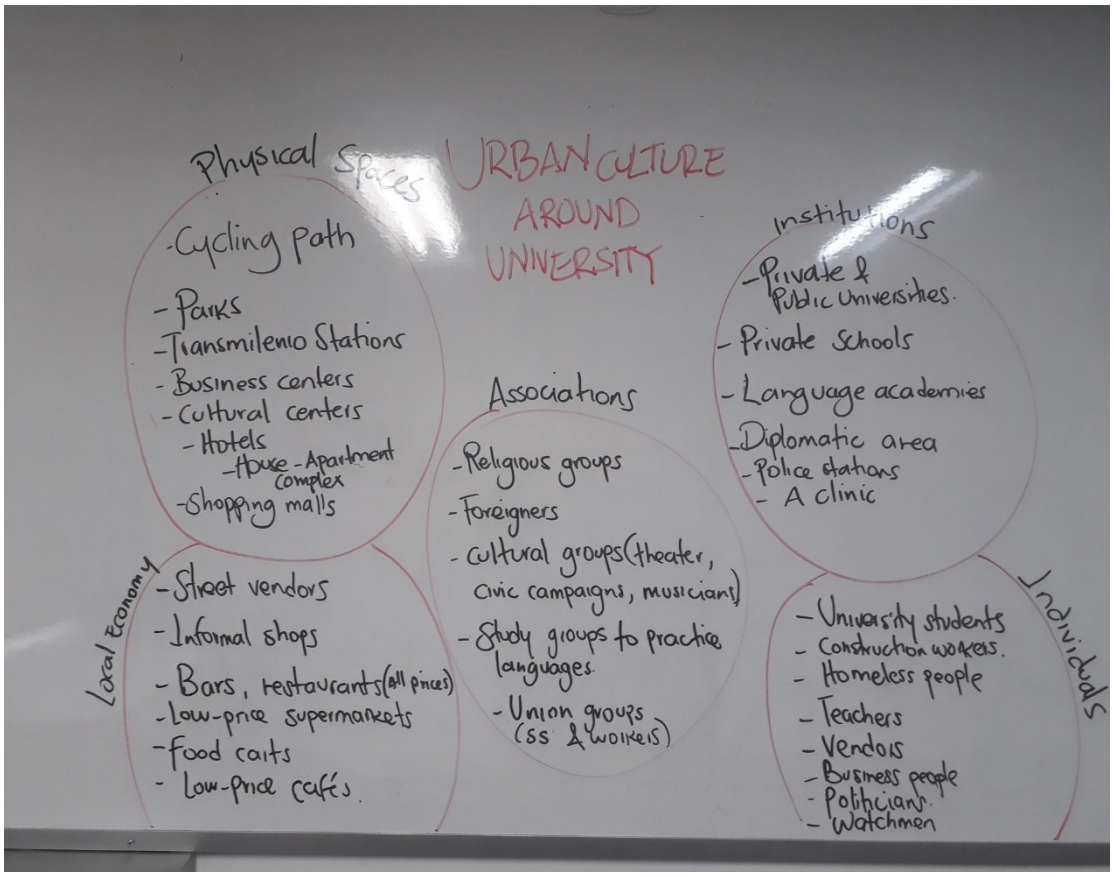


Illustration 3. Defining the culture around university.

university (See Illustration 3)

Next, for the second part of the workshop, I provided an example of a short (4 weeks) implementation I had carried out the previous year about a cross-disciplinary inquiry project within a community-based pedagogy perspective in the EFL classroom, with students from Industrial Engineering program, psychology, and Marketing. In that experience, I conducted mapping with my students, and created a curricular unit that emerged from their interest to explore new shifts in cultural beliefs through low-price supermarkets in the city. By using the knowledge of their disciplines of study, they could analyze the phenomena from different perspectives. This example was used to provide guidance for the teachers on the possibilities to connect the local resources we found with the content of the level I was teaching.

Finally, since their classes started on October 1st, I asked the teachers to conduct the asset-mapping with their new groups, have them present the findings in class, and decide on the asset they wanted to research about as a group.

Workshop # 3. What are the standards that guide our curricular units? How do we build a curricular unit? (Oct 10th)

This workshop started with the presentation of their group's findings, and a



Illustration 4. Asset-mapping by students around the university

reflection on the experience conducting the mapping. The teachers explained that students had decided on the topic they wanted to enquire about by the number of pictures taken to that specific asset. Illustration 4 is an example of the students' presentation.

The following chart (Table 2) summarizes the topics of inquiry the different groups decided to conduct after the exploratory field exercise.

Teachers	**Topic of inquiry**	**Students' professional fields**	**Places or Local resources studied**
Teacher #1	Creating an NGO to foster the preservation of Tunjuelito River	Social communication, Industrial Engineering, environmental Engineering.	-Tunjuelo river. -Families, elder people and neighbors.
Teacher #2	A proposal to improve civic practices in the cycling route around university.	Marketing and trade, systems Engineering, psychology.	-Biking path -University campus -Students at university.
Teacher #3	Analysis of environmental issues with garbage in Bogotá with possible solutions from environmental regulations	Law	-Campus surroundings. -Experts at university on environmental management
Teacher #4	Exploring possibilities to access private and public higher education for young population in Colombia.	Economy, marketing and trade, digital marketing.	-Educational institutions around university. -Students from those institutions.

Table 2. Inquiry topics that became the focus of the curriculum in ELT

After the presentation, the teachers brought the syllabus with the standards they had to meet according to the levels they were teaching (See context in research methodology). They started to discuss on the products they could foster to meet those standards. I shared with them my example of the construction of the curricular unit, and how I connected the standard with each of the texts students created. Finally, I gave each teacher a matrix to build the curricular units (See appendix 5) and they began working on the construction of the units individually but asking help from their colleagues and from me. They finished the curricular units at home.

Workshop # 4. Let's polish up curricular units (October 25th, 2018)

In the last workshop, teachers presented their curricular unit to their colleagues and received feedback. This was done by exchanging their units, and inserting comments. Then, in couples they adapted the units with the feedback received. At the end, they presented their units to the class, explained their curricular decisions, and answered the questions posed by their peers about the ways in which they would carry out the activities proposed.

Along the professional development workshops, I collected data about teachers' insights on the local assets that surround the university, their discussions about understanding socially-embedded pedagogies, and their decision-making about integrating the local assets in the curricular units. In the following chapter, I explain the results and analysis of the implementation previously described, as well as the findings and conclusion that emerged from the teachers' experience in the professional development workshops. It allows to observe that teachers find a meeting point among the disciplines their class, by contextualizing the knowledge of the community, as well as potentiating individual's

capacity to works with a common rather than a personal goal, by enquiring and interacting with students' realities.

CHAPTER 5. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter describes the process of data collection, data management and data analysis that I carried out after a professional development experience (TPD) with four teachers for four months from September to December 2018. The TPD focused on using community assets to engage in critical reflection with teachers who became interested in carrying out local investigations with their students in the EFL class. Thus, in this section I report the framework of analysis, data analysis procedures, and the resulting categories that emerged from the collected data. The results presented in this chapter answer the research question: How do EFL university teachers use local assets as sources for curriculum and teaching?

Data collection and management

This study considered four data instruments for data collection. Field notes of group discussions and class observations, curricular units of community projects, an initial and final semi-structured interview. The first data were gathered using field notes from four professional development workshops that took place during 2 months (See the instructional design). Workshops with teachers focused on discussing the professional readings and findings ways to relate its contents to the curricular units. The semi-structured interviews

dealt with the construction and implementation of the curricular units and its evaluation. Finally, class observation provided details of the implementation of the curricular units.

Guided discussion with teachers during the workshops in each session were audio recorded and transcribed. My observations from the interactions with teachers were listed in a chart providing date, a number for each teacher, text extracts being discussed, teachers' comments or contribution and memos of my reflections.

The primary source of information was teachers' curricular units. The curricular units were developed by each teacher using a chart provided for the weekly plan. It included description of the activity, objectives, standards, community resources, and products. Teachers received feedback to revise their units. I focused the organization of the data on the ways teachers related the local resources to the contents of the class.

Regarding the two semi-structured interviews carried out with teachers, I recorded and transcribed teachers' answers in a separate word file for each one. While I was transcribing the response for each question, I inserted memos using the comments tool. This process was prior starting the color coding to find the emergent relations among categories, which I will explain in the data analysis procedure.

Considering the field notes for class observation, I attended three sessions for each teachers' group to support project development. I used a chart I created in a word file that included date, teacher, setting, activities, observations that emerged from the teachers and students, my comments (memos), and a column for coding. With this organization of data, I proceeded to start the analysis following grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2006).

Data analysis approach: Grounded Theory

For my qualitative, descriptive-interpretive study, grounded theory suits the framework of analysis, provided the systematic and yet flexible procedure to collect and analyze data that constructs theories confined to such source of information (Charmaz, 2006). This means that what we build from our interaction and observation with our participants' experiences, generate the concepts we propose to make sense and explain their statements and actions, with an analytic lens.

The examination of data in this framework encompasses the process of sorting and synthesizing information through qualitative coding. This process consists of classifying segments that start to represent emerging themes and categories. It entails the following steps: 1. open coding, explained as labelling phenomena by breaking down data, comparing and conceptualizing, with the end of giving the event, idea, or incident a name that represents the phenomenon (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). 2. Axial coding, which consists of grouping and naming the initial codes according to their properties to create emergent categories (Charmaz, 2006) 3. Selective coding, the researcher allocates names to the relationships existing among the categories (Corbin & Strauss, 1998). Finally, using theories that support all the coding process, and permit theorizing as the final step in grounded theory.

With the aim to ensure the validity of the analysis, I used methodological triangulation that is two instruments on the same object of study, so that I could contrast my views on the data without relying exclusively on one method, which may bias my vision of the particular reality I was researching (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2002). Thus, I validated the field notes for classroom observation with last semi-structured interview.

Data analysis procedure

Using the framework, for the first stage, I began the open coding by going over the field notes, curricular units, and semi-structured interviews. Once I started to find commonalities, I selected a different color to label each code that was recurring in the passages along the data. Since I used a word document, I created the codes with the tools to add comments, as shown in the Illustration below.

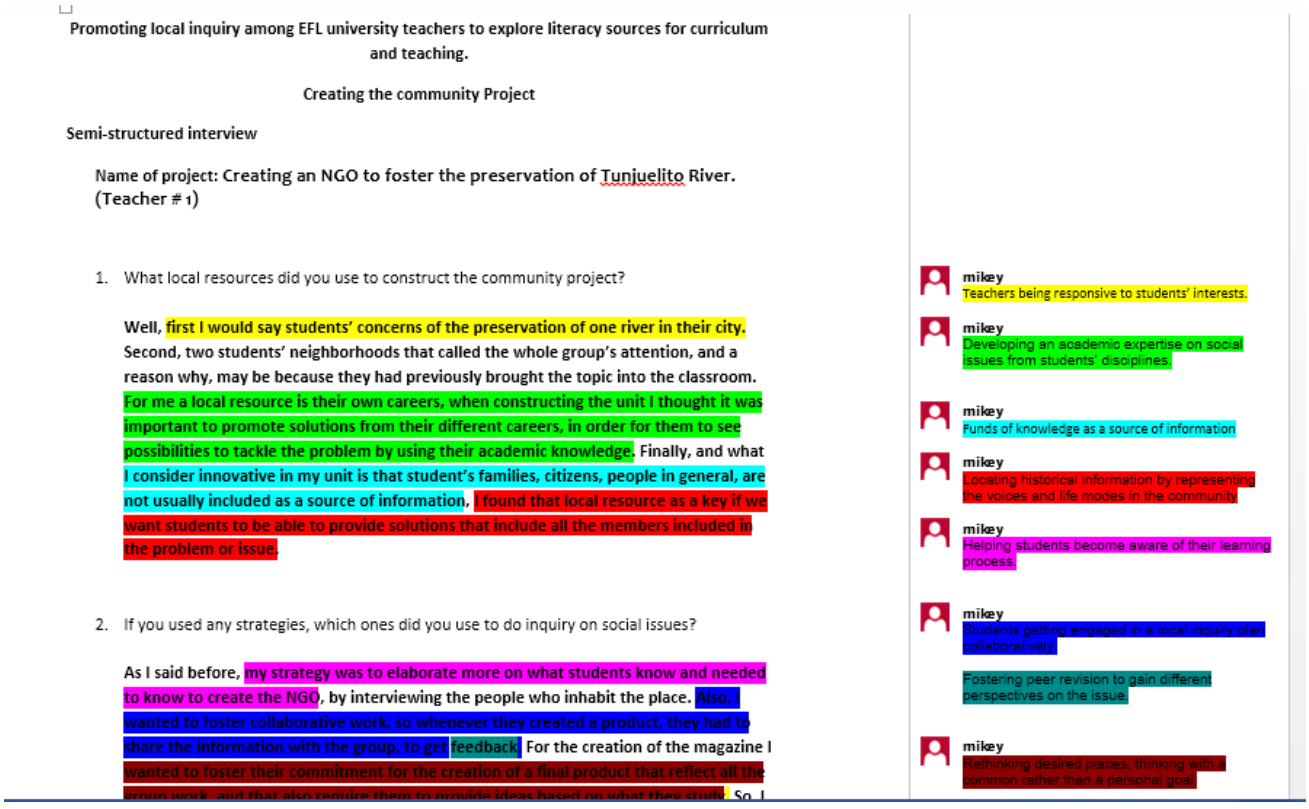


Illustration 5. Example of color coding (Semi-structured interview-Nov 03, 2018)

The codes were named by using a gerund form that portrayed the links that the teachers established with the local resources to make decision for curriculum and teaching. Thus, I came across 53 codes that were visible throughout reading the data.

Afterwards, for the process of axial coding, I started making connections with the constructs I proposed for my theoretical framework, in order to group the codes that displayed a relationship. I grouped them in broader themes that contained the main aspects to propose categories. To do so, I used color coding again, but this time with the aim to narrow down similar patterns. Four big themes emerged. Entwining communities from the EFL class, community inspiration as the starting point for the EFL curriculum construction, community-interaction as a learning opportunity, social issues in the academic culture; each one including the tensions and challenges portrayed by the teachers along the process.

By categorizing themes in a chart, I was able to perceive the main concepts that capture the essence of my study, and the way in which themes fit into those emerging categories. Thus, I proceeded to do selective coding through subsuming the themes that answer my research question: *How do EFL university teachers use local assets as sources for curriculum and teaching?* As a result, one main category arose, with one subcategory that lead to present a thick description based on the relation among the data and theory (See Table 3).

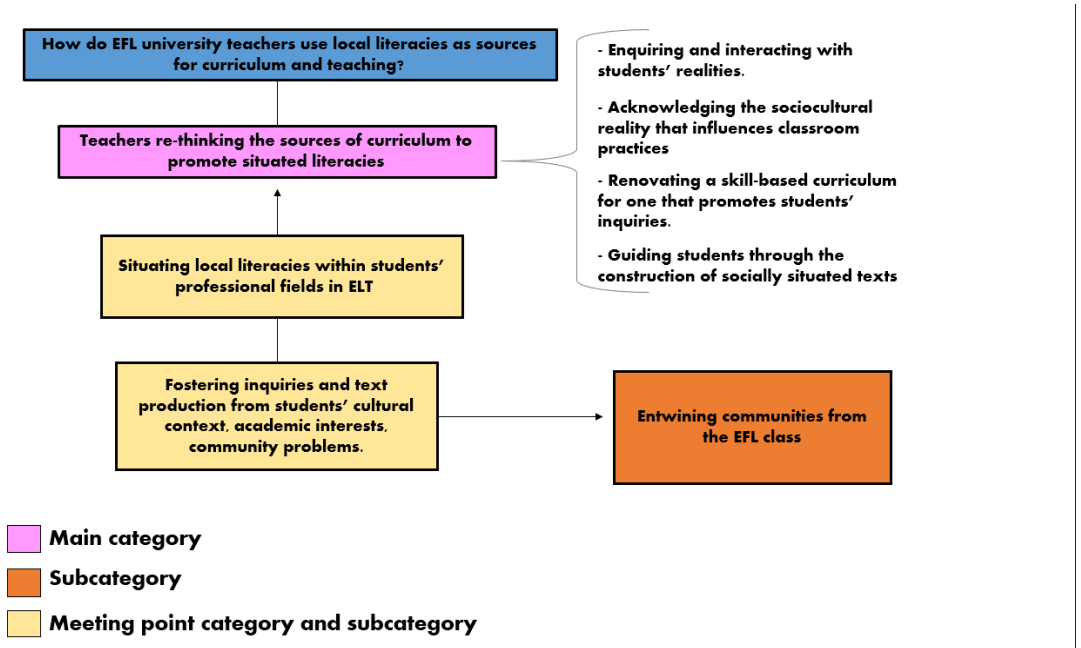


Table 3.Main category and subcategory

Findings

This short exploratory teacher professional development experience allowed me to identify teachers' willingness and dispositions (Mills and Ballantyne, 2010) to enquire, get closer to students' realities, social issues, and everyday practices, in order to create a language curriculum that values, reflects and integrates the experiences around students' lives (Sharkey, et.al, 2016). Along the process, they learned together different ways to read and interpret the linguistic landscape using a pedagogy that permitted them to discover critical social issues that affect individuals and their environments. Through this experience, teachers were involved in learning about ways to promote a critical spirit

(Freire, 1987; 1998) inquiring about sociocultural problematic, through community interaction, to create sensitivity from the academic culture in their classes.

Throughout field exploration activities teachers were constantly enquiring and examining the assets in the context that surrounds their realities. Teachers were immersed in a recognition and understanding of the community resources that became the core of teaching and curricula. Thus, they explored local textual practices that influence the everyday life of both students and teachers (Smith & Sobel, 2010)

The field assignment provided teachers and students reasons for doing local inquiry on topics related to Tunjuelito river preservation, civic practices in the cycling path (Carrera 11 calle 72-77), environmental issues (pollution and garbage management) as well as possibilities to access higher education for young people in Colombia. Teachers' openness to embrace risk taking to renovate the curriculum were key to overcome the challenges that it represented.

Their disposition to accept the academic invitation for professional development from the institution, facilitated peer support, addressing students´ interests in topics of inquiry, and integrating different sources for their EFL class, such as students' fields of study. Table 2 displays the environmental, social, and educational topics proposed by students within their professional fields. Teachers adapted curricular units to foster the development of students´ inquiry projects during their professional development experience. (See table 2. Inquiry topics that became the focus of the curriculum in ELT)

The previous description contributes to explain the main category: *Teachers rethinking the sources of curriculum to promote situated literacies*, considered by teachers as the core to transform their pedagogical practices and consider integrating local resources into socially situated EFL curriculum and teaching.

Teachers re-thinking the sources of curriculum to promote situated literacies

I named this category as an in-vivo code, explained by Charmaz (2006) as the participant's meaning of their views and actions. It came across when I was reading the data from one participant in the initial semi-structured interview. Her quote below pictures the need to transform her beliefs about English teaching based on mere linguistic content to involve local realities and students' realities into the curriculum.

> To be open minded in terms of the resources that the environment provides to the English class. Sometimes the English teacher is too concerned with the linguistic goals, students learning the grammar, learning to read, learning to write; however if we do not think outside the box, results will always be the same: language as a requirement, senseless classes that do not match with their context.
>
> (Teacher 1- Semi-structured interview. November 1st, 2018)

Thus, for this study, rethinking the sources for curriculum implies taking professional risks towards understanding and acting together new pedagogies that require social exploration. Moving away from a static skill-based curriculum, materials and textbooks provided to teach to the construction of context-embedded opportunities for learning using students´ realities.

During TPD, all participants were adamant about considering their open-mindedness, willingness, and creativity, as the starting point to renovate the curriculum with a community-oriented vision. Re-thinking the sources of curriculum, then, inspires the

exploration of community resources and members; with the aim of valuing students' voices, encouraging them to question, propose, and imagine the path to contribute to transformations from their disciplines of study. Through TPD, the teachers stated the need to get out of the comfort zone, be open-minded, resourceful, and attentive to promote interaction with community members, valuing their voices, lives, and modes.

Teachers' disposition to rethink their pedagogical practice and curriculum through TPD, led them to pose questions as to overcome recurrent challenges and tensions along the process. These included raising students' curiosity to learn English using community assets and developing students-led inquiries; designing a contextualized curricular plan that addresses inquiry topics from students´ professional disciplines and the institutional standards. Finally, teachers were interested in making inquiry projects the source to find a common ground through their fields of knowledge.

Below, I provide an explanation of the categories and subcategories and refer to how teachers addressed the transformations in their practice. Illustration 6 categorizes the

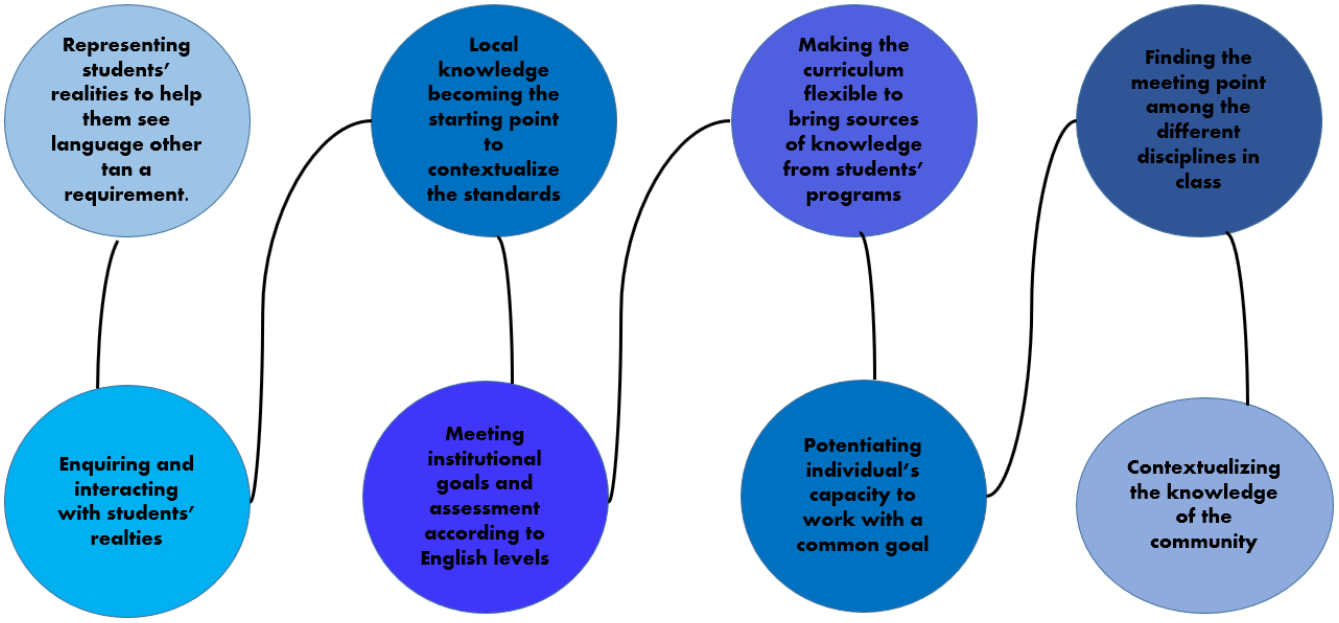


Illustration 6. Steps in the process to understand a context-embedded pedagogy

process teachers underwent to understand a context-embedded pedagogy.

The steps portrayed in the illustration emerged from the professional reading discussions, and the construction of the curricular units. In the discussions during the initial workshops, teachers first concerned was regarding organizing content in the English curriculum. They were accountable for teaching English as a requirement in the disciplines, but they were also interested in expanding the content to make students' community realities closer to their learning experience. Using community as curriculum was the starting point to engage students in innovative and contextualized practices in the classroom. The following excerpt exemplifies a teacher´s reflection about the priorities for teaching English from a situated perspective.

> I totally agree that it is within our reach to make changes in our mindsets and practices, to delve into our students' challenges with an inquisitive mind, searching and trying to engage them in a learning experience they can feel part of. However, the starting point here needs to be students' requirement to graduate, and how our goals per level present learning a language. My main concern is that they understand my decision-making, so that they find a balance, so that they see English can be part of their context, and at the same time they make sure they are learning the language, because that also represents their reality. The goal here is that we go through a process of helping them discover that it is not only a requirement and help change their mindset as well.
> (Field notes, professional readings- September 12th- Teacher 4)

Teachers reported that they needed to enquire and interact with students' realities themselves to identify local assets, find the way to connect them to teaching and learning in the curriculum. It enabled them to be responsive to their students' interests and everyday sociocultural practices. That is, they were conscious about their role as agents of change in the institution, becoming critical educators (Howard & Aleman, 2008). The statement

below describes Teacher 4 reflection about what it takes to develop a project from being aware of students' world, by rethinking their pedagogical decisions.

> The success of these kinds of pedagogical projects depends a lot on the teachers' knowledge of such context, students' interests, the situations and experiences lived every day. We need to leave the classroom as well, and be really curious about the reality that surrounds our students.
>
> (Teacher 4. Semi-structured interview. December 6, 2018)

The social awareness about students' context lead teachers to become involved in the exploration of situated literacy development practices in the EFL class. Teachers read students' world and involved students in a multimodal text production that depicts their realities by providing out-of-class spaces to develop problem-posing skills. In-class teaching were oriented to gain new perspectives on the issues they identified. Teachers constantly mediated, scaffolded text production, and provided positive feedback.

In the following excerpt, teacher 3 refers to text production as a process that fosters social consciousness, sensitivity, and action taking. They reconsidered teaching writing beyond a skill development process to acquire the target language, and promoted text production as a form of cultural appropriation (Barton, Hamilton, & Ivanic, 2000)

> I found [the experience] it very powerful and engaging for them and for me. I have always been concerned with the development of writing production, this curricular unit allowed the students to produce texts based on a social awareness, not only as a task, but following a process that permitted them to raise their own questions from their observations and concerns discovered in the mapping. Also, they could find a way to widen their views by analyzing the needs of the people who face these environmental problems, the experts in environmental management and regulations, as well as contrasting them with global models. This process helped them to develop ideas to propose a campaign that promoted solutions that actually fit their contexts. So, the process taught students valuable lessons, such as that of working collaborative with their classmates, community members, and academic experts, in order to gain

> sensitivity of what happens in the real world where they interact, and construct their writing skill from that consciousness.
> (Teacher 3-Last semi-structured interview. December 06th, 2018)

The examples illustrate Freire and Macedo's (1987; 1998) concept of literacy regarded as a medium that values the historical and existential experiences inside a cultural production, considered as an integral way for people to produce, reproduce, and transform meaning. Thus, teachers rethink sources of curriculum to promote situated literacies when they engage their students in an inquiry process that empowers them to become researchers of their own reality, promoting a curious spirit, and guiding them through the constructions of socially situated text. Hence, as Comber (2013) posits texts evolve from inquiring, analyzing and interrogating of the context of places of study. To represent this point, teacher´s 1 response reveals the ways students' texts reflect their local realities into their community products.

> Their texts reflected that they took into account the voices of the community members they interviewed, as an important source of information to make decisions on the solutions they could propose for the problematic at the river. For instance the magazine showed me that they could really locate the necessary actions to take in the preservation project, based on what they know from their programs of study, the research they did about preservation systems, and they reality of what they could observe. That is an engaging way to encourage text creation with a social and critical purpose.
> (Teacher 1-Semi-structured interview. December 06th, 2018)

Teachers re-thinking the sources of curriculum to promote situated literacies is further explained through the subcategory *situating local literacies within students' professional fields in ELT*. It describes the ways teachers fostered the interaction of communities inside and outside the EFL classroom.

Situating local literacies within students' professional fields in ELT

In my study, the participant teachers situate local literacies by constructing the curriculum starting from the exploration of the sociocultural reality that influences classroom practices. It allows them to shape and integrate the local knowledge. The starting point was to identify the assets that surround the context of the university and the community. In the projects developed by the teachers and students, the assets comprised institutions, neighborhoods, river preservation, cycling path, community members at/around university (academic community, family members, students, and street vendors)

Additionally, a major finding was to realize that teachers reflected on students' professional programs as a local asset through which they geared curricular content, in order to develop awareness on social issues. The following response describes the teacher's perception on local resources.

> For me a local resource is their own careers, when constructing the unit I thought it was important to promote solutions from their different careers, in order for them to see possibilities to tackle the problem by using their academic knowledge. Finally, and what I consider innovative in my unit is that student's families, citizens, people in general, are not usually included as a source of information, I found that local resource as a key if we want students to be able to provide solutions that include all the members included in the problem or issue.
>
> (Teacher 1-First semi-structured interview. November 01st, 2018)

When students' professional disciplines (Social Communication, Industrial Engineering, Environmental Engineering, Marketing and Trade, Systems Engineering, Psychology, Law, Economy) became visible as a local resource, the teachers started to pose questions that brought about the synergies in the classroom. In the curricular units that addressed social problematic, teachers situated local inquiries at the core and invited students to take actions collaboratively. Working in groups students provided peer feedback

to gain perspectives from their field of expertise. To make it possible, the teachers decided about the type of texts students would produce; the local input that would grant students the possibility to analyze the social issues from different perspectives; the construction of texts after peer feedback, and the evaluation to meet the standards.

For example, in the curricular unit from participant 3 (See appendix 6) the teacher proposed a project to create a pedagogical campaign about environmental issues with garbage in Bogotá. The students from the law school proposed possible solutions and supported their arguments in a written report using Colombian environmental regulations.

Additionally, students designed together an interview to an expert professor on regulation to environmental issues. The goal was to realize what could be done to address the needs of citizens with the help of an expert. The teacher comments follow.

> […] I have always considered that students' programs need to be reflected on addressing solutions to the social issues they encounter. Then, the English class has to deal with content within students' fields. My strategy was to have students write driving questions for the analysis of environmental issues, because I think that is how they can give direction to the topics based on what they really want to enquire.
>
> […] I believe that situated literacy happens when we acknowledge what students know, in this case their fields of knowledge, to explore their social surrounding in a way that makes sense for them.
>
> (Teacher 3-First semi-structured interview. November 01, 2018)

From the teacher's quote I inferred that situated literacy is developed through granting students the possibility to move from awareness to action (Pandya & Ávila, 2013) while becoming researchers that use language to question and produce texts informed and motivated by their own reality. In this case, students' practice is evolving from the analysis of issues which students find personally significant: their cultural context, academic

interests, community problems, and aspirations to rename and reconstruct their own version of the world (Luke & Woods, 2009).

Another relevant aspect for teachers to think about when guiding the community project, among the different disciplines, was the incorporation of institutional standards (CEFR). Sharkey and Clavijo (2012) assert that when working with a community asset-based perspective, teachers are invited to include the realities of the curriculum standards they must meet, and to place the local knowledge and resources as the starting point for their teaching. However, having considered the relevance of integrating different problematic situations students identified from their disciplines, teachers could have considered the standards from those disciplines to enrich the curricular inquiries.

In a curricular unit, from participant 2 (See appendix 7), for instance, the group of students worked on a promotional video campaign to improve civic practices in the cycling path around the university to address the need expressed by the community members inside/at university. As a problem-posing exercise, the teacher proposed conducting a biking trip with the purpose of keeping a record of the practices they observe. This is the input for creating a text that helped meet the standard "Students can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within his field of interest, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence" (Writing descriptor A2-level CEFR).

After the field trip, students wrote in groups a narration called "what I found on my biking trip in English class" that was later used as a class discussion, since the main teaching goal for that English level was to learn to write about past experiences. Thus, the teacher used the narratives to provide feedback, to encourage students to add more details,

elucidate social issues and express wonderings. This exercise evidenced the way in which teachers situated text production from students' problem posing on their reality.

During the interview, the teacher explained how she addressed the standard in the activity proposed.

> My purpose was to help students realize that they could improve their language skills by doing meaningful tasks. For example, we were required to study the past, then we used the biking trip to write the narration. With that activity, they were required to observe the place, gain more insights of the it [local knowledge] then come to class, and learn to write a text following a linear sequence of events [as given in the writing objectives]. Something I wanted to foster through the unit was the standard about comparing and contrasting alternatives, giving brief comments on the view of others, which is why feedback is always visible. So, to conclude, their textual production always fulfills the standard about exchanging personal opinions of topics that are of personal interest, those texts always need to come from the knowledge the community shares with the students.
>
> (Teacher 2-First semi-structured interview. November 01, 2018)

In addition to following institutional standards, the teachers planned their units in a way that permitted them to use valid forms of assessment for the EFL class. Through community-based pedagogy, meeting the standards becomes a collaborative task of both teachers and students who involve the community as partners in the curriculum design (Demarest, 2014). For this to be accomplished, the teacher needs to envision part of the outcome and provide a space to create assessment tools together.

Through this experience, the teachers figured out ways to adapt the structure of evaluation, for one that permitted them to include the assets students were exploring. Additionally, they were opened to integrate alternative forms of assessment from the process experienced by students in the inquiry project. Teacher 4, worked on a project that explored possibilities to access private and public higher education for young population in

Colombia (See appendix 8-curricular unit teacher 4). She created the assessment criteria with the students using the standards for the language level and including the experiences students had with their context exploration. The criteria to construct the text follows.

1. The social issue presented is clearly located and supported with evidences
2. The analysis from the different programs needs to be visible
3. The text presents the bibliography
4. The text has gone through a revision process from other classmates (groups)
5. It is well structured, cohesive, and coherent.
6. The texts show task completion.

(Class observation – November12th, 2018)

Another illustration to how teachers shaped assessment tools is reflected in teacher's 3 integrated evaluation for the mid-term and final exam (established by the institution as 50% of the final grade). The teacher contextualized the evaluation by using different texts students had created in order to foster writing an opinion essay individually. With this exercise the teacher reported that student' creativity was awaken, since they could situate the text in their own reality. This written activity motivated them to analyze the issue and be critical of the context they interact with:

> I realized that sometimes we impose texts in students, and they do not always relate to them, how can we ask them then to write essays or opinions about something they may not find close to their reality. When I decided to include their own productions in both exams, I was amazed by their points of view, and how smoothly they presented arguments, referring to their own inquiry, they could question their classmate's statements, relate to them, propose, etc. I noticed this because this part about the opinion essay is what they struggle the most with.
>
> (Teacher 3- semi-structured interview. December 6, 2018)

I can conclude that by situating students' reality in the curriculum, the teachers were willing to negotiate evaluation; they committed themselves to create assessment tools that evolve from the students' voice, participation, interests, as well as their interaction with the everyday realities that motivate students to express themselves.

Cochran-Smith (2005); Zeichner & Conklin (2008) state that effective educators understand the surroundings of the population they work with, and therefore acknowledge their motivations. This was evident in the teachers' creativity to meet the standards by appreciating students' insights and voices of their inquiry process to construct the curriculum.

> They felt this research process as their own, since they related to the reality. […] they use the cycling path every day, they could bring their academic knowledge, and at the same time they met the grading criteria and goals established for the level.
>
> (Teacher 2. Last semi-structured interview. December 06th, 2018)

As a final contribution to this subcategory, I can highlight that in my study, teachers managed to renovate a skill-based curriculum for one that was founded on local inquiry, including both the linguistic and social needs of the learners. The institutional standards served as the assessment criteria. The innovative constituent was that they guided a socially situated experience, where students engaged in and proposed solutions as researchers, and proposed alternative ways of assessment integrating students´ texts that reported on their inquiry experiences. Thus, teachers viewed evaluation as reflecting the teaching and learning processes that represented students' reality.

Another feature that came out of the analysis of this subcategory was the ways teachers promoted interaction among inside and outside the classroom communities that I called entwining communities from the EFL class. It emerged from a common pattern

found in all the curricular units (See appendices 1-4), expressed by the teachers during the interviews. All the teachers engaged their students in a local inquiry plan that would always involve fostering interaction with community members as a learning opportunity that valued funds of knowledge (Moll; et al, 2005**)**. Then, their students interpreted and reflected on a place, by representing the lives and modes of that community. Accordingly, the texts they developed were planned in a way that potentiated individual capacity; that is, what students know from their fields of study is used in the community project with a common goal. Moreover, all the curricular units supported getting informed by a wider context, through researching ways to address the social issue, so that students could take collaborative action informed by their reality, the community, their fields of knowledge, and the city context.

Through community projects, teachers became aware of the resources that the local environment provided for EFL curriculum, being attentive to their role to maximize learning opportunities in the classroom, understand, and transform them outside the classroom (Kumaravadivelu, 2001). The following graph (Illustration 7) outlines the convergence of the realities outside the class viewed from the students' perspective, the linguistic, as well as the local within a community. This convergence allowed to generate a consensus in the pedagogical projects, used to provide solutions to a social issue with a common rather than a personal goal.



Illustration 7. Entwining communities from the EFL class

Below, I explain the ways in which teachers entwined communities along their projects.

The convergence of communities is evident in the curricular unit of teacher 1 (See appendix 9) whose project was to create an NGO to foster the preservation of Tunjuelito river. She proposed to make a historical record of what has happened to the river. Thus, students collaboratively designed an interview to have more information about the river, asking elder people in their families who have always lived in Ciudad Bolivar, their neighbors, and young population. Afterwards, the group visited the place. With this information in mind, the group conducted research about strategies for river preservation, how organizations can be distributed to clean these areas.

Through this exercise, the teacher boosts the appreciation of students´ funds of knowledge, understood as the exchange of knowledge with neighbors, family, and community members, reducing classroom insularity (Moll; et all, 2005). She had students contextualize a problem, elicit questions, and analyze an issue critically, from the voices of the community, in order to be able to have a broader historical perspective of the issue. Therefore, students could get informed and started thinking about action for betterment of the whole community (McInerney, Smyth, and Down, 2011). In the interview, the teacher explained:

> Finally, and what I consider innovative in my unit is that student's families, citizens, people in general, are not usually included as a source of information, I found that local resource as a key if we want students to be able to provide solutions that include all the members included in the problem or issue.
>
> (Teacher 1-First semi-structured interview. November 01, 2018)

Further, in the classroom, the teacher managed to potentiate each student's capacity to work with a common goal (Comber, 2013) that consisted of making decisions of what they would portray as a group, and what really represented a solution for the community they had already interacted with.

Another aspect to examine is the strategy the teacher presented to promote exploring local and global social issues and ways of handling them. Once students have realized and become aware of the local reality they are researching, they explore global models, without overgeneralizing realities, but gaining insights that allow to open their minds when proposing solutions that fit the context. As Smith & Sobel (2010) posit, first students need to explore and learn about what they are familiar with, so that they can get closer to a phenomenon that are invisible to them.

In regard to the consolidation of a community in class, the teachers revealed their commitment to foster the analysis of social issues from students' fields of knowledge, contributing, from what they know, to the group proposals. As a result, teacher participants affirmed that interacting with the outside community helps develop social sensitivity from the academic environment.

In this fashion, the EFL class evolves into a cross disciplinary dialogue (Smith & Sobel, 2010) which inspires teachers and students to explore problems and projects beyond their area of knowledge. The response of teacher 3, working with his group on the analysis of environmental issues with garbage in Bogotá with possible solutions from different programs, let me remark the relation the teacher established between social issues and students' field of study.

To sum up, inside and outside the class communities intertwined when teachers guided their students into the consideration of their interactions with communities as a learning opportunity to research social issues. Through this process, the teachers developed sensitivity towards a situated curriculum, and get involved in an exploration of their roles as community teachers (Murrell, 2011) who contextualize the knowledge of the community, culture, and identity of the students and families they work with, in order to build a successful teaching practice in diverse settings.

The categories exposed through this chapter permitted me to answer the research question and explain how they objective was achieved. In the next chapter, I develop the conclusion to the interpretation of my study with its implications for the field of language literacy teaching and teacher education

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Chapter 6. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter, I present the concluding statements of the interpretation of the findings that evolved from the research process, which lead me to answer the research question how do EFL university teachers use local assets as sources for curriculum and

teaching? In addition, I relate the objective of the study to its possible contributions to the field of literacy studies, and language teacher education and professional development.

This study aimed at identifying the links that language teachers from a private university establish with local resources to make decisions about EFL literacy teaching. To accomplish this goal, the teachers were participants of teacher professional development (TPD) workshops, designed by me, based on the studies by Sharket, et al (2016). Through this experience, they became involved in asset mapping in the university surroundings; they held group discussions about socially embedded pedagogies, and designed curricular units using students' realities as the core for their learning experience.

Through the intervention it was possible to observe how TPD invited teachers to reflect upon their pedagogical practice and curriculum. It was oriented to propose using local literacies for curriculum design and context-embedded pedagogies. It provoked tensions and challenges among the teachers; provided that they were constantly rethinking their pedagogical frameworks, in order to renovate their conceptions about the language class, literacy, the local reality, and decisions about curriculum design.

The challenges perceived by the teachers included raising students' curiosity to learn English using community assets and developing students-led inquiries. Also, teachers were involved in designing a contextualized curricular plan that addressed inquiry topics from students' professional disciplines and the institutional standards. Finally, they realized that students' professional fields need to be considered when planning contextualized lessons through local inquiries. Therefore, they had to explore ways of making inquiry projects the source to find a common ground through students' fields of knowledge, as an asset that influences the life of the students (Smith & Sobel, 2010).

Teachers rethinking the sources of curriculum to promote situated was the main category that emerged from the data. It became the determinant factor reported by teachers in order to renovate the curriculum, with a community-oriented vision. They engaged students in a local inquiry process that considered their linguistic and social needs. Thus, teachers' disposition (Mills and Ballantyne, 2010) to explore and acknowledge students' realities contributed to promote community interaction. Moreover, after carrying out field explorations with students, teachers became sensitive towards considering the context as a resource for teaching and curriculum.

Teachers' curricular units, interviews, and class performance exhibit their willingness and innovative actions to readapt a skill-based curriculum, for one that situates local literacies as tools for language learning. Their curricular constructions also fulfilled institutional standards by representing reality; which invites students to read the world, develop problem-posing, and engage in multimodal contextualized text production.

The teachers developed their curricular unit by considering local assets, such as, institutions, neighborhoods, river preservation, cycling path, community members at/around university (academic community, family members, students, and street vendors) and students' professional programs, through which they addressed curricular content, in order to develop awareness on social issues.

The conception of teacher development based on considering capacity only from the dimensions of knowledge and skills was challenged to integrate sociocultural practices (Grant and Agosto, 2008). The participant teachers became informed by the community that led them to pose questions and take action from curriculum. Thus, they started to think

about their role as agents of change as an opportunity to become critical educators (Howard & Aleman, 2008).

Teachers re-thinking the sources for curriculum allowed them to enquire and interact with students' realities themselves to identify local assets, find the way to connect them to teaching and learning in the curriculum. It enabled them to be responsive to their students' interests and everyday sociocultural practices. Hence, as stated by Wells (1992) teaching evolved from the problems that inquiry awoke in students, which emerged from the reality they feel committed and related to.

From the challenges reported by the teachers, I identified the subcategory situating local literacies within students' professional fields in ELT. The teachers situated local inquiries as the core to provide solutions on social problematic collaboratively by promoting each student's views from their field of expertise. Their decision-making to implement socially-embedded pedagogies comprised examining the kind of texts students would produce, the input to grant students the possibility to analyze the social issues from different perspectives, the construction of products by getting constant feedback from their peers, and the evaluation according to the standard students had to meet.

The teachers achieved students' analysis of social issues, by fostering contextualized text production, meeting the standards according to the requirements for the English level; and adapting the structure of evaluation, for one that permitted them to include the assets students were exploring. They were opened to integrate alternative forms of assessment from the process experienced by students in the inquiry project.

Additionally, the teachers managed to potentiate individual capacity by fostering the analysis of social issues from students' fields of knowledge. This way, students explored, interpreted, reflected upon their local reality though working collaboratively with a common goal, and contributing from what they know.

Furthermore, the teachers were able to intertwine communities from the EFL class by providing spaces for students to interact with the outside communities, and act informed by their reality. Their actions consolidated a community inside the English class to analyze and propose actions of betterment (McInerney, Smyth, and Down, 2011) from the academic environment.

Finally, once students had to explore and learn about what they are familiar with, the teachers provided moments to consider and gain perspectives from global solutions to the local issues identified. Thus, students did not overgeneralize realities, since they could get closer to phenomena that was invisible to them after they had understood and analyzed their own reality (Smith & Sobel, 2010).

In conclusion, this study is an invitation for language departments at universities, as well as for ELT university programs to consider teachers professional development beyond subject matter, linguistic content, and literacy as the skill to read and write. The language class needs to acknowledge and appreciate students' realities and local resources, so that they become the core of a contextualized curriculum that promotes students' inquiries, and leads them to take actions informed by their own everyday practices. TPD programs need to challenge teachers to rethink their role and practices, by inviting them to enquire their students' world, which allows to build a context-sensitive view of the act of

teaching. The final chapter accounts for the limitations of the project and the invitations for further research.

Chapter 7. LIMITATIONS AND ISSUES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The limitations of this study had to do with time, teachers' workload, and the university's agenda. The first limitation was presented because the four participants are not full-time teachers; thus, it was difficult to find a space that suited their everyday routines. However, the administrative staff was supportive of the project, and allowed me as the researcher to arrange my working schedule, so that I could adapt to the teachers' availability. Additionally, they provided us with a place with all the resources to carry out the professional workshops.

Given the teachers' workload, sometimes they could not meet the deadlines proposed in the chronogram. This process required rethinking the curriculum, the classroom activities, and conceptualizing socially embedded pedagogies; which takes a lot of time, and commitment from the teachers. I realized that they needed more support, and that the project could not become an extra task that would demand more time from them. Therefore, I rearranged the plan for the professional workshops in a way that they could fulfill all the tasks during the encounters. Towards the end of the project, it was amazing to see how dedicated and curious the teachers became that I would see them discussing their decision-making on the challenges they experienced during the process.

Regarding the university's agenda, the planning for the TPD had to be readapted, as well the chronogram of teachers' implementation of the curricular units, given the cultural week. This was somehow stressful for the teachers since they thought they would not be able to complete the whole unit. Nevertheless, the administrative staff added an extra week for the teachers to finish the projects.

Concerning invitations for further research, it is worth considering exploring teachers' knowledge base as language teachers through professional reflections, the

construction of curricular units, the implementation of the community projects, and their teaching practice. In this study, teachers situated local literacies considering the diversity of students' professional programs as an asset that needs to be integrated to analyze their realities and enrich inquiries in a cross-disciplinary manner (Smith & Sobel, 2010).

Although I was able to evidence the products the groups of students created, future implementations can focus on analyzing the outcomes of students' commitment to exploring community issues, learning and transformation of perceptions towards a second language, as well as their conceptualization of socially situated pedagogies from students' views.

Finally, fostering cross-disciplinary inquiry projects among teachers and students can be an opportunity to create a community of practice among teachers from other areas of knowledge, and the language teacher. Exploring literacy development through socially-situated projects can enrich the field of literacy development and teacher education from a context-sensitive perspective.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. INITIAL SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW.

Promoting local inquiry among EFL university teachers to explore literacy sources for curriculum and teaching.

Creating the community Project

Semi-structured interview

Dear teacher: Thanks a lot for agreeing to participate in this interview. The purpose is to discuss your insights about constructing the curricular unit, identify the links that you set with the local resources, and the way in which you plan to bring them to the curriculum.

Name of project:

1. What local resources did you use to construct the community project?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2. If you used any strategies, which ones did you use to do inquiry on social issues?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. How does your unit foster a situated-literacy development?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

4. How did you relate local knowledge and text production with the institutional standards?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

5. What is your role as a teacher when involving local realities into the curriculum?

APPENDIX 2. FINAL SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Promoting local inquiry among EFL university teachers to use literacy sources for curriculum and teaching

Teacher:_____

Final interview

Dear teacher: Thanks a lot for agreeing to participate in this interview. The purpose is to discuss your pedagogical experience, since you started the exploration of CBP. The idea is to reflect on your students' products and what made them possible.

Date: Dec 06th, 2018

1. How did you find the pedagogical experience you carried out with your students?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

2. What kind of connections can you establish, if any, with the students' results and you role as a teacher in the classroom?

_____
_____
_____
_____

3. What made your students' results possible? How?

_____
_____
_____
_____

4. To what extent do you think you will use resources from students' contexts in your future teaching?

_____
_____
_____
_____

5. How do students´ texts reflect their local realities into their community products?

_____
_____

APPENDIX 3. CONSENT FORM



EFL University teachers using literacy sources to connect curriculum and teaching

Main researchers: Yuly Andrea Nieto Gómez (yulyandreanieto@gmail.com) 3172125531
Master of Applied Linguistics to TEFL UDFJC

Purpose of the study: Identify the links pre-service teachers establish with local y resources to make decisions about their language literacy teaching.

Procedure: Teachers will attend four TPD workshops, in which you they engage in professional readings and discussions. Also, they will do asset-mapping to construct the curriculum for your class, and design the project with your students. Then, they will be observed during the implementation of the curricular units. And finally, they will respond two interviews.

Duration and location: The project will last all the second semester and the encounters will be at the language center in classroom 103, I will use the projector, speakers, and Wi-Fi connection. Encounters will happen in a different schedule for teachers' classes. On the second workshop, teachers will conduct a mapping of the community around university.

Researcher's commitment: I commit to work with these teachers in different timetables for those assigned in my working contract. Additionally, participant teaches will not have a special treatment in tasks related to working responsibilities at the language center. Finally, I will report the findings of this project once it is over.

Confidentiality: Teachers' personal information will remain absolutely anonymous. They will be named with a participant number. They will participate in discussions, interviews, and class observation. However, all the products and information that they provide will be restrictedly used for the research purposes. That information will be audio recorded and transcribed. They will not be videotaped. Additionally, the information they provide and their participation will not interfere with their contract or course assignation. There will be no retaliation for the opinions, comments and thoughts they express.

Participants' requirements: If teachers accept to be part of the study, they will commit to attend the professional development workshops, hand in the curricular units, and agree to be observed in their implementation.

As the director of the department, I give consent for the development of this research project at the language center.

_____

Director's signature
CC._____

APPENDIX 4. CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHERS



EFL University teachers using literacy sources to connect curriculum and teaching

Main researcher: Yuly Andrea Nieto Gómez (yulyandreanieto@gmail.com) 3172125531
Master of Applied Linguistics to TEFL UDFJC

Purpose of the study: Identify the links pre-service teachers establish with local y resources to make decisions about their language literacy teaching.

Procedure: You will attend four TPD workshops, in which you will engage in professional readings and discussions. Also, you will do asset-mapping to construct the curriculum for your class, and design the project with your students. Then, you will be observed during the implementation of the curricular units. And finally, you will respond two interviews.

Duration and location: The project will last all the second semester and the encounters will be at the language center, upon negotiation with your timetable.

Confidentiality: Your personal information will remain absolutely anonymous. You will be named with a participant number. You will participate in discussions, interviews, and

class observation. However, all the products and information that you provide will be restrictedly used for the research purposes. That information will be audio recorded and transcribed. You will not be videotaped. Additionally, the information you provide and your participation will not interfere with your contract or course assignation. There will be no retaliation for the opinions, comments and thoughts you express.

Participants' requirements: If you accept to be part of the study, you will commit to attend the professional development workshops, hand in the curricular units, and agree to be observed in your implementation.

I have read and agreed to participate in this research study

_____

Teacher's signature CC._____

APPENDIX 5. MATRIX TO CONSTRUCT THE CURRICULAR UNIT

USING THE COMMUNITY AS A RESOURCE IN THE EFL CURRICULUM

TEACHER: **LEVEL:**

PROJECT:

GENERAL OBJECTIVE:

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos/Textos

APPENDIX 6. CURRICULAR UNIT TEACHER 3

USING THE COMMUNITY AS A RESOURCE IN THE EFL CURRICULUM

TEACHER: 3. **LEVEL: 6 (B1). Eight students. (Law)**

PROJECT: Analysis of environmental issues with garbage in Bogotá with possible solutions from different programs.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE: Students will identify specific environmental problems that affect citizens in Bogotá to create a collective solution from their different disciplines of study.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: Students will create a pedagogical campaign with different solutions and will write a report that supports the campaign.

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
Semana 1:	-Students will be given post is notes. Each one will write forms of pollution they find in Bogotá. (Step #1: building from the known) -The whole class will categorize post it notes, providing a name to the issue. (Garbage, pollution, recycling, solid waste) -Students will work in	-To realize what needs to be done to carry out the analysis of environmental issues, starting from students' own observations.	-Can recognize significant points in straightforward newspaper articles on familiar subjects. - Can obtain information, ideas and opinions from highly specialized sources within his /	-Pictures -Newspapers -Online articles	-Questions -Infographic -Introduction report

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
	couples. They will go out and register pictures of the issue they are in charge of. -At the same time they will write 5 driving questions based on the observations. -In class, they will present their pictures, driving questions, and the plan to answer them. -Each group will go online, read articles, watch videos to answer the questions, and they will present a concept map to the class. -For homework, they will write the introduction of their report and the problem they will address. (Teacher will provide feedback, and corrections will be made in class)		her field.		

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
Semana 2:	-According to the issue they chose, students will interview an expert on their discipline (law), the environmental department at university, and some students from other English classes. (Through a google form). -Groups will first design the interview in class, exchange them with their classmates, and then apply it. -The interview will help them think of a strategy for the campaign. -Each group will organize the info they have collected by posting it on a blog the whole creates. -To think of more strategies, they will look for a model of environmental control in countries with the best life qualities.	-To realize what can be done from their fields with the help of an expert, and contrasting with the needs of citizens (in these case students from university) -To broaden their perspective on global management of environmental issues to foster their creativity to find solutions to their own context.	-Can use the language fluently, accurately and effectively on a wide range of general, academic, vocational or leisure topics, marking clearly the relationships between ideas. --SS Can participate fully in an interview, as either interviewer or interviewee, expanding and developing the point being discussed fluently without any support, and handling interjections well.	-Interaction with expert and students.	-blog -interviews -Presentation -Report with main info about the topics.

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
	-They will create a presentation for their classmates where they talk about the models they chose. -For homework, they will write about the information they have gathered, and what they have found from experts' voices and students voices. (Teacher will provide feedback, and corrections will be made in class)				
Semana 3:	-Groups will plan the campaign, the products they need to display it in the project fair. -They will discuss their ideas in class to receive feedback. -They will create the products in class. -In class, they will write the justification of the campaign, and the conclusions.	-To create final products with the help and advice of their peers.	-SS Can give a clear, well-structured presentation of a complex subject, expanding and supporting points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples. - Can summarize, report and give		-Final reports. -Artifacts for the campaign.

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
	-Reports will be peer-reviewed. Each group will provide feedback to the other. -Groups will prepare their stands.		her/his opinion about accumulated factual information on familiar routine and non-routine matters within his / her field with some confidence.		

APPENDIX 7. CURRICULAR UNIT TEACHER 2

USING THE COMMUNITY AS A RESOURCE IN THE EFL CURRICULUM

TEACHER: 2. **LEVEL: 2 (A2-). Seven students**

PROJECT: A proposal to improve civic practices in the cycling route around university.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE: To have students create a social awareness campaign to improve the practices in the cycling route so that they prioritize citizens.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: Students will create a promotional video for the campaign based on the needs expressed by the members of the community at/around university (students from other universities, workers, vendors).

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
Semana 1:	-Students will watch a Ted talk called: Why do I ride bicycles while others are driving. After answering comprehension questions about it, they whole group will create a mind map writing 1 sentence why people in Bogotá use their bike. -We will do a brainstorming	-To help SS become more aware of the issue, by observing the setting in a purposeful way.	-Can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure etc., including short narrative.	-Cycling route. -Pictures	-Mind map. -Biking vocabulary -Biking trip story.

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
	of vocabulary related to riding a bike. -With the permission of the language center, and the watchman accompanying us, we will conduct a biking trip along the cycling route on the 11t^{h}(72-93). -The purpose of the field trip is: 1. Students will answer 3 questions previously given by the teacher: -What behaviors make me feel unsafe? -What are the advantages of using the cycling route? -What could people improve to make it a better experience? And what should I improve? 2. Students will keep record of the practices they observe. -In class, SS will get in pairs to answer the questions.		- Can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within his field of interest, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence.		

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
	Since we will be writing stories(past experiences) they will write a story called " What I found on my biking trip in the English class"				
Semana 2:	-Students will read their stories and I will provide feedback. -After each story, groups will discuss on the experience. That way, groups will choose what they want to focus on to design the campaign. -Groups will gather and make a plan of what they need to know from the bike users, in order to improve the civic practices, then they will create the interview questions, with my support -Each group will exchange interviews, answer them and	-To collect peoples' experiences and opinions in order to be inform of the how the members of the community perceive the problem.	- Can enter unprepared into conversation of familiar topics, express personal opinions and exchange information on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events)	-Interaction with community members.	-Interview -Findings report -PPT presentation

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
	give feedback. -Once the interviews are ready, they will go to the main campus and around to ask the questions. -In class, they will write a report (following prompt by me) on what people replied. -They will prepare a power point presentation to share their findings in class.		-Can give brief comments on the views of others. Can compare and contrast alternatives, discussing what to do, where to go, who or which to choose etc.		
Semana 3:	-They will plan how they will make the video. It will include a description of the steps of the project, findings, and the measures to be carried out to improve the civic practices, with an acting from the students. -All the group will work together. SS will work in stations: One creating the script of what they are going to say, the other, looking for	-To present a solution to make the cycling route a better opportunity for transportation.	Can keep going comprehensibly, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident, especially in longer stretches of free production.		-Promotional video

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
	the images that they will include, and the other one will be in charge of the edition.				

APPENDIX 8. CURRICULAR UNIT TEACHER 4

USING THE COMMUNITY AS A RESOURCE IN THE EFL CURRICULUM

TEACHER: 4 **LEVEL: 4 (B1-). Six students**

PROJECT: Exploring possibilities to access private and public higher education for young population in Colombia.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE: To have students explore programs, procedures, and opportunities to enter higher education as a way to foster educational and social inclusion.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: Through a Facebook page, students will display the findings to create a network that guides young people into their best possibility.

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
Semana 1:	-Students will create a brainstorming of what they know about the education system in Colombia. -After that, they will get in groups of 3, and will come up with 10 questions that they wonder about access. -Once they have written the questions, teacher will provide feedback.	-To pose questions that guide the exploration of access to higher education.	-SS Can understand in detail a wide range of lengthy, complex texts likely to be encountered in social, professional or academic life, identifying finer points of detail including attitudes	-Newspapers, social media, articles, local videos.	-Questions -Infographic -Presentation

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
	-Students will go online and distribute the questions within the group, they will look for different sources to answer (videos, articles, interviews). -The two groups will create an infographic and a power point presentation to inform the others about what they found.		and implied as well as stated opinions. -SS Can easily follow and contribute to complex interactions between third parties in group discussion even on abstract, complex unfamiliar topics. -SS Can present clear, well-structured descriptions of complex subjects, underlining the relevant salient issues. -SS Can expand and support points of view at some length		

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
			with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples.		
Semana 2:	-Students will upload their findings to the web Facebook page, giving a mission to their project, and providing details of what people can find. -They will conduct a field exercise that involves: -Taking pictures of the higher institutions around Sergio Arboleda, taking notes about the population that studies there, the timeslots in which people study, the programs offered by the institution, and the payment facilities they offer.	-To explore the topic in their immediate contexts to enrich the information they provide through their digital content.	- SS can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. -SS can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization. - Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on	-Field exercise -Photos -Interaction with people.	-Notes -Pictures -Interviews -Written reports -Digital content.

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
	-Then, they will come to the class to create a 5 question interview for 4-5 the students of those institutions, based on what they observed. -Once they applied the interviews, they will write a report. -Groups will exchange the reports and we will start a class discussion of the findings.		a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.		
Semana 3:	-Groups will create all the content of the web page. Choosing the most relevant info. -They will present their content in class to receive feedback. -They will prepare their stand for project fair. They will explain the steps of the project, how they gathered the information, the findings,	-To prepare their research procedure, findings, and think about their main conclusions.	SS Can give a clear, well-structured presentation of a complex subject, expanding and supporting points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples. Can handle interjections well, responding spontaneously and almost effortlessly.	-Photos, interviews, observations.	-Web page or facebook page wit findings.

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
	and final opinions on the findings.				

APPENDIX 9. CURRICULAR UNIT TEACHER 1

USING THE COMMUNITY AS A RESOURCE IN THE EFL CURRICULUM

TEACHER: 1. **LEVEL: 5 (B1-). Six students**

PROJECT: Creating an NGO to foster the preservation of Tunjuelito River.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE: Students will create a campaign through an NGO that invites people to make part of the improvement of the situation of Tunjelito River

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: Students create a magazine to launch their NGO, with the logo, objectives, and resources.

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
Semana 1:	-SS will go over unit 6 about NGO's to explore the purpose, examples, etc. -In couples, they will read the story of Tunjuelo River, and will create 5 wonderings that come up from the reading. -The group will do a comprehension exercise, and will share the wonderings. -Based on the wonderings, they will go to the lab to	-To get familiar with the concept of NGO, and plan the steps that are necessary to take to develop the project.	SS Can present clear, well-structured descriptions of complex subjects, underlining the relevant salient issues.	-Videos -Articles -News	-Driving questions Presentations

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
	answer them, and prepare a short presentation.				
Semana 2:	-They will make a historical record of what has happened with the preservation of the river. -In groups, they will prepare 10 questions to ask elder people in their families who have always lived in Ciudad Bolivar, their neighbors, and young population. (Two students live in that community; however their partners will go with them) -The questions will be shared in class to provide feedback. -Once they make the interview, in class, they will	-To make a historical record by getting informed by the members who live in the place. -To learn collaboratively not only in class, but with their families and neighbors.	- SS can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. - Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	-Community members. -Relatives	-Interview questions -Brochure -Written report of the interviews.

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
	organize the information and create a brochure. -Then, in groups they will do research about the preservation of rivers, and strategies that organization use to clean those areas. -Then, they will start creating the focus, the mission, the resources, and members of the NGO. Along with the ideas to clean the river with community. -They will validate their ideas by asking one member of their families or the people they interviewed before. -They will create a report about their plans for the NGO that they will upload in google class. The idea is that their classmates read different report and they get into a class discussion I will lead in class.				

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
Semana 3:	- One member from each group will go to the other, the idea is that they rotate to another group, showing all the texts that they created. -Then, the class will do a brainstorming of components that the logo of the NGO should include, and the name. -Groups will be distributed according to the sections of the magazine: One group will work on the design, the general information through graphics, and pictures, explanation of mission.	-To take action by gathering the information collected.	SS Can give a clear, well-structured presentation of a complex subject, expanding and supporting points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples. Can handle interjections well, responding spontaneously and almost effortlessly.	-The ones from week 1-2	-NGO Magazine

Semanas	Descripción de la Actividad	Objetivos	Estándares	Recursos de la Comunidad	Productos
	The second group will create a dynamic way to include the information from the brochures, and summarize the best parts of the reports of what people from the community think of the proposals. The third group will plan a way to present the strategies for the conservation. -We will create and print an magazine to present it at the fair.				