

**MY CULTURE, MY STORY: STORYTELLING AS A STRATEGY TO QUESTION
STUDENTS' OWN CULTURAL IDENTITIES IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM**

**Trabajo de investigación para optar por el título de Licenciada en Español y Lenguas
Extranjeras con énfasis en inglés y francés**

Johana Carolina Rodríguez Aranzalez

**Asesor:
Ferney Cruz Arcila**

Universidad Pedagógica Nacional

Facultad de Humanidades

Licenciatura en Español y Lenguas Extranjeras

Bogotá, Colombia

2025

To my parents, who with their unconditional love and support have allowed me to fulfill my dreams, this being one of them. To my pets, who accompanied me and warmed my lap during sleepless nights. To my beloved D, my dear friend J and all my precious bonds, who lovingly shed me with their light and held my heart in the darkest moments. To the wonderful women of GIFA, who sow in me a spirit of rebellion and whose sweet words nourished my thoughts, motivating me to vindicate the existence of other worlds and fight for a more dignified world. To my advisor, who with patience and understanding guided me on this academic path, despite all the difficulties. Infinite thanks to all of you. This achievement is as much mine as yours, for those pieces of yours that have amplified my soul and contributed to its ongoing growth.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	4
CHAPTER I: Contextualization.....	6
Statement of the problem.....	6
Rationale.....	8
General objective.....	10
Specific objectives.....	10
CHAPTER II: Theoretical considerations	11
Literature Review	11
Theoretical Framework	16
Culture in language learning	16
Cultural identity	18
Gender	22
Storytelling	24
CHAPTER III: Research Design.....	28
Qualitative Research	29
Narrative Inquiry	30
Setting and participants.....	32
Context	32
Participants.....	34
Data Collection Instruments.....	35
Field Notes	35
Interviews	36
Questionnaires	37
Artifacts	38
Data analysis approach	39
Timeline of activities	40
Ethical considerations	41
CHAPTER IV: Instructional design	42
CHAPTER V: Data analysis.....	54
CHAPTER VI : Conclusions	66

Conclusions.....	66
Implications	69
Limitations.....	70
Further research.....	71
References.....	71
Appendix 1.....	76
Appendix 2.....	78
Appendix 3.....	81
Appendix 4.....	84
Appendix 5.....	85
Appendix 6.....	86

Abstract

The relationship between cultural identity, language learning and storytelling has not been explored by researchers regarding public schools in our country. In Colombia, culture is not deeply discussed in EFL classrooms (Mejia, 2006). Reviewed investigations demonstrate that stories are composed of cultural knowledge (Lucaraveschi, 2016) which might increase students' interest in exploring their own culture, and while sharing personal stories, a potential opportunity to enhance the development of their identity emerges (Kim & Li, 2020). This research proposes a pedagogical strategy based on storytelling with a focus on gender to question learners' cultural identities by critically analyzing gender roles in stories. It was conducted at a public-school in Bogota with a sample group composed of 11th-grade female students, using a narrative inquiry approach and implementing data collection instruments such as field notes, questionnaires, interviews and stories during interventions. Findings demonstrate that students' own cultural identity can be questioned while critically addressing gender issues in the English classroom through storytelling. In conclusion, they could reposition themselves from diverse loci of enunciation as women in society, not only negotiating their identities but also enhancing foreign language learning in the process.

Key words: Cultural identity, gender, storytelling, English learning.

Resumen

La relación entre la identidad cultural, el aprendizaje de idiomas y la narración de historias no ha sido explorada por los investigadores en las escuelas públicas de nuestro país. En Colombia, la cultura no se discute a fondo en las aulas de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) (Mejía, 2006). Las investigaciones consultadas demuestran que las historias se componen de conocimiento cultural (Lucaraveshi, 2016), lo que podría aumentar el interés de los estudiantes en explorar su propia cultura, y al compartir historias personales, surge una oportunidad potencial para mejorar el desarrollo de su identidad (Kim y Li, 2020). Esta investigación propone una estrategia pedagógica basada en la narración de historias con un enfoque de género para cuestionar las identidades culturales de los estudiantes mediante el análisis crítico de los roles de género presentes en ellas. Esta se llevó a cabo en una escuela pública de Bogotá con un grupo de muestra compuesto por estudiantes mujeres de 11vo grado, utilizando un enfoque de indagación narrativa e implementando instrumentos de recolección de datos como notas de campo, cuestionarios, entrevistas e historias durante las intervenciones. Los hallazgos demuestran que la identidad cultural propia de los estudiantes puede cuestionarse al abordar críticamente las problemáticas de género en el aula de inglés a través de la narración de historias. En conclusión, estas pudieron reposicionarse desde diversos lugares de enunciación como mujeres en la sociedad, no sólo negociando sus identidades sino también potenciando el aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras en el proceso.

Palabras clave: Identidad cultural, género, narración de historias, aprendizaje de inglés.

CHAPTER I: Contextualization

In this chapter, the contextualization of the research will be carried out. Firstly, the statement of the problem will be presented, explaining why questioning students' own cultural identities using storytelling in the English classroom was chosen as the main concern of this investigation. Secondly, the justification around why it is significant to address identity questioning and critically discuss gender issues in the English classroom and finally, the research question along with general and specific objectives that compose this research will be presented.

Statement of the problem

“Language is the soul of the country and people who speak it” (Tang, 2011, p. 21). The way we speak is itself a mark of identity that tells a lot of information about who we are and where we come from. This can be easily reflected in our accent, our jargon, our customs, our ways of interacting with other people, and so on. When we learn a foreign language, we face also new ways to use the language that embeds a different worldview which is full of values, beliefs and customs that differ from what we actually know about our culture. According to Brown (2000), “a language is a part of a culture, and a culture is a part of a language; the two are tortuously interwoven (...)” (p. 11), which implies that every language reflects and transfers a different cultural knowledge. Then, learning a foreign language becomes a way not only to express but to build our identities. In fact, “language is among the identity layers and social identity can be constructed based on those identity layers” (Karkonan Nasrabadi, 2006, p. 2).

However, our identity is not just configured by language because, as Shohamy (2006) states, “social variations related to socioeconomic class, education, occupation, age, sex, religion ... (also) play equally important roles in determining one's speech” (p. 6). For instance, social contexts such as schools be part in this construction as well. Breen (2001) suggests that “our

personal identities as language learners within a group derive much from classrooms” (p. 23), which means that there is an identity that defines us as language learners and depends on our interaction in the learning environment. This idea is supported by Ellis (2008), who discovered that "learners' sense of (...) identity influences learning through the interactions in which learners participate" (p. 15) this means that in a specific context such as the classroom, teachers' and students' identities are exchanged as they interact with each other.

Regarding the Colombian context, it is possible to evidence that in the foreign language teaching “there has been a noticeable tendency towards the adoption of an instrumental perspective, with a corresponding emphasis on the material and economic benefits of being bilingual” (Mejía, 2006, p. 11), which has left behind cultural-related content as a relevant element of learning English in public schools. In fact, even if this is brought to discussion in the classroom, Mejía (2006) found that “knowledge of another culture is only developed at a superficial level, such as cultural celebrations involving different types of food, music, dress etc. without this leading to a deeper reflection on the significance of these differences or their implications” (p. 12).

This phenomenon was evident in the observation, as students at the assigned public school had some knowledge about cultures such as Japanese, African and British ones but it was limited to customs, celebrations and food. This was evident through the creation of a cultural corner where learners explored a different country per month but still, they did not go deeper in exploring how that language use permeates their way of seeing the world and influences the construction of their identities according to their cultural context. Due to this, students were not able to explore and reflect on further cultural aspects such as their own cultural identity, nor on the foreign one in a significant way. To achieve this purpose, it becomes necessary that teachers enhance cultural awareness in the classroom, so students can “develop a consciousness about (their) own culturally

induced behavior as well as that of others. It implies an ability to reflect on one's cultural identity, values, and beliefs in order to understand those of one's interlocutors” (Fandiño, 2014, p. 7. Once this consciousness is reached, social issues which barely show up in the English classes will have an opportunity to be addressed.

Bearing this in mind, storytelling can be a useful pedagogical tool to face these issues as it allows “to convey, through the language of words, aspects of ourselves and others (...)” (McDrury and Alterio, 2003, p. 31). By recognizing how others perceive the world by listening to their own personal stories, students can negotiate their identities as they begin to be aware of and know others’ ways of living and facing life while reflecting about their own cultural identity and how it has been configured by the narratives around them. In fact, as Ellis (2008) points out,

“The individual is the product of social forces but is also able to shape his/her own identity. So, identity can be assumed as the potential ability, and it is the social context that provides the language learner with opportunities to enhance this potentiality” (p. 29).

Therefore, a selected story is meant to be a vehicle to address Colombian social issues such as race, gender and class, to foster the own cultural identities questioning in the EFL classroom.

Rationale

Research on cultural identity, storytelling, and gender roles has not been common in our context, especially in public schools. Therefore, this research is relevant to explore this new investigation field and to obtain meaningful information on the topics addressed in this document, which can be discussed and amplified by other researchers and future studies. Additionally, this study may be important for students as it opens the opportunity for them to explore and question their identities as women, and through this questioning, they may construct new ways of being women in our context. In this sense, considering the PEI of the school where this research was

conducted, which states "Educar en la vida y para la vida, con calidad y proyección comunitaria", this research can contribute to the exploration of values, beliefs, and knowledge related to our own cultural identity and thereby build a path where female students can question their identities and construct new ways of being and existing in the world, and thus develop as leaders while learning a foreign language. As a researcher, this study can contribute to the research corpus of the Languages Department at the National Pedagogical University, as it aligns with its mission and vision regarding the training of critical teachers, whose interests include developing research with a social and transformative approach, seeking to impact their communities through education. In this case, this study aims to enhance the questioning of cultural identities while addressing social issues in the classroom through telling and critically reading stories, which can be a useful strategy to foster empowerment and agency in students to change their contexts beyond school. More broadly, it can also be useful for the EFL community as it addresses a topic not commonly explored in English language teaching in our country, which is the questioning of cultural identities through storytelling. Therefore, the results obtained may pave the way for new research that delves deeper into and questions other relevant aspects of foreign language learning and how this process influences cultural identity formation and negotiation in our country and even expand to other more global contexts.

Research question

How may storytelling with a focus on gender contribute to questioning eleventh-grade female students' own cultural identity regarding gender roles in an English classroom at a public school in Bogotá?

General objective

To explore how eleventh-grade female students' own cultural identities at a public school can be questioned by telling and critically reading a selected story about gender roles in the English classroom.

Specific objectives

1. To explore how a group of eleventh graders' cultural identities can be questioned in the English classroom when using storytelling with a focus on gender roles.
2. To analyze the impact of storytelling on the questioning of cultural identities regarding gender roles of a group of female students.
3. Determine how storytelling could impact English language learning while telling and critically reading a selected story related to the role of women in society.

CHAPTER II: Theoretical considerations

In the following chapter the theoretical considerations that compose this research will be explained. In the first place, a literature review was carried out to read about the information that has been discussed by academics around the topics to investigate. Then, the theoretical framework will address the four main concepts that are essential for the current investigation: culture in language learning, cultural identity, gender and storytelling.

Literature Review

There is a variety of studies related to the role of storytelling in language teaching, an innovative technique that has gained some popularity in the last years due to its pedagogical potential, but the relationship between cultural identity and language learning, specifically in a foreign language, has been a field not so commonly explored by researchers. Due to this, studies have focused on these previous topics separately. In the following review, I will discuss all the findings around culture in language learning, cultural identity, gender and storytelling, and the contributions to the proposed research.

In the first place, as Lucarevschi (2016) stated, storytelling is “one of the oldest forms of human communication, being used for entertainment, and for the promotion of education and cultural values” (p. 2). This suggests that stories also have a pedagogical function since they are not only creations of language but also contain cultural knowledge. Hence, they can be assumed as significant tools to improve and develop students’ language and cultural competences in the classroom. In fact, Lucarevschi highlights the role of storytelling in enhancing L2 learners’ language skills as a meaningful and contextualized practice that works not only in specific language skills but also in the learning process. Likewise, storytelling can be mediated by methods like the TPRS (Teaching Proficiency in Reading and Storytelling), which, according to Muzammil

(2017) is a useful strategy not only to improve students' speaking skill but also to help them to connect with their learning environment by creating a joyful atmosphere along with their teachers while telling stories. In fact, the results of his research show that this method outperforms the traditional English teaching methods used in the classrooms, which makes possible more positive learning outcomes from the students.

Moreover, stories can create awareness, respect, and recognition of cultures by experiencing them, as it happened in the McCullum, Maldonado & Baltes' (2014) study about FNMI (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) culture in Canada. In this phenomenological research, it was found that stories have the power of teaching, as they strengthen both content retention and language acquisition. Telling a story to each other implies turning events that have taken place and perspectives about those events on narratives. This collective experience of storytelling evokes an emotional response that is retained longer and more completely as a memory, which finally reinforces learning. These results demonstrate that students can learn from telling their lives as well. In fact, Freeman, Martin, Nash, Hausknecht & Skinner (2020) study reinforce the previous ideas. In their research, they explored the use of digital storytelling to promote intergenerational relationships between Nak'azdli youth and Elders through the sharing of their stories and supporting the students in learning more about the Dakelh culture and history, which is located in Canada. Digital storytelling uses digital resources, tools and media like images, audio, video, graphics and text to create a story. The findings show that digital storytelling has a lot of benefits regarding mutual sharing and learning by Elders and youth, such as reinforcing and building language and preserving cultural traditions. This demonstrates the relevance of storytelling in language learning and its potential to positively promote cultural knowledge and practices. In the same line, some studies have adapted traditional storytelling to digital environments and resources,

as explained above. For instance, Kristiawana, Ferdiansyah, & Picard (2022) have found how local culture-based digital storytelling activities are effective to engage students in language learning. In this process, students can also learn collectively by helping each other in solving problems, sharing responsibilities, and respecting each other's ideas. This strategy can be implemented in multicultural classroom settings where students can successfully share their stories and enhance their use of the language and intercultural learning at the same time. Thus, creating a story makes students become interested in their own culture as well as more engaged and motivated to learn English. In fact, it also promotes positive attitudes such as autonomy and creativity when implemented, as Liu, Tai & Liu (2018) study demonstrates. In their research, he found how a free-space digital storytelling approach, which refers to the use of digital tools, resources and media to create a story outside the institutional settings, impacts students' language learning motivation and performances by engaging them in reflective learning.

Similarly, other papers such as the one made by Kim & Li (2020) explored how students expressed their voices, identities, and emotions using multimodal resources available in digital stories. They found that digital storytelling projects in a school curriculum can engage learners with a wide range of expressive resources while also enhancing students' motivation, creativity, identity development, and connection with others. An interesting contribution to the current research is the idea of students being able to develop their identities by sharing stories in the classroom. Hence, the findings of the previous studies show how storytelling can be a useful tool for students to not only improve their language learning process but also to express their cultural identities by exploring and recognizing their own culture through telling stories, using digital resources such as images and sounds.

However, there is still a considerable knowledge gap in the impact of storytelling on student's cultural identity questioning. Also, it is known that using a certain type of story, story format, or how a storytelling activity might affect L2 learners' performance when developing their language skills, which can represent a challenge once applied. Thus, few studies have been implemented with monolingual and multicultural groups to explore their response depending on the narratives used, considering they will address a variety of social issues that might be new for learners. Additionally, some of these studies have focused on children's populations, so there is a need to address different age groups to verify their effectiveness in a broader educational field.

In the second place, even if there are several studies about the relationship between cultural identity and language learning, some of them only focus in the influence of culture in language and demonstrate that these constructions cannot be separated as they are interwoven, an idea I consider can work as a theoretical pathway to discover the role of cultural identity in foreign language learning processes. According to Rodriguez-Tamayo and Tenjo-Macias (2019), language interacts with culture in defined ways, such as being the transmitter and tool used for the internalization of culture by the individual, as cited in Hammers and Blanc (1995). This means that language also builds identity. In fact, Ahmad Khan's (2020) study shows that language is related to our identity, and there is an impact in the cultural identity while teaching English as a foreign language. The results suggest that students might reproduce their individual local culture and beliefs using English. This highlights the importance of language in reflecting and transferring cultural knowledge, which creates the identity of the speaker, in terms of attitude and way to see and understand the world, when using either their mother or foreign language.

Likewise, Rodriguez-Tamayo and Tenjo-Macias (2019) found in their study that children's cultural identity formation is related to receiving others' influences, living situations as

determiners of languages switch, and using two languages as a key aspect. This means that they might change the use of the foreign language for the mother one while speaking for different reasons, which are determined by their context, identities, etc. The use of language is associated with expression but also refers to a change in attitudes and behaviors, which are influenced by the social role that the learner plays in the moment of speaking. For instance, in a classroom context, when speaking a language, students also share their own perspectives, experiences, values and beliefs, that later can be turned into stories and become a way to express their own cultural identities and reflect about them in the process, by making a contrast with different narratives.

Finally, it is important to understand how students perceive their own cultural identity. In this sense, Pérez-Gómez & Cortés Cross (2021) study classified the perceptions that a group of EFL students and teachers from a public university had in Colombia, their cultural identity, and Colombians' cultural identities in general. The researchers found that perceptions are extremely positive, participants tend to talk about their personality and mood over their character and appearance when giving a critical opinion about themselves. However, these findings do not provide information about the impact of social issues in the Colombian students' identity and suggest the need to address cultural identity not only focusing on the search of the aspects that we share as a community, that join us, but also those that separate and make us different from other cultures. This idea opens the field for the proposed research, which aims to explore the state of the own cultural identity configuration in relation to foreign language learning, in terms of how EFL students' own cultural identity might be questioned using storytelling as a pedagogical strategy in a public-school setting.

Theoretical Framework

Bearing in mind that this research aims to explore the impact of using storytelling as a strategy to help questioning students' own cultural identities in the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom, it is necessary to understand the concepts that surround this concern to clarify the direction of this research. In the following section, I will define concepts such as culture in language learning, cultural identity, gender and storytelling and discuss the perspectives given by different authors and some related studies, along with their contributions which will consolidate the essence of the proposed problematic.

Culture in language learning

Culture is not only limited to the shared behaviors, customs, habits and rituals of people who belong to a common social group. As Monzo, Rueda & Nieto, (2010, as cited by Mercuri, 2014), could evidence in their research, culture goes beyond external aspects of a person's life; it rather moves toward intangible aspects, such as religious beliefs, the nature of language, and the values that shape the way a person thinks, behaves, and views the world. Likewise, according to Pavlenko (2002, as quoted for Ellis, 2008), language is seen as both constituted by and constituting social context. Thus, language is related to culture as it serves as a vehicle to communicate cultural meanings and knowledge among people and allows the construction and expression of identity. For instance, Kramsch (1998) found that

“There is a natural connection between the language spoken by members of a social group and that group's identity. (It) draws (...) a sense of social importance and historical continuity from using the same language as the group they belong to” (p. 34).

This means that by using language people can configure their cultural identity, which provides an expression of the sense of self within a culture and a specific group or community where we, as individuals, feel belonging to.

Regarding language learning, culture plays a crucial role in this process as it helps learners to understand and appreciate the language they are learning in its cultural context. According to Fantini (2009, cited by Ho, 2014), cultural awareness, cultural knowledge, and cultural skills, including linguistic competence, are essential components of language learning. Understanding the cultures of the language being learned helps learners to communicate more effectively and appropriately, as language use is closely tied to cultural norms and values. In addition, cultural understanding helps learners to develop empathy and respect for cultural diversity, which is an important aspect of language learning.

Language and culture are intertwined, and learning a language involves learning about the cultures of the people who speak it. As Condon (1993) notes, culture can be defined as a way of life, and learning a new language involves grappling with the notion of culture in relation to language. Therefore, language learners must understand the social norms, attitudes, and ways of thinking of the culture they are studying to communicate effectively and appropriately. For example, in American English, people tend to signal politeness by being indirect, while in other cultures, directness is preferred.

In this sense, culture plays an important role in language learning, and learners who understand the cultural context of the language they are studying are better equipped to communicate effectively and appropriately. Cultural understanding also promotes respect for diversity and empathy, which are essential components of language learning. These last insights are relevant for my research as I expect that through stories and the questioning of their cultural

identity, students will be able to strengthen their values such as respect and tolerance towards difference, not only in the classroom but also in their daily lives.

Regarding the relationship between language and culture, it is possible to make connections with the educational field and language learning in the classrooms. As the daily use of language represents a particular identity, among the cultural one, the role that language plays in the formation and expression of identity is undoubtedly influential. Indeed, since language is always used within a cultural context, it cannot be separated from cultural identity (Silbernagel, 2015). This insight is interesting as it provides a view on how identity and language are interrelated and how they influence each other. Now, moving on to the school context, which is also a setting established by the culture where it is set, Mitchell and Myles (2004) assert that “the identity of the learner, and his or her language knowledge, are collaboratively constructed and reconstructed in the course of interaction” (p. 12). So, every time language learners interact in the foreign language, whether in the oral or written mode, they are not only learning and enhancing language skills but also forming their identities in the process. An example of this is the accent, which is perceived as an identity mark for each learner. Therefore, language learning serves as an appropriate "place" to promote identity construction.

In the following section I will present the concept of cultural identity, at first moment in a separated way, and then as a whole construct and its relationship with language, to reach a deeper understanding of its relevance and how it connects with the main essence of this research.

Cultural identity

Culture is a complex concept that has been discussed by several authors over time, so giving only one definition can limit the understanding of it. However, in this research, I consider that, as a social construct, it can be understood as the views, beliefs, customs, behaviors, and values

that are shared by a group of people. On the one hand, this can be seen as a collective aspect of humanity, a big wire of meanings that has been built since ancient times and allows humans to connect and interact with each other in particular ways, while they share a common origin and ground. On the other hand, it is possible to conceive it from an individual viewpoint, where culture influences the personal construction of each human being, a process that is finally reflected in their own identity. Identity, in general terms, refers to all the traits, unique characteristics, affiliations and social roles of an individual. According to Hall and Du Gay's views (1996), identity is unfinished and is always being modified and transformed, according to the historical moment, circumstances and mainly, the discourses the subjects have constructed and reconstructed from their interactions with others. This means that identities are a result of cultural exposure, as culture spreads knowledge about the world that helps to configure each individual traits and roles inside their communities and social groups. In fact, Riley (2007) states that identities consist of meanings, and specific configurations of meanings can be implemented functionally as roles through the community's communicative practices. These insights serve as evidence of the role of culture in identity construction, an essential idea in this research.

Bearing in mind those base definitions, cultural identity can be defined also as

“uniqueness or emotion of belonging to a group of people. It is part of a person's personal idea and self-perception and is related to nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, generation, locality or any kind of social group that has its own distinct culture” (Khan, 2020, p. 4)

Then, this kind of identity is traversed by every human characteristic from language to arts, food, music, and diverse social habits that we acquire as we live in communities. Toohey (2002) supports this idea by saying that “cultural identity answers questions that are linked to who the person is, how the person relates to the social world, and under what conditions the person speaks”

(p. 4). In the same direction, Syed and Juang (2014) pinpointed that it “referred to the way individuals defined themselves in relation to the cultural groups they belonged to” (p. 17). Therefore, I consider cultural identity as a complex process mediated by human interactions, that finally consolidates a sense of self that is constructed through the relation of different meanings and spheres of knowledge, such as the ones provided by our own culture.

Likewise, according to Altugan (2015), cultural identity includes experiences, talents, skills, beliefs, values, and knowledge of individuals and generally refers to the nature of individuals. People respond to the questions of " who they are" and " their status in the family and the outer world" through the sense of identity. Regarding the role of cultural identity in language learning, he found a positive relationship between these two subjects. He believes that to teach successfully, teachers should be knowledgeable about the characteristics, motivations, and sense of cultural identities of their learners. If these aspects are not included in the foreign language classroom, Tajeddin & Teimournezhad (2014) pinpointed that a lack of cultural knowledge of the target language can provoke a cultural gap which can become an obstacle in language acquisition. In this sense, if learners do not develop awareness about the cultures of the mother and target language, as well as of other possible cultures in the teaching, then intercultural communication becomes a difficult activity to handle. In the end, this can prevent learners from expressing their own cultural identity. For instance, learning a foreign language will theoretically demand the learner to adapt his/her values and behavior (Jund, 2010), which explains how students are able to redefine their identities in the language learning process.

Language, then, can be seen as “a way of expressing one’s culture and identity” (Dumitrašković, 2015, p. 4). In harmony with these ideas, Dumitrašković believes that by learning about cultural aspects, students can “engage with interpreting their own and the meanings of others,

with each one's experience of participation and reflection leading to a greater awareness of self in relation to others” (p. 4). Therefore, it becomes necessary to see a learner as “an active participant in the language learning process, and by extension, identity construction” (Van Lier, 2008, p. 10). To make this possible, she considers that students must be “cognitively, emotionally, and physically engaged. Learners [then] begin to understand the complexities of their own language through classroom study of the target language” (p. 5).

This previous idea emphasizes the role of the teacher in creating an engaging environment where the students can express their thoughts, beliefs, values, etc., which are fundamental elements of their identities. To do so, teachers must

“be aware of cultural identity to see the features and characteristics of each learner better and more importantly to learn the learning strategies of each student to be able to teach mixed classes better, (...) as each different culture might require different activities and strategies to make learners be interested in lessons” (Dumitrašković, 2015, p. 3).

As Ellis (2002, cited by Altugan, 2015) stated: “Learning is successful when learners are able to summon up or construct an identity that enables them to impose their right to be heard...” (p. 2), so giving students the opportunity to express themselves in previously prepared learning contexts, where their culture is taken into account to create teaching materials and resources, will enhance the process of their identity construction. This has been proved by Eleuterio (1997) and Hoelscher (1999), who observed that classrooms filled with teachers and students who share their cultural identities are prone to build trust and foster stronger relationships, which leads to student engagement, higher motivation, and excitement about learning together. For this research, it is expected that students get successfully engaged in storytelling and while telling and sharing their

stories, can be able to question their cultural identity and strengthen their values towards social issues, through language learning.

Gender

Gender has been a complex term that has been discussed by many scholars over the last centuries, for example in the late 20th century authors like Judith Butler, bell hooks, Marta Lamas and Mara Viveros had theorized and shaped interesting discussions around it. Traditionally, gender is related to sex, following a biological perspective that assigns it according to the specific bodily structures of the human being. However, in this research, gender is considered from a cultural perspective; as Butler (1990) proposes, "(it) is the cultural meanings that the sexed body assumes" (p. 45). Therefore, its "identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results" (p. 68). This means that gender is not something that is predetermined by nature at birth but a social and cultural construction since bodies can construct their own gender identities in the acts they perform, hence its *performative* character. In this sense, she suggests that gender "should not be constructed as a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts follow; rather, gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts" (p. 214). This idea harmonizes with the dynamics of cultural identity, as discussed in the previous section, since it is constantly negotiated and configured through social interactions in relation to each person's context.

Bearing this in mind, Lamas (2000) points out that

"It can no longer be accepted that women are, by 'nature' (that is, based on their anatomy, their sex) what culture designates as 'feminine': passive, vulnerable, etc.; it must be recognized that the so-called 'feminine' characteristics (values, desires, behaviors) are assumed through a complex individual and social process: the process of gender acquisition" (p. 111).

This thought is extremely important for understanding that, since cultural and gender identity are social and cultural constructs, their questioning can be mediated by activities associated with these social environments, in this specific case, through the process of teaching and learning a foreign language. In this sense, Ehrlich (1997) highlights that "Language indirectly indexes gender, that is, this relationship is mediated by the social activities and practices symbolically and practically associated with women and men in a particular community" (p. 9). These conceptions generally vary from culture to culture and substantially influence the construction of the identities of the individuals who belong to them. Likewise, language intertwines the way in which these gender practices are carried out, thus being a means through which it is possible not only to transmit them, but also to question gender preconceptions and stereotypes and put them up for debate about other ways of being women and men within society.

Regarding the relationship between gender and language education, it is important to note that, as Norton & Pavlenko (2004) noticed within an ESL classroom, (...) gender, as one of many important facets of social identity, interacts with race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, (dis)ability, age, and social status in framing students' language learning experiences, trajectories, and outcomes. (p. 1) This means that gender, like other identity dimensions, is part of the students' learning process, although it is a factor that could be overlooked in English classes. For this reason, the present research seeks to question cultural identity, placing special emphasis on gender, since it comprises the complex construction of the individual in terms of how he or she perceives himself or herself in the world. In this case, just as identity is constantly constructed around social roles, beliefs, knowledge, customs, and other aspects related to culture, so too is gender, which is sought to be questioned through the critical telling and reading of stories where predetermined roles are exposed and subsequently questioned by students. In this

way, an opportune space is opened in the classroom for students to negotiate and question their cultural identities, discovering new ways of enunciating and repositioning themselves in their local context, while also learning a foreign language.

Storytelling

Before defining what storytelling is, it is helpful to know what a story is. In general terms, a story is a series of events which are connected to each other and can be shared through words in a written or oral way. These events or situations can be expressed using different forms of communication like imagery, body language, music, etc. Since ancient times, stories have been a way not only to communicate our human experiences but also a vital basis for communicating values and beliefs about the world. Nowadays, stories are a relevant element of different human activities and interactions, from daily-life conversations to more structured settings, and one of them is storytelling. On one hand, according to Dyson and Genishi (1994), storytelling is a process where a teller uses a narrative structure, vocalization, and/or dramatic and mental imagery to communicate with an audience, who also uses mental imagery to provide the teller with verbal and non-verbal feedback. On the other hand, McDrury and Alterio (2003) consider storytelling as a

human experience that enables us to convey, through the language of words, aspects of ourselves and others, and the worlds, real or imagined, that we inhabit. Stories enable us to come to know these worlds and our place in them given that we are all, to some degree, constituted by stories (p. 31).

These insights are somehow contradictory, as the first one focuses on the functional aspect of storytelling, describing its actors and characteristics, and the second one emphasizes the humanistic aspect of telling a story and the possibility to connect with others and their visions of the world. For this research, storytelling will be understood in both ways. This means, as the art of

sharing experiences with others through language and as a process that is effectuated by different communicative means.

In this sense, as stated by the National Storytelling Network (2001), storytelling is characterized by five important components: 1) interaction, 2) words, 3) actions, 4) presentation of a story and 5) stimulus of listener's imagination. Firstly, it is interactive, which means that it involves an interaction between the storyteller and the listener. In fact, the response of listeners can affect the telling of the story, and efforts made by these two actors also help to set the story itself. Secondly, it is made up of words which compose the story and thus there is the use of language in the process. This particularity differences storytelling from other art forms such as dance or mime, for example. Thirdly, it uses actions such as vocalization, physical movement and/or gestures, which also separates it from other text-based forms of interaction. Fourthly, it presents a story or narrative, which will be recognized as such depending on the context and culture where it is told. Finally, storytelling stimulates the listeners' imagination. While listening to a story, listeners can imagine and recreate in their mind all the actions, images, characters and events that compose the story. This process is possible due to the performance of the teller and the listener's beliefs and understanding; therefore, it will vary as it becomes an individual experience for each one.

Bearing these ideas in mind, storytelling is considered a pertinent strategy to work with a selected story in the classroom, due to the use of different resources such as mimics, voice changes, gestures, movements; verbal and non-verbal tools to tell and communicate to others the content of the narrative in which the author expresses her own experience regarding gender roles in Hindu culture. This differs from only reading a story because telling involves other comprehension and linguistic processes, in a more interactive way, that complement the individual decoding of written

meanings. It demands that students as tellers can make sense of experiences reflected in the story while sharing them with others in a collective practice, opposite from only reading. In this case, telling a story aloud is meant to encourage learners' reflection towards their own cultural identities, this by sharing with their classmates what they read and could understand from the chosen story experiences and events, as a exercise of comprehending and connect with the cultural meanings embedded on it to later question these in relationship with gender constructions and the own cultural identity.

To synthetize, storytelling is then a valuable form of expressing our experiences as human beings. In harmony with this idea, Maynard (2005) defined stories as the way people communicate their experience, the way they understand the experience of others, the way they liberate their imaginations, the way they make sense of the world and their own position within it. Then, I consider storytelling can be seen as a human collective activity that allows us to express not only who we are, but also where we come from, personal traits about us and the culture we belong to, by using the language of words. Stories are the way people make sense of their reality, and the world that surrounds them. They compound the sense of a person within a culture or a community group. Likewise, as Abo Skhela (2010) asserts, stories are political because they address the ways in which people's identities, their beliefs, attitudes, and values, are created and maintained. In brief, stories are composed of vital information about us and the influence of the external world in the creation of our identity.

Moreover, storytelling can be used in education, especially in language learning, as is demonstrated by Kim (2010). In his research, he found that storytelling was an effective pedagogical instrument in improving language skills of learners who demonstrated interest and pleasure in participating in this kind of activity. Indeed, Lucarevschi (2016) explains that the use

of stories improves language skills for three main reasons: they are highly motivating; they provide learners with comprehensible input; and they promote social interactions. Therefore, I consider storytelling as a powerful instrument to teach and motivate learners to learn a language by engaging and encouraging them to actively participate in their educational process. Stories allow the use of language in a meaningful way by implementing it in a near context, related to their personal life and experiences. They also facilitate interaction between students by listening and telling stories to each other, while they can also interact with the teacher in the process. This way, students can develop their learning potential collectively with the support of others and learn in a more significant way by creating a reflective setting where stories are discussed, and then new ones are created by themselves.

In brief, stories are a relevant means to educate and learn. They also play an important role in social and cultural practices as they help “to connect people to the past, present and the future” (Barzaq, 2009, p. 6), which opens the possibility to explore and recognize our own identity and the way we see the world based in the cultural context we were born. I firmly believe that stories can be an effective way to question students’ own cultural identity as them become memorable, this means, might transcend if they are vivid enough for the listener, and can be seen as meaningful resources of knowledge since they are formed by different perspectives, beliefs, behaviors and values, etc.

To summarize, storytelling is a meaningful tool to learn in foreign language classrooms, as has been demonstrated in several studies. Its implementation as a pedagogical technique might open the possibility of recognizing, exploring and reflecting on students’ own cultural identity as this is expressed through the use of language and finally manifested in different communicative forms, such as stories themselves. These are composed of experiences that are interpreted in the

mind according to our own cultural knowledge and meanings, elements that finally shape our identities. This will be exposed to students (by telling selected narratives) and then expressed by them (by creating and retelling their own stories) in order to promote personal reflections and possible changes in their way of perceiving social issues.

However, it is necessary to be critical about the nature of identity, along with its cultural traits, which is flexible and is always ready to be explored and shaped in the different contexts we inhabit. Bearing this in mind, cultural identity questioning might be an achievable result once the school context provides a favorable setting where students are able to comprehend how culture has configured the way they perceive and analyze their world. For this research, the previous concepts shed light on the investigative path to follow, as they are all interconnected and open a new opportunity to be implemented in language learning processes.

CHAPTER III: Research Design

Cultural identity is configured through different contexts and the interaction within a culture, as it is formed while we are being raised, and composed by positive and negative attitudes towards life and how we perceive it, think about it, speak of it and behave in our daily life. Therefore, storytelling can be a useful strategy to help students to question their own cultural identities in the EFL classroom. In order to carry out the current research, it is important to define what type of research served as a path to follow, the context in which the investigation was implemented, the instruments that were used to collect the necessary data, and finally, the ethical considerations that were born in mind to make it a transparent process.

For this purpose, the following section will present and explain the reasons why the following elements were chosen to develop this study: 1) qualitative study conducted from a narrative inquiry approach; 2) Lorencita Villegas de Santos school and students from 11th grade as

the setting and participants for the study; 3) field notes, interviews and student's stories as instruments for data collection; and 4) the ethical aspects to be bear in mind to implement this present research in a transparent way.

Qualitative Research

The nature of this study is qualitative since it aims to help students to question their own cultural identity by using storytelling in the English class. Thus, it is focused on exploring and understanding how the use of stories can have an impact on the configuration of the student's identity, which is opposite to a quantitative study, where it is expected to recollect data to create statistics. In fact, qualitative researchers "are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 21). In this sense, I consider that this type of study is the most appropriate to develop the current research as I am looking at the possible effects of storytelling in the EFL classroom, specifically, in students' cultural identity questioning by telling and creating stories which will address social issues that might have been perceived or even lived by them, which will recollect their personal experiences around social problems such as racism, sexism and classism. By reflecting on these matters, they will be able to question their cultural identities as well as their values related to respect and tolerance towards difference to enhance a more peaceful coexistence in society.

Likewise, as the "individuals construct reality in interaction with their social worlds" (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016, p. 24), constructivism underlies the present qualitative study process. This approach is also coherent with my research as it aims to understand how students construct and reconstruct their own cultural identities in the English classroom by providing them with meaningful learning resources such as stories, so they can not only listen to them but also get

involved in the creation of their own stories to share their thoughts, beliefs and values, which are important elements that compose and express an identity. In this way, it will be possible to determine how students give meaning to their world through their own experiences.

Finally, qualitative research is “an umbrella term covering an array of interpretive techniques which seek to describe, decode, translate, and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 520). This means that qualitative studies can also involve different approaches and follow a variety of procedures that will be chosen according to which of them have more concordance with the research objectives established by the researcher to interpret the information collected around a social phenomenon. Hence, I selected the narrative inquiry approach, as it is useful to achieve the aim of this study, due to the possibility to recollect the data from stories, which are texts that were created by students during the implementation phase of the research.

Narrative Inquiry

Stories are powerful tools as they display how we make sense of our experiences, how we communicate with others, and through which we understand the world around us. Narrative inquiry is a type of research that is characterized by “the use of stories as data, and more specifically, first-person accounts of experience told in a story form having a beginning, middle, and end” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 573). These stories can be expressed in several ways such as biography, life history, oral history, auto-ethnography, and autobiography.

As Bell (2002) states, stories “provide a window into people’s beliefs and experiences” (p. 210). Thus, they expose aspects related to identity and cultural membership. This

idea is supported by Riessman (2008), who points out that we engage in a process of identity construction through storytelling; we construct who we are and how we “want to be known. Through the words and the narrative structures we use in the crafting of our stories and through the very content of these, we identify with other members of society and show our affiliation to a particular cultural group. This insight is relevant for my research as I aim to explore how cultural identity can be questioned by listening to and telling stories, which, as proposed by the authors, are means that, in fact, are involved in the construction of identity.

In harmony with those thoughts, narrative researchers do not only focus on individuals’ experiences, but also explore “the social, cultural, and institutional narratives within which individuals’ experiences were constituted, shaped, expressed, and enacted” (Mendieta, 2013, p. 42). As it deals with the complexity of human nature, this research is an ongoing interpretative process which focuses on interpretation and understanding of meaning, more than giving objectivity the main importance in the process of data recollection. Indeed, the interpretation starts immediately when one story is selected out of any number of other possible stories and it continues during the entire research process, even after the research report is finished (Moen, 2006).

It is also important to highlight the role of the researcher in narrative inquiry studies. As Barkhuizen (2011) states, they are not passive listeners, but, on the contrary, are part of the story that is being told or created, both as characters and as narrators. As characters, they become part of the narratives and shape to some extent their content and structure, and as narrators, they both interpret and “represent participants’ accounts of lived and imagined personal experience” (p. 393). This means this type of research aims for a constant dialogue between the researcher and the researched so they both can finally re-construct and make sense of what happens inside and outside

the classroom by collaborating with each other. For this study, it is expected that I, in the first moment, as the narrator of the story told in class, will be in some stance permeated by the shared interpretations, meanings and experiences from students, and vice versa once they represent their own stories in the second moment of the implementation. This interaction can also create an optimal setting for reflection towards social issues and how it can be legitimated by cultural beliefs, values, behaviors, etc.

To conclude, this approach, as Clandinin (2006) highlights, “provides the possibility to understand how the personal and social are intertwined” (p. 22), in this case, in students’ cultural identities, and “how these (...) are shaped by the larger social, cultural and institutional narratives” (p. 23) in which they have lived. Therefore, the use of narrative inquiry allows me to explore how, by sharing their own stories, students can have the opportunity to reflect about their own identity and how this has been shaped by the culture they were raised in.

Setting and participants

Context

The current research has been carried out at Lorencita Villegas de Santos, a public-school located on Carrera 29C N° 71C-11 in Barrios Unidos, located specifically in Gaitán neighborhood. This school was founded in 1962 and was named in honor of the Colombian philanthropist Lorenza Villegas, who cared about helping people most in need, especially in the fields of health and education. It began operations with a total of 110 female students.

Nowadays, the mission of the school is the comprehensive training of intellectually competent, committed, ethical, creative, critical, autonomous and knowledge-building people, capable of structuring and developing life projects to grow, interact, understand, transform and transcend positively in society; in a democratic space, built from the recognition of others, of the

other, of the different ways of being, feeling, thinking and acting. As vision, it aims to be recognized in 2020 for its high standards in the comprehensive training of girls and young people, with identity, a sense of belonging, love for knowledge, experiencing ethical, moral, spiritual, cultural, social, political, democratic and environmental values with a clear projection that allows students to face the demands and challenges of the globalized world, thus contributing to the construction of inclusive spaces, being managers of peace. In harmony with the will of innovation and the enhancement of transcendence in society, starting by the education of the individual, this research proposal has the potential to contribute to the creation of a more democratic society through the reconstruction of a cultural identity where values, beliefs and worldviews could turn into reflection, and students become more open to recognize and tolerate diversity, which implies being aware of the other and avoiding discrimination by aspects such as gender, race or class.

The institution has different facilities such as a library, one soccer, basketball and volleyball court, an arts room and a small cafeteria. Also, all the classrooms have a TV set and a board, as well as many windows that allow students to have good light and breathe fresh air while studying. In a general way, the school is well organized and structured in terms of how the facilities are disposed of to the academic community, and all the areas that create an enjoyable learning environment for the students. However, they do not have structures such as platforms that help students with disabilities to move more easily inside the buildings and get into their classrooms. This information is relevant because in the implementation of the research, it is necessary to display didactic material on the TV sets and use some audiovisual resources to display the content proposed for each stage of the instructional design, which will be explained further in its corresponding section.

Regarding the Foreign Languages (English, French and German) program of this institution, it aims to develop the communicative competence of the students to facilitate the access to knowledge through the new information and communication technologies (TICs), as well as through cultural exploration. This last insight is connected with my research proposal as it attempts to explore the configuration of the students' cultural identity in the English classroom as a way to understand the possible changes that stories can have regarding this issue. Therefore, this setting provides an appropriate context to carry out this study.

Participants

The student group selected to implement this research study was 11th grade, specifically 1101 of the morning schedule. This group is composed of 21 students, all girls, between the ages of 15 and 17. The research criteria followed to select this population is based on the purposeful sampling and the typical sample, concepts taken from Merriam and Tisdell (2016) .

Firstly, purposeful sampling “is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 96). Regarding the purpose of this investigation, students of the English language were the best sample to work with. I also considered they must have a specific age from 15 to 17 years old as they are more exposed to cultural topics, and they already might have past tenses knowledge and a larger vocabulary to understand and create stories.

Secondly, the typical sample was borne in mind for the selection of the participants because “it reflects the average person, situation, or instance of the phenomenon of interest” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 97); in this case, it reflects the average students of 11th grade. This means that they do not represent an unusual sample, and they can participate in the study without

restrictions. Hence, this kind of sample allowed, as researcher to recollect and analyze data from a typical population, rather than one from a very specific context, which aligns with the investigation nature.

Data Collection Instruments

In qualitative studies, the researcher is the one in charge of collecting information which will be useful for the purposes of the investigation. This information mainly comes from the observation of the context and the participants' actions within it, which composes their behaviors, thoughts, beliefs, values, ways to see and experience the world, and so on. Hence, research needs to use specific instruments to gather the data required. For this project, field notes, interviews, surveys, and students' own stories were selected to achieve that purpose.

In this section, I will define each data collection instrument while also indicating their role in current research.

Field Notes

According to Merriam & Tisdell (2016), field notes are a written account of the observation done in the setting or context where the research will take place, which became the raw data from which a study's findings eventually emerge. This means that field notes are highly important because they constitute the basis upon which the study is conducted, as it is conceived as a main data resource. Regarding this research, field notes are helpful to gather information about the context and to describe participants' actions and behavior in the English classroom, such as their engagement with the activities proposed, and any particular event related with the issue that will be studied. In short, field notes work as an instrument to recollect relevant data such as the setting configuration and students' attitudes towards storytelling. They also help to identify the cultural identity aspects that students might express in the English class. Finally, observation will

be taken as a constant exercise as it will help to uncover interesting facts that can be used as reference points for interviews and to generate a deeper understanding about the phenomena. (See Appendix 1)

Interviews

As mentioned before, observation is a useful tool to gather meaningful information that will facilitate research development, but it is not helpful in terms of knowing more deeply about specific aspects related to the issue studied. Hence, interviews are considered a complementary instrument that allowed us as researchers to identify aspects that are mostly hidden in the observation process such as the inner thoughts, feelings, personal experiences and life meanings of the participants. The purpose of interviewing, then, is to discover what is “in and on someone else’s mind” (Patton, 2015, cited in Merriam & Tisdell, p. 426).

As DeMarrais (2004, cited in Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 108) defines, a research interview is “a process in which a researcher and participant engage in a conversation focused on questions related to a research study”, which are conducted, in most cases, in a face-to-face encounter, where the research will elicit information from another.

Regarding the current investigation, interviews will be used as a means to know more about the participants’ viewpoints about culture-related aspect of their identities, and their experiences toward storytelling and the creation of their own stories, which will provide complementary information for this study. For this purpose, I consider designing the interviews in a semi-structured way. As mentioned by Merriam & Tisdell (2016), this format allows the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic (p. 110-111). It means that I will have more freedom and flexibility to

organize the questions or change them accordingly to the interview flow, to do extra questions to explore details and specific interesting events to gather more meaningful data for the present investigation. To conclude, interviews will be recorded to keep the information obtained for a longer period; this also will facilitate the transcription process in a future research stage. (See Appendix 4)

Questionnaires

In qualitative studies, a questionnaire is a "structured instrument, consisting of a series of items and/or scales, that is administered to participants in order to assess their perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, or other characteristics" (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008, p. 269). It serves as a means of gathering data or information from participants, typically composed of a mix of closed-ended and open-ended questions to recollect both quantitative and qualitative responses. This kind of tool can provide the researcher with useful information about the personal experiences and thoughts of participants. They are free to answer using their own words, rather than selecting from pre-determined response options, as a survey or another more restrictive data collection instrument.

For this research, the implementation of a questionnaire will allow me to know more about cultural aspects related to the identity of students. This instrument will contain a set of questions related to the previous knowledge and perceptions of students related to their own culture and the foreign ones. By doing so, I am aiming to collect qualitative data related to their thoughts and beliefs around cultural topics, which will serve as the starting point for this research. (See Appendix 2). Finally, a second questionnaire about the chosen story that aims to critically reflect on gender roles will be implemented to check students' comprehension and foster critical analysis in relation to this social issue. (See Appendix 3)

Artifacts

Researcher-generated documents, as well as artifacts, are defined as “documents prepared by the researcher or for the researcher by participants after the study has begun” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 174). This means that artifacts refer to the material created for the participants during the research process. In this current investigation, it is expected to collect students’ creations in form of stories that they themselves will write and read aloud.

Bearing in mind the purpose of this study, stories are considered a useful way to enhance learning and to engage students in the English class. But they are not only used as tools that mediate second language learning. Stories, as personal documents, “are a good source of data concerning a person’s attitudes, beliefs, and view of the world” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Then, they will provide information about how students perceive themselves and express their own cultural identity. In fact, as Pavlenko (2007) states, they “are not solely individual productions but they are shaped by social, cultural, and historical contexts as well as by the relationship between the narrator and the interlocutor” (p. 11). So, they work as artifacts where meaningful data related to students’ cultural identity aspects can be collected. The idea will be that after listening to stories which address social issues such as race, gender and class, students will create their own stories about these topics. Their stories will then express their own personal experience towards these issues, which will embody culturally related aspects such as their beliefs, values, and behaviors, that can be negotiated and transformed through reflection before doing this task. Therefore, I will be able to analyze and understand if students’ cultural identity is being questioned due to the use of storytelling in the English class.

Data analysis approach

The approach used to analyze data in this research is grounded theory. To analyze the data collected in a research, it is important to keep in mind that, as Merriam and Tisdell suggest, "(it) involves consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read - it is the process of making meaning" (p. 202) to manage the most significant extracts of data. Thus, the method selected for this study was defined by Glaser and Strauss (1967), according to what Merriam and Tisdell (2016) propose in the chapter dedicated to data analysis methods. Grounded theory obtains its name because the theory, paraphrasing the authors, is grounded in the data and emerges from it, not the other way around, as is done in other approaches. This "consists of categories, properties, and hypotheses that are the conceptual links between and among the categories and properties" (p. 228), understanding *categories* as words which describes the data, and *properties* as those concepts that describe, in other words, the broadest dimensions of categories. During the process, the researcher has to use the pieces of information collected through the field notes, interviews, questionnaires, etc., and carry out an exhaustive comparison exercise, since, as Merriam and Tisdell (2016) explain, in grounded theory "comparisons are constantly made within and between levels of conceptualization until a theory can be formulated (p. 215)" Thus, it is necessary to make connections, divergences, similarities, new concepts, or points of interest as the information obtained in the research is coded and analyzed, until the path that leads to the answer to the initially posed question is opened.

Regarding the specific aspects of its development, according to Corbin and Strauss (2015), cited by Merriam and Tisdell (2016), there are three phases of coding to follow in grounded theory: *open*, *axial*, and *selective*, which are part of the analytical process characteristic of this method.

First, *open coding* "is what one does at the beginning of data analysis (...) it is tagging any unit of data that might be relevant to the study" (Corbin and Strauss, p. 229). In this research, open coding was used to find common and repetitive concepts and ideas within the information collected (field notes, interviews, and questionnaires) while reading the stories in class, and then order these patterns into codes. More than 200 codes emerged from these data (see Appendix 6). Second, *axial coding* is defined by Corbin and Strauss (2015) as "the process of relating categories and properties to each other, refining the category scheme" (p. 229). The codes defined in the first step were classified into 200 themes, which were later grouped into four main categories: *interrogating gender preconceptions*, *questioning women's roles*, *repositioning themselves as women in society* and *exploring a story to question identities*. Finally, in the *selective coding* phase, where propositions and hypotheses are developed, the pertinent analysis was carried out within each category to define the results that would shed light on answering the research question.

Timeline of activities

Regarding the data collection instruments and analysis approach mentioned, a schedule created for the intervention is illustrated in the following chart, so it provides a clearer idea of the development of the research study:

ACTIVITIES	TIME PERIOD: 1st SEMESTER 2023
Starting of observation and creation of field notes	25th April
Design a questionnaire and implement it to know more about relevant cultural ideas from students	4th May – 16th May
Final version of the research proposal	May 25th
	TIME PERIOD: 1st SEMESTER 2024

ACTIVITES	March	April	May	June
Selection of the most appropriate stories to address the social issues proposed				
Creation of the instructional design				
Implementation of storytelling: telling story related to gender roles				
Collection of data through field diaries, questionnaires, workshops and artifacts				

ACTIVITES	TIME PERIOD: 2nd SEMESTER 2024			
	August	September	October	November
Finish implementation of storytelling				
Systematization of data collected				

Ethical considerations

In all research, especially in qualitative research, it is necessary to ensure that the study is carried out with integrity and that it involves the ethical stance of the researcher (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 260). For this reason, in the current research development it is important to consider ethical aspects such as permission, which can be obtained through informed consent, and protection of the participants' identity, as it attends to their right to privacy.

Considering that all the participants selected for this research are minors, whose age range is between 13 and 15 years it is highly recommended to provide them a safe environment where they feel comfortable to participate while the investigation process takes place. To do so, it is mandatory to have the permission of the person in charge of them. Therefore, a format was provided to each student so their parents could authorize the research to process minors' personal data before implementing the data collection instruments mentioned in the previous section. (See Appendix 5)

In addition, it is also necessary to ensure that participants' identity is not going to be shared with others as this information only applies to academic purposes within the study. For instance, when conducting interviews, it is common that "respondents may feel their privacy has been invaded, they may be embarrassed by certain questions, and they may tell things they had never intended to reveal" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 46). Thus, the researcher must listen attentively and be emphatic, allowing the participant to freely express themselves without feeling judged. Also, when conducting any survey or interview, students are going to be asked if they would rather use pseudonyms, so their answers remain anonymous once the research finishes. In this way, participants will feel confident enough to share their honest thoughts and beliefs about their cultural identity, how it has been configured by the culture they were raised in and how it can be questioned through stories.

CHAPTER IV: Instructional design

In the following section the theoretical elements behind the methodology applied to carry out this research will be discussed. It is composed of the visions of language, learning and teaching that are pertinent for the development of the study, along with a detailed description of the activities developed in the pedagogical implementation phase.

Vision of language

Regarding the focus of the present research, language is framed as an identity constructor. According to Norton (2000), language is not simply a means of expression or communication but a practice that constructs and is constructed by the ways language learners understand themselves, their social surroundings, their histories, and their possibilities for the future. Indeed, it is through language that a person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points

in time (2000). This means that language can be seen as a way to not only express our own identity but also to construct it by negotiating personal and cultural meanings. In harmony with this thought, Weedon (1997) defines language as "the place where actual and possible forms of social organization and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested. It is also the place where our sense of ourselves, our subjectivity, is constructed" (p. 21). Hence, language serves as an ideal setting to share diverse visions of the world to reinforce and nourish one's own cultural and self-identity within a community of speakers. These ideas are appropriate for the present investigation as identity questioning is facilitated by the study and use of language which is going to be used in relation to raising critical awareness of cultural elements, specifically related to social issues such as race, gender and class, that can influence the own identity construction.

In addition, as Norton (2004) also states, "identity construction must be understood with reference to relations of power between language learners and target language speakers" (p. 28). Having this in mind, identity is also built around power speeches, especially in an "inequitably structured world in which the gender, race, class and ethnicity of second language learners may serve to marginalize them (p. 29)", "them" referring to second language students. In fact, it is through language that a person gains access to – or is denied access to – powerful social networks that give learners the opportunity to speak (2000). This is explained in Bourdieu's (1977) work, where he explores the relationship between power, identity, and language learning. He found out that "speech always owes a major part of its value to the value of the person who utters it" (p. 652). This means that the person who speaks cannot be understood separately from his/her social relationship networks. Considering these insights, language becomes a relevant tool to enhance identity questioning by addressing social issues such as gender, race, and class through stories, as learners are not in an isolated and controlled learning environment but constantly surrounded by

power relations in their daily lives which might sustain their own identity construction, opening a meaningful opportunity to change their cultural perspective.

Vision of learning

Bearing in mind that this research aims to question students' own cultural identity, learning is framed as a critical process following the ideas of critical pedagogy. This perspective, as Pennycook (2001) states, "emphasizes, validates and explores the culture, knowledge and experiences that students bring to school" (p. 17), rather than focusing on the traditional practices where the main concern is the teacher's presence. In this sense, critical pedagogy opposes the idea that Canajagarah (1999) describes in which "students are conditioned mentally and behaviorally by the practices of schooling to serve the dominant social institutions" (p. 22), leaving no space for their voices to be heard in the classrooms. Indeed, as Hooks (1994) points out, the education most of us have received and are being given was not and is never politically neutral (p. 39), which means that the way we see ourselves and conceive our environment has been shaped by discourses coming from the social institutions that surround us. In harmony with this idea, Pennycook (1989) affirms that "one's understanding of the world is affected by one's views and values, (so) any practice of language learning and teaching is intrinsically political and socially constructed". Thus, critical pedagogy plays an important role as it enhances the development of a critical consciousness where students can "interrogating biases in curricula that re-inscribe systems of domination (such as racism and sexism)" (p. 19). In this way, learning must be a practice where "students and teachers engage in a "genuine dialogue... [and] work as partners in a unified quest for critical consciousness" (McLaren 1994, p. 232), which implies that students start analyzing and questioning beliefs and values that dominate and teachers use language to connect their students'

experiences with their learning process while promoting an open space to reflect and critique their current contexts so they can later be able to transform them.

Vision of the learner

The vision of the learner will be framed within the critical pedagogy perspective and the post-method approach proposed by Kumaravadivelu. According to these, the learner is seen as an active agent not only in the classroom but in society. As Hooks (1994) pinpoints, students are “whole human beings with complex lives and experiences rather than simply as seekers after compartmentalized bits of knowledge” (p. 24), so they cannot be relegated to be passive containers waiting to be full by teacher's wisdom. Instead, they have the responsibility of actively participating in the construction of new knowledge by bringing to the class their ideas and topics for discussion and sharing their perspectives about them. This practice allows the opportunity of exposing issues related to their actual contexts and engage in discovering possible resolutions. By doing so, learners are expected to develop *liberatory autonomy* which refers to “actively seeking to help learners recognize sociopolitical impediments to realization of their full human potential and by providing them with the intellectual tools necessary to overcome those impediments” (Kumaravadivelu, 2001, p. 548) that can be represented in forms of discrimination based on race, class and gender, problematics that are going to be addressed in this research through different stories.

Vision of teaching

Language teaching is frequently carried out from an instrumental view in which grammar structures are the central content used to learn how to communicate, separating the learning process from the context where it takes place. However, education as Freire's (1970) work suggests, should be a transformative and liberal process in which students can critically examine their current

contexts and be able to make changes through dialogue, reflection and action, and strategies that are enhanced in critical pedagogy approaches.

Bearing in mind the objectives of this research and the critical perspective in which it is framed, the vision of teaching chosen to develop the respective pedagogical intervention is the post-method pedagogy. This pedagogy emphasizes the need for contextual sensitivity in teaching practices. As stated by Kumaravadivelu (2001), "language pedagogy, to be relevant, must be sensitive to a particular group of teachers teaching a particular group of learners pursuing a particular set of goals within a particular institutional context embedded in a particular sociocultural milieu" (p. 539). This recognition of the linguistic, economic, sociocultural, and political particularities of the learning environment ensures that teaching strategies are tailored to meet the diverse needs of students and opens the possibility of changing the contexts that surround them.

Also, post-method pedagogy conceives teaching as a transformative practice that goes beyond the four walls of the classroom. Rooted in the belief that education should not only empower students but also foster a sense of community through collaborative work, this pedagogy facilitates the creation of a diverse learning environment. This insight harmonizes with Hooks' (1994) vision of teaching, as she considers that

"Engaged pedagogy does not seek simply to empower students. [It fosters] the possibility of a learning community, a place where difference could be acknowledged, where we would finally all understand, accept, and affirm that our ways of knowing are forged in history and relations of power" (p. 39).

Hence, the classroom becomes a space for dialogue where students and teachers engage in reciprocal learning that promotes critical thinking and social change. In this way, students are

encouraged to critically analyze their own experiences and the world around them, leading to a deeper understanding of social injustices.

Furthermore, this type of pedagogy seeks to enhance not only academic growth but also social consciousness and transformation. To accomplish this, it's fundamental to acknowledge that different social factors such as "race, gender, class and other variables directly or indirectly influence the content and character of classroom input and interaction" (p. 544). By having this consciousness, teachers can create classrooms that serve as settings for identity construction and social change. As Kumaravadivelu (2001) highlights, it is essential to nurture a "sociopolitical consciousness that participants bring with them to the classroom so that it can also function as a catalyst for a continual quest for identity formation and social transformation" (p. 548). In doing so, teaching becomes a means of not only maximizing learning opportunities but also understanding and challenging the broader structures of power and inequality, creating a setting that "encourage students and teachers to question the status quo that keeps them subjugated" (Kuramarandivelu, 2001, p. 543). These insights align perfectly with the purpose of this research, in which students are meant to question their own cultural identity and develop a critical understanding around gender, race and class social issues that permeate their contexts and influence their learning process.

Post-method pedagogy is framed within three main principles: *particularity*, *practicality*, and *possibility*. The first one, which is a fundamental part of this method, emphasizes the importance of considering the specific context in which teaching and learning occur. In fact, as Kuramarandivelu (2001) pinpoints, "the experiences participants bring to the pedagogical setting are shaped not just by the learning/teaching episodes they have encountered in the past but also by the broader social, economic, and political environment in which they have grown up" (p. 544).

Therefore, an effective pedagogy must be sensitive to the linguistic, economic, sociocultural, and political particularities that surround the learning environment in which students are located.

In second place, *practicality* refers to the practical application in teaching. It encourages teachers to focus not only on theoretical concepts but also on strategies and techniques that can be implemented effectively in the classroom, which is done by applying their own theories and getting feedback during the practice to question them if necessary. This practical approach ensures that teaching methods are accessible and relevant to both teachers and students, facilitating meaningful learning experiences.

Finally, *possibility* highlights the transformative potential of education. Post-method pedagogy views teaching not only “as a mechanism for maximizing learning opportunities in the classroom, but also as a means for understanding and transforming possibilities in and outside the classroom” (Kuramarandivelu, 2001, p. 543) By fostering critical consciousness and social engagement, teachers can empower students to believe and create positive change in the world around them.

This approach harmonizes with previously mentioned authors such as Pennycook, Hooks and Canagarajah as they all consider students’ experiences, contexts, and particular knowledge in order to create a learning environment in which both teachers and students can dialogue to develop new ways of building substantial knowledge while recognizing each other and raising critical awareness towards the contexts that influence language learning, which demand to be questioned and transformed.

Pedagogical intervention

According to the critical perspective of this research, language learning is conceived as a holistic process in which students not only obtain communicative tools to navigate their reality but also to

be empowered to question and make changes in their own contexts, even if these changes are not reflected in the immediate educational setting. Having this in mind, the current pedagogical intervention is planned based on social issues and how they could influence identity construction and enhance its future reconstruction through the use and creation of stories. Thus, a set of different activities were implemented during the first and second semester of 2024, which are organized according to the main social issues addressed, gender, but also race as a transversal issue that was meant to be included in the research, but time did not allow to finish its development. Race was considered as a topic to address along gender as it might influence gender constructions and social dynamics in our culture. These two topics were developed in a timeframe of ten weeks and composed of activities that focus on exploring elements of cultural identity and analyzing them in relation to the corresponding issues discussed in class. To do this, the topics are planned to be explored in four months where diverse learning strategies such stories, images, videos, questionnaires, role plays, and group discussions will be used. In the final session of the intervention, students will create their own story using the knowledge and ideas discussed around gender roles. As follows, the social issues chosen and their purposes are explained.

Gender: This topic started in April 2024 and continued until the end of June. During these sessions, the activities were oriented towards exploring what gender roles are in both Colombian and Indian cultures, as a means to contrast and analyze similitudes and differences between them, how gender roles influence our way of perceiving the world and the possible resolutions towards gender discrimination and inequality. Due to this, I considered India having in mind their delimited gender roles and perspective towards women, who are expected to be wives or mothers, take care of children and home, often suffer domestic violence, must obey their husbands and have less participation in jobs.

Race: This topic began at the end of August and continued until October. In these sessions, activities are focused on analyzing what race is, having in mind Colombian and the United States culture as a starting point, and reflecting on how racial stereotypes impact people's daily lives, encouraging students to question cultural conceptions and propose new ways of facing discriminatory or unequal situations inside and outside school. Due to this, I considered the United States as a country which historically has oppressed and discriminated black communities and where racism is still a serious social issue.

The following chart describes in detail the development of each social issue and its corresponding sessions by week.

GENDER				
Week	General objective(s)	Skill(s)	Content	Activity(ies)
1	Discuss what gender roles are and the common perceptions of them according to our own culture and a foreign one.	Speaking Listening Reading	Reviewing gender roles and stereotypes in Colombian and Indian culture.	Students will watch an introductory video on the topic and discuss in pairs some questions related to gender roles. At the end, a comparison chart is going to be created by them, in which both cultural perspectives (Colombian and Indian) are compared.
2	Recognize how gender roles manifest in people's lives.	Listening Speaking Writing	Analyzing what the implications of being a woman or men are in a foreign culture.	To begin, a brainstorm is going to take place so students can share their previous knowledge about gender roles, making emphasis in Indian and Colombian context. Then, in small groups, students are going to read an extract of the first part of the story "Chocolate" and reinterpret it with their own words using mimics, gestures, movements, voice tone and

				other resources they consider relevant. Key words and expressions will be written on the board. Then, they are going to present it as a scene from a play to their classmates.
3	Identify the role of woman and man in Indian society and determine similitudes and differences according to our culture.	Speaking Writing	Discussing gender roles in the story, the implications of them, and finding possible resolutions to unequal or discriminatory scenarios.	Students are going to present their extract of the story using storytelling resources. Then, in groups they are going to discuss some questions related to it to check their comprehension and discuss implications of gender roles exposed. Finally, the teacher will handle the second part of the story. Each student is going to read it individually, create a alternative ending and then make a summary of events.
4	Reflect on the impact of gender roles in our culture.	Writing Reading	Questioning gender roles by reviewing the situations exposed in the story read.	The teacher will handle the summaries done by students and provide feedback. Later, students will reorganize the events in chronological order collectively on the board. A game will be used to select the participants. Finally, they will fill out a questionnaire related to the story that aims to critically discuss gender roles.

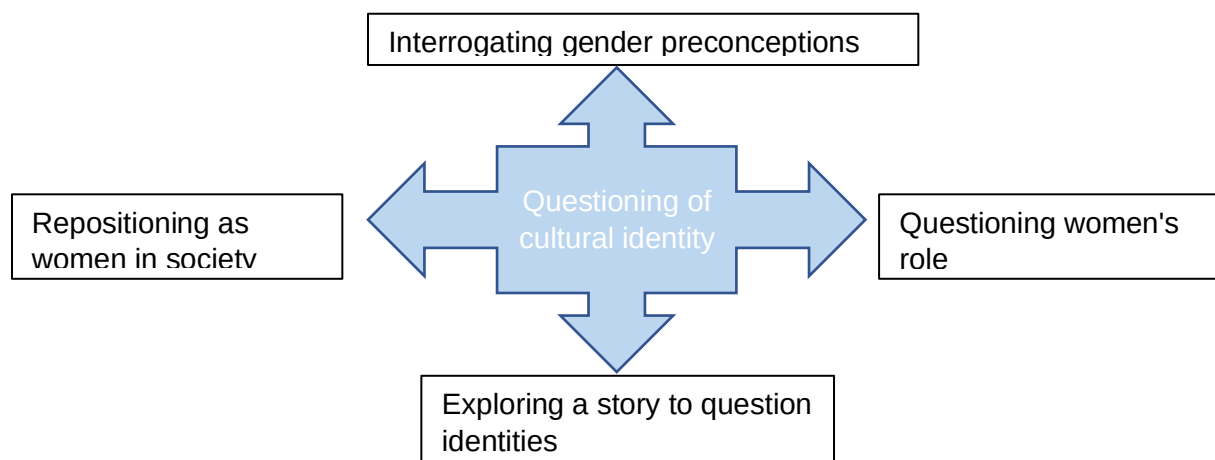
RACE				
Week	General objective(s)	Skill(s)	Content	Activity(ies)
5	Introduce racism through a short biographical story.	Speaking Reading Listening Writing	Identify racist struggles in a contextualized real-life case in United States history.	Students will play Broken Phone to transcribe the short story selected. The group that finishes first will read the story aloud and then

				discuss in groups some questions related to it. Finally, the teacher will introduce racism in United States by talking about the life of Rosa Parks, which is the historical character reflected in the short story.
6	Discuss what race is and perspectives about it according to learners' own culture and a foreign one.	Speaking Listening Reading Writing	Reviewing race and racial stereotypes in Colombian and anglophone culture towards Afrocolombian people.	First, the teacher will display two images in the TV and write down a paragraph on the board. Students must fill it out with a description (these two images correspond to a white and a black young man). Once done, students will share their responses and then answer some questions around racism, while creating a mind map in the board with the ideas provided by them. These will open discussion around biases and prejudices around race.
7	Recognize how race takes place in interactions of daily life.	Listening Reading Speaking Writing	Analyzing what the effects of being considered as white, brown, or black are in our culture.	Students will present their news report in a newscast section called "Voices of change". The teacher will provide feedback and then, students will discuss on how the fight against racism might remain nowadays, being guided by some critical questions. Finally, in groups, learners will read a Colombian new and create a short comic.

8	Reflect on the impact of race in our culture.	Speaking Listening	Discussing the effects of racial stereotypes and introduce other types of racism.	Students will watch a 14-minute scene from Green Book movie and answer some questions related to it. These are aimed to open discussion around racism showed in the scene. Finally, the teacher will explain the types of racism (interpersonal, institutional, internalized and structural).
9	Determine how race is experienced in a foreign culture.	Reading Speaking	Identify the perceptions around race in a real-life based story.	The teacher will introduce the second story called “Recitatif” by asking some questions to students about difference and how they have experience it in their lives. Then, in a circle, they are going to read it aloud by turns. Key words will be written on the board and explained if necessary. Once finished, students are going to answer some comprehension questions and identify characters, and what they think are their races according to descriptions and situations provided by the story.

CHAPTER V: Data analysis

In this chapter, the data analysis is carried out following a grounded theory approach. Once the data collected were analyzed, four main categories emerged: *interrogating gender preconceptions*, *questioning women's roles*, *repositioning themselves as women in society* and *exploring a story to question identities*. These categories will be developed in relation to different authors and considering the stories read in the classroom and their impact in the questioning of cultural identities of the female students who participated in this study. As shall be seen, in the first category, gender preconceptions are discussed, bearing in mind the learners' own cultural constructions in contrast with the culture reflected in the story proposed. In the second, women's roles are questioned by exploring cultural biases and a new locus of enunciation beyond their own culture. In the third, women's positioning in society is redefined through empowerment, exposing new gender perspectives and reconstruction of cultural identities that might have defined it. Finally, in the last category, storytelling is presented as a useful pedagogical strategy not only to mediate in English language learning but also to critically reflect upon social issues, specifically gender-oriented ones.



Interrogating gender preconceptions

Following Butler's ideas about gender, which must be separated from sex as a biological feature, but understanding it as a social and cultural construction, it is possible to find how gender preconceptions are present in learners' imaginaries, which are the product of their interactions within society. In the first sessions, while doing collective brainstorming to explore their ideas about gender roles, I could notice the following:

Students could identify the role of women in our country by sharing ideas related to how they need to be quiet, be soft, do housework and the man, on the other hand, be the one that provides money, work hard and is not emotional. (Field Note 2)

These ideas, which are dichotomous in nature, as feminine and masculine traits are conceived as opposite (for example, a woman is supposed to be emotional, but a man is more logical), seem to be those that predominate when addressing gender roles, delimiting feminine characteristics from masculine ones. In fact, in the story worked on in class "Chocolate", which frames the traditional gender roles within the Hindu culture, the students were also able to identify this separation, as mentioned by participant #5:

7. According to the story, how should a woman and a man be?

The woman is responsible for the pregnancy and
the care of everything and the man only gives
orders and contributes financially

The woman is responsible for the pregnancy and the care of everything, and the man only gives orders and contributes financially. (Questionnaire 2)

It was interesting that the students were able to reflect on the limitations of the roles for each gender, then propose a holistic view of these characteristics which was evidenced on the brainstorming activity carried out in the first session, since for them, these roles can be shared by

men and women. One of the learners critically reacted to Tara's situation, who was a married Hindu woman, when she deals with accomplishing the role of having children as an implicit demand in their marriage, by saying "(eso) refuerza ese estereotipo de la mujer de estar en casa y tener hijos, pero ella no era la que no podía (tenerlos)..." (Field Note 4).

This reflection is in tune with the thoughts of Lamas (2000), who states that "gender is a cultural construction that assigns roles, values, and behaviors to bodies based on biological sex, but these roles are neither natural nor immutable" (p. 34), since in the first exercise mentioned above, students were able to give a new place to the possible characteristics of the genders. In this place, learners could conceive men and women as equal subjects who are able to share these predetermined roles, such as having children, by sharing responsibilities; doing housework, by making agreements and splitting tasks; being both emotional and having flexible personalities in terms of quietness or gentleness. For example, while asking about the disposition of gender roles, students agreed on placing the given ideas for both genders. That is, not only women must be quiet, care about their appearance, do housework, have children, but men should also perform these predetermined roles. Likewise, women are also able to provide money to the home, be less emotional and so on. By doing this exercise, the gender spectrum around these constructions, which are merely stereotypical, can be broadened beyond the biologically and socially determined.

Likewise, the students were able to express their ideas regarding the place of women and men in society, according to pre-established roles, and how they relate to each other according to these constructions. While answering the final interview regarding the relationship between men and women in the story worked on in class, participant #5 emphasized:

como esa, como esos estereotipos de que aún así si tu te esfuerzas mucho eres mujer pero no lo vas a lograr. Si yo soy hombre, me esfuerzo lo mínimo y pues ya tengo como algo asegurado. Entonces como que ha sido una relación complicada y creo

(...) like those stereotypes that even if you try hard, you are a woman, but you are not going to achieve it. If I am a man, I make the minimum effort and then I have something for granted So it has been a complicated relationship (...) (Interview 1, p.1, own translation)

This reflects not only the privileged place of men but also the place of women, which is delimited by roles that society shapes and reinforces. These ideas are problematic, as they cause unequal treatment and relationships between genders. In the following section, the discussion will be developed around how the students question these gender roles and their place as women within society.

Questioning women's role

The role of women in modernity has been transformed thanks to the various struggles carried out during the last centuries, advocating for the guarantee of rights, more equitable conditions and horizontal treatment with respect to their male peers. The students in this study, who have mostly been part of the girls' school for several grades, have been educated in different but more modern backgrounds. In this sense, it can be seen how in the first sessions they manage to critically question the role of women, based on what was discussed in class and one issue showed in the story regarding Tara's apparent inability to have children:

A student remarked how not being able to have children "was a gender role problem". She said, "woman are meant to be worried about having children but not men porque sienten que les afecta su ego masculino". Girls agreed with her opinion and provided a solution saying that it must be a shared activity between women and men. (Field Note 3)

On the other hand, it was interesting that one of the participants, while answering the questionnaire about the story Chocolate, identified Tara, the main character, as the one she did not like due to her behavior in relation to the other characters, as shown below:

3. Did you dislike any character? Why?

Tara, because she be carried by her mother o husband
tells her she is dependent to her mother and husband.

Tara because she is carried by her mother or husband tells her, she is dependent to her mother and husband. (Questionnaire 2)

This idea is related to a vision of the submissive woman, who depends on people outside herself to cope with the circumstances of her life. Viveros (2016) mentions that "[t]he identities and bodies of individuals are always shaped by systems of power that impose meanings and hierarchies on them (p. 13)" In this sense, Tara's mother and husband exercised power over her socially and economically, which did not allow her to be completely autonomous. The student manages to express her disagreement with this conception of women, which obeys pre-established roles that are ultimately questioned in the classroom.

Following this line of thought, participant #7 makes a critical exercise in questioning the historical changes that women have gone through in the fight for their rights, since today inequality persists, and gender problems also do. When asked about how she perceived the role of man and woman in the story in relation to our Colombian society, she insists:

H: Pues creo que hay similitudes, porque o sea digamos que aunque se esté como viendo lo de los derechos de la mujer y todo eso, pues aún siguen personas que como que siguen defendiendo, lo que te decía, lo retrógrado, entonces siguen como con sus pensamientos antiguos. Pero pues en la actualidad, entonces uno dice como: ¿dónde están los cambios por los que se ha venido trabajando? Pero digamos que en la historia sí hay varios comportamientos que se siguen viendo en la actualidad, como lo es el machismo, las mujeres que necesitan de la opinión de un hombre para ser ellas mismas, las mujeres que les dicen a otras mujeres que no pueden estudiar, que tienen que ser amas de casa...

Well, I think there are similarities, because let's say that even though we're seeing the issue of women's rights and all that, there are still people who continue to defend, as I was saying, the

retrograde, so they continue with their old thoughts. But now, then one asks: where are the changes that have been worked for? But let's say that in history there are various behaviors that are still seen today, such as machismo, women who need the opinion of a man to be themselves, women who tell other women that they can't study, that they must be housewives... (Interview 4, p. 2)

These ideas are fundamental because they show the questioning of pre-established gender roles and open the opportunity to propose new ways to question the identities that have been built around them. In this way, the students are able to critically reflect on their roles as women in relation to what is established by society, and they express the need for a new positioning, which will be addressed in the final category.

Repositioning as women in society

Gender turns out to be something performative, as Butler (1999) proposes, and therefore identity is also "(...) performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results" (p. 68). In the first intervention, it was possible to notice this diversity of expressions in terms of the way the students looked and behaved, as I described:

All students are girls, some of them have their hair dyed and short hair. A few have a different way of dressing and talking, even sitting in class. This is not feminine (according to stereotypes), more direct when addressing me, and they sit with open legs or completely extended. (Field Note 1)

These configurations respond to a femininity that has possibly been constructed based on a gender perspective where women are not restricted to defined behaviors, such as kindness, respect, and submission, but rather where they have at their disposal a range of possibilities with which to define themselves. Some students then demonstrate a prior exercise of questioning their identities from the first moment of the research.

In this sense, in the final interview, participant #6 could critically reflect on the issue of being a woman when asked about the role of women and men in the story in relation to what happens in our Colombian culture, aiming to explore if she noticed any similarities or differences.

She said:

como ahí en la historia, o como no tanto los hombres sino la sociedad imponen estereotipos, tanto como para mujeres como hombres. Y eso implica de que uno tome como un pensamiento y como que se envuelva con todo ese tema y lo empiece a replicar haciéndole daño a los demás. Eh, entonces yo digo que no es tanto como hombres y mujeres sino que la sociedad misma apoya eso, o sea como que...

“...society imposes stereotypes to men and women. And that implies one having a certain way of thinking and get involved with the whole issue and starts replicating it, hurting others” (Interview 5, p. 2, own translation)

This idea of society imposing certain gender roles is critically discussed by Lamas (1996), who states that “The male-female dichotomy with its cultural variants establishes stereotypes, most of the time rigid, that condition the roles and limit the human potential of people by stimulating or repressing behaviors based on their suitability to gender.” (p. 141). The learner recognizes how these imposed ideas are replicated in society and become harmful to the way of conceiving a woman, which allows reflection on the exercise of femininity within a pre-established cultural construction, which not only limits but can also stop the will of other women to perceive themselves and configure their identities differently.

It is also noteworthy what was said by participant #11 in the final interview when asked about what it means to her to be a woman after reading the story Chocolate. She answers:

había tenido como, ya había leído historias similares. Creo que ser mujer es algo es muy difícil como de darle un significado concreto, creo que para cada mujer es diferente, que cada una tiene su propia perspectiva dependiendo de lo que ha vivido; pero yo creo que si pudiera y tuviera que definir a las mujeres en una sola palabra sería fortaleza y resistencia.

I had read similar stories. I think that being a woman is something that is very difficult to give a specific meaning to. I think that for each woman it is different, that each one has her own perspective depending on what she has experienced; but I think that if I could and had to define women in one word it would be strength and resilience. (Interview 6, p. 3)

This opinion highlights an important aspect in the construction of gender identity, which is diversity, and does not respond to a biologically given body, but rather, takes into account her ideas of a vital experience. In this sense, the student manages to reflect on her experience as a woman from her particular place, evidencing critical thinking and also the spirit of empowerment that comes from recognizing herself before a society that demands her to be strong and to exercise resistance in order to live.

Finally, participant #7 directs her reflection toward the behaviors necessary to occupy a new place and reposition herself as a woman before a society that, under particular ways of thinking, limits and subjugates her. This emerges as a response to what she considers to be the main message of the story, where she says:

V: Pues, tal vez como, uhm... mirarte primero a ti misma. Porque pues entiendo que en la India la cultura es un poco más compleja y sus formas de pensar, sus ideologías, son más ehm, retrogradadas por así decirlo. Pero pues igual tenemos el caso de la chica Tara que en algún momento se dio cuenta, o sea ella pudo abrir los ojos, pudo darse cuenta que podía superarse a sí misma, podía ser feliz de otra manera que no era con la persona con la que estaba. Se dio cuenta que ella no era el problema y reconoció y asumió de manera consciente lo que podía hacer. Entonces pues creo que es más como eso, el autorreconocimiento, el valor, el amor propio, todo lo que tiene que ver con darnos nuestro lugar.

Well, maybe like, uhm... looking at yourself first. Because I understand that in India the culture is a little more complex and their ways of thinking, their ideologies, are more, um, retrograde, so to speak. But then we have the case of the girl Tara who at some point realized, I mean, she was able to open her eyes, she was able to realize that she could overcome herself, she

could be happy in a way other than with the person she was with. She realized that she was not the problem, and she recognized and consciously assumed what she could do. So, I think it is more like that, self-recognition, value, self-love, everything that has to do with giving ourselves our place. (Interview 7, p. 1)

The student manages to articulate the events narrated in the story with the current situation of women, proposing a path to emancipate herself from the power exercised by other external people, in this case, her partner. Likewise, participant #13 shared her thoughts around this attitude of empowerment after reading the story when asked if this activity changed in any way how she perceives herself as a woman. She said:

V: Creo que no, porque siempre he tenido una ideología muy centrada, siempre he sabido que soy mujer, y soy muy fuerte y puedo, tengo unas capacidades increíbles, que no necesito compararme y no necesito depender o estar a la sombra de alguien, para pues relucir. Entonces creo que la historia tal vez remarcó más mis ideologías y

I think no, because I always have a very centered ideology, I always have known that I am a woman and I am very strong and I can do things, that I have amazing capacities, that I do not need to compare, and I do not need to depend on or standing in someone else's shadow to shine. So, I believe that the story maybe emphasized my ideologies more and... (Interview 7, p. 3)

The student reaffirms her way of acting in the world as a woman based on a recognition of herself as a capable, strong and independent human being, who does not require the male figure to excel within her context. Thus, it can be seen how a new locus of enunciation is created from the construction of a feminine identity outside of the cultural and social restrictions performed by the male gender, which in our culture stimulates behaviors and attitudes contrary to those denounced by the student.

Thus, storytelling becomes useful for mediating a deep questioning of current social problems, which ultimately opens the possibility for students to not only critically reflect about what is to be a woman in Colombia but also to reposition themselves through the empowerment of their identities in the face of a panorama that is still hostile and that demands continued transformation.

Exploring a story to question identities

Storytelling, as proposed by McDrury and Alterio (2003), is a human experience that allows us to convey, in the language of words, aspects of ourselves and others. Thus, it turns out to be a means to express not only ideas, beliefs, and customs, but to explore situations that occur in our lives. In this research, the use of this strategy is proposed in a pedagogical way to question the identities of students in the English classroom, which could be seen in the previous categories. In this final category, the usefulness of storytelling in teaching a foreign language will be discussed in more depth.

First, the comment made by participant #7 in the final interview is interesting. When she was asked about the aspects that most caught her attention when we read the story proposed in class, she responded:

V: Pues si tenemos en cuenta las historias, las, los temas trabajados, puedo ver como el empoderamiento es uno de los temas principales y el tener el control de nuestras propias vidas y la conciencia de saber qué es lo que estamos haciendo, y cómo lo estamos haciendo.

C: ¿Y por qué te llama la atención ese aspecto?

V: Porque es algo que trabajamos bastante por el hecho de ser mujeres puede que sea algo que se supone deberíamos ya asumir con normalidad y con conciencia, puede ser algo que a grandes rasgos tenemos todavía como un problema hoy en día: la desigualdad y todo que tiene que ver con problemas... ehm... no sé.

C: ...como de género o...

V: Sí, como más sociales.

V: If we have in mind the stories, the, the topics addressed, I can see how empowerment is one of the main topics and having the control of our lives, and the consciousness of knowing what we are doing do and how we are doing it. C: Why did that aspect attract your attention? V: Because it is something we work a lot just because the fact that we are woman, it may be something that we are supposed to accept as normal and with consciousness, it may be something that we still have as a problem nowadays: inequality and all that has to do with issues... Ehm, I don't know. C: ...like gender issues or... V: Yes, like more social ones. (Interview 7, p. 1)

This opinion shows that through storytelling it is possible to address social problems and reflect critically on them. The student remarks that even today gender is a common topic to talk about, but it is still conceived as a recent issue that must be discussed in the classrooms. Reading a story like *Chocolate*, which problematizes gender roles in Indian cultures, opened a space for discussion about similar situations that surround our social and cultural context, and that permeate the education that students receive at school, bearing in mind Canagarajah's (1999) and Kumaravadivelu's (2001) critical pedagogy approaches. In this case, the social issues addressed correspond to the constructions of gender and the role that women and men must fulfill according to our Colombian culture. Through the proposed activities, it is also aimed to broaden the way students think and conceive themselves in the world from a personal exercise of critical reflection, taking into account that no educational space is neutral, as hooks (1994) states in her work.

In addition, storytelling not only provides a contextualized environment in terms of the chosen story and the narrated facts but also allows the possibility of working with language skills such as listening, reading, and oral and written comprehension. According to the research of Lucarevski (2016), this strategy allows a pleasant and motivating practice where students can also work on their language skills and stimulate new learning outcomes.

In this sense, the behavior of the students when we were reading the first part of the story in the implementation sessions is remarkable:

At the beginning, students tried to figure out the mistakes of some sentences selected from their own summaries. It was difficult for them as they did not know the expressions shown (get pregnant, gain weight), but could identify misspelling mistakes in the past tense verbs. (...) a few students asked me directly about vocabulary such as “juzgar” (judge), “machista” (sexist), “obedecer” (obey), and “apropiarse” (appropriate). (Field Note 4)

When doing the roleplay, they were attentive and looked for understanding unknown words or expressions and their correct pronunciation. (Field Note 2)

These ideas show how the learners were able to firstly, enhance language learning processes by exploring new vocabulary in relation to the story and secondly, self-correct the spelling of the words, which demonstrates how storytelling allows the improvement of students' language skills, as stated by Muzammil (2017) in his work on the subject, while also questioning and producing knowledge about the social issue discussed in class.

Likewise, it is noteworthy how the stories stimulated the creativity of the students, improving their motivation regarding the activities carried out in the implementation and allowing them to learn collectively. For example, while they were planning how they would perform the play with the events narrated in the first part of the story, I was able to notice that:

...the unknown words or expressions were explained as they called me and asked for the meaning or way to pronounce it correctly. Also, some shared with me how they feel about a certain character or how they imagine it. One of them used some clothes to get into the character and recreate its physical appearance. (Field Note 2)

Some groups made an extra effort to present material to complement the scenario of their roleplay, like posters, bags, clothes, chairs, etc. Finally, they could identify the characters, define them, and answer comprehension questions. (Field Note 3)

In this way, storytelling is beneficial to improve not only language skills in English, but also allows to encourage students social skills through its use, helping their classmates to solve a problem (recreate a scene from the story in groups), share responsibilities (division of roles to be played and order of intervention) and to respect the ideas of others (creation of a script), actions that go hand in hand with the language learning process, which coincides with the discoveries of Kim & Li (2020) and Kristiawana et al. (2022) regarding the benefits previously mentioned. Finally, storytelling is shown as a useful strategy to explore and problematize social situations that can guide students in the questioning of their identities through being able to identify the cultural constructions around genders in a foreign culture compared to their own, as well as its potential as a pedagogical tool to improve language skills, while carrying out a critical exercise to question gender roles within the stories read and how that allows them to create new spaces of enunciation for diverse, empowered and strong female identities.

CHAPTER VI: Conclusions

Conclusions

This study used a narrative inquiry approach to explore how storytelling with a focus on gender could contribute to the questioning of cultural identities among a group of female students at a public school in Bogotá. This kind of storytelling aims to tell stories which problematize and discuss gender issues, in this case, how gender roles are constructed by cultural and social discourses and finally become part of our cultural identity, determining what it is to be a woman for society. To this end, as fully discussed in chapter V, storytelling was implemented through a

selected story, which was developed alongside role-playing activities and questionnaires, allowing for its critical analysis.

At the beginning of this research, it was evident that cultural content was not significantly present in the English classroom. The first questionnaire showed that it was not relevant enough for learners, as they had simple notions. Thus, the implementation of the story and the reflection activities surrounding it enhanced the construction of cultural knowledge and encouraged the active participation of students, being the way that topics were addressed in each class an aspect highlighted by the head teacher. It was possible to maintain relevant communication between us, in addition to constant support in planning, which allowed me as a student and pre-service teacher-researcher to successfully implement the activities. According to the information collected, it is clear that both the story and the critical analysis carried out throughout the sessions were successful strategies for questioning the students' cultural identities regarding their gender, as they allowed them to question, and ultimately reposition themselves in the face of new ways of being women in today's society.

The results demonstrate that the students were able to critically interrogate predetermined notions of gender. Through brainstorming, it became possible to recognize these roles as limiting, and then, through the proposed telling activities, the students were able to interrogate gender preconceptions and recognize the limitations of these roles. Then, through the proposed reading, the students were able to interrogate gender preconceptions and attribute new characteristics to them in a more holistic way. The data revealed that the stereotypes and prejudices constructed around the place of women are problematic, as most students expressed disagreement with them, and for this reason, bringing them up for discussion becomes necessary in the classroom.

Another key result is the critical questioning of the role of women in our society. As evidenced in the questionnaire about the chosen story and the final interview, the students not only managed to question pre-established gender roles but also proposed new ways of being women beyond those socially and culturally constructed ones in their environment. Thus, these strategies are successful in carrying out a critical analysis of the existing inequity regarding gender roles and the identities that have been shaped by them.

Furthermore, this research also reveals the capacity for repositioning oneself in relation to the cultural identities regarding gender that predominate in Colombian society. As the majority of students in this study emphasize, being a woman in Colombia not only requires courage but also the ability to recognize oneself as capable, strong, and independent. Their response to the current gender issue is empowerment and repositioning from a new locus of enunciation that allows them to create varied cultural identities, unrestricted by stereotypes and prejudices. These results suggest that addressing gender in the classroom is essential for question and build new identities that help us, as women, confront a social landscape that remains hostile and demands transformation.

Regarding language learning, findings also demonstrate how critical pedagogies are helpful to enhance language skills while discussing social issues in the classroom. Learners could learn new vocabulary in relation with the story read, practice different grammatical structures and improve the spelling of words learned through self-correction, activities that allowed them to improve their English skills in a contextualized and real setting. Storytelling became a motivating and pleasant practice that stimulated new learning outcomes, such as creativity by doing roleplays and encouraged social skills mediated by language use such as solving problems, sharing responsibilities and respecting others' ideas, which finally nourish students learning process, individual and collectively.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that the use of storytelling, this is telling and critically reading a story in class, contributes to the questioning of the cultural identities of female students at a public school in Bogotá. Furthermore, the data obtained demonstrate that through telling and critical reading stories, it is possible to profoundly question current social issues, such as gender, thus opening up the possibility of questioning one's own cultural identities in order to contribute to a more equitable and peaceful society. In this sense, these results highlight the importance of including more cultural content into the classroom and addressing it in depth from a critical perspective, as proposed by educators such as Freire (1970), Kuramandivelu (2001), and Canagarajah (1999), thereby contributing to transformative learning.

Implications

One key implication of this research is the improvement of critical thinking through the implementation of storytelling in the classroom. By this use, students could not only have the possibility to reflect critically on gender constructions but also to question their own cultural identities by interrogating and repositioning in the face of new ways of being a woman in our Colombian society. The creation of this new locus of enunciation becomes relevant as learners are not usually aware of their power of agency in the classrooms, so these findings show the significance of the implementation of strategies that allow students to discuss what is happening beyond the school, being able to reflect on social issues that have an impact on their lives and, ultimately, in the construction of their identities.

On the other hand, the results show the importance of this study to enhance language learning while reflecting on social issues, as mentioned above. Students had the opportunity to read and critically analyze a story that is based on real-life events, even based on another culture, which allowed them to identify and interrogate themselves about their own cultural identities and how prejudices and stereotypes play an important role in the way they perceive themselves as

women in the Colombian society. While implementing activities that aimed at these objectives, learners felt motivated to ask about new vocabulary and show interest in learning expressions related to the story presented. Similarly, they improved their pronunciation by practicing in the role play activities carried out and refining grammar structures, in general terms, when answering questions related to the story. This demonstrates that critical pedagogies are meaningful not only to encourage critical thinking but also to improve linguistic skills when teaching English.

All in all, the main implication of this kind of research regard English learning is opening the opportunity to explore social issues in the classroom, while also enhancing linguistic skills in learners, which can be worked hand in hand to strengthen the construction of both cultural and linguistic knowledge. Thus, this pedagogical proposal opens a new way to question learners' identities in the English classroom by exploring and discussing critically social issues, such as gender roles and their impact on a public-school female student's identity.

Limitations

One of the limitations of the research was time and some of the activities expected to be carried out in the implementation phase could not be done in the classroom. This is an important aspect to have in mind as learners might benefit from having more time interacting with other stories and keep reflecting critically on gender-focused issues as aimed in this project. This limitation highlights the importance of probably extending English learning hours at school and taking into account that, especially when addressing complex topics as gender, time becomes necessary to avoid common biases and misconceptions or voids in knowledge that both teachers and students could have if not deeply explored.

Another limitation was language use, as some of the students did not feel very comfortable expressing complex ideas in English at the beginning of the implementation, so they often switched to Spanish to give their opinions during the activities carried out. This behavior was almost

transformed at the end of the implementation as learners could enrich their vocabulary and use new expressions to refer to their thoughts around the story read. However, it is important to mention that improving a specific language skill was not the main objective of this research; due to this, activities were not developed in a traditional way, aiming to learn a grammar topic, but instead stories contain different grammatical structures and vocabulary while expressing social issues and perceptions around gender roles, which provide students a real and local context where English learning could take place through discussion and critical reflection.

Further research

As a suggestion for future research, it is considered relevant to explore gender issues in a broader context as it does not only affect school students but also teachers, administrators, and other agents in education and society, while discussing it alongside English language contents to enrich the educational process and achieve a true transformative learning. Also, it is suggested to explore social issues in a transversal study that contemplates racism and classism as correlated phenomena that go along with gender issues and could be overlooked when focusing only on one problem, as this research did. Finally, it is important to highlight that this kind of proposal answers to a specific and located context but would also be significant if extended to other places in our country or even be proposed in a more global panorama.

References

Abo Skhela, K. A. A-R. (2010) The Effectiveness of Using Storytelling Technique in Enhancing 11th Graders' Listening Comprehension Sub-Skills in Middle Gaza Governorate. The Islamic University – Gaza Deanery of Graduate Studies. Curricula & English Teaching

- Ahmad Khan, W. (2020) Your language, your identity: The impact of cultural identity in teaching English as foreign language. *European Journal of English Language Teaching*, Volume 5. Arabia Saudi.
- Altugan, A. (2015). The Relationship between cultural identity and learning. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 186, pp. 11591162.
- Barkhuizen, G. (2011). Narrative Knowledging in TESOL. *TESOL Quarterly*, 45(3), 391-414. doi: DOI 10.5054/ tq.2011.261888.
- Barzaq .M.(2009) Integrating Sequential Thinking Thought Teaching Stories in the Curriculum. Al- Qattan Center for Educational Research and Development QCERD. Gaza.
- Bell, J. S. (2002). Narrative inquiry: More than just telling stories. *TESOL Quarterly*.
- Bhabha, Homi K. (2007) *El lugar de la cultura*. - 1a ed. 1a reimp. Manantial.
- Bourdieu, P. (1977) *The economics of linguistic exchanges*.
- Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful qualitative research: A practical guide for beginners*. London: Sage.
- Bruner (1983), *Text, play, and story: The construction and reconstruction of self and society*. Princeton, NJ: American Ethnological Society.
- Bruner, E. M. (1984). Introduction: The opening up of anthropology. In S. Plattner & E. M.
- Butler, J. (1990) *Gender trouble. Feminism and subversion of identity*. Routledge, New York and London.
- Butler, J. (1989) *Variaciones sobre sexo y género: Beauvoir, Wittig y Foucault*.
- Canagarajah, S. 1999. *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism in English Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chen, V. H. H. (2014) *Cultural identity. Key Concepts in Intercultural Dialogue*, 22.

- Clandinin, D.J. (2006). Narrative inquiry: A methodology for studying lived experience. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 27, 44-54.
- Condon, J. C. (1993). *Cultural anthropology*. New York: Random House.
- Dumitrašković, T. A. (2015) Culture, Identity and Foreign Language Teaching and Learning. *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*.
- Dyson, A., & Genishi, C. (1994) Introduction: The need for story. In Dyson, A., & Genishi, C. (Editors). *The need for story: Cultural diversity in classroom and community*. Illinois: The National Council of Teachers of English.
- Ellis, Rod. (2008). *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. 2nd Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ehrlich, S. (1997) Gender as social practice. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 19(04):421 – 446 DOI:10.1017/S0272263197004014
- Fandiño, Y. J. (2014). *Teaching culture in Colombia Bilingüe: From theory to practice*. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, 16(1). 81-92.
- Freeman, S; Martin, J; Nash, C; Hausknecht, S; Skinner, K (2020) Use of a Digital Storytelling Workshop to Foster Development of Intergenerational Relationships and Preserve Culture with the Nak'azdli First Nation: Findings from the Nak'azdli Lha'hutit'en Project. *Canadian Journal on Aging / La Revue canadienne du vieillissement* 39
- Freire, P. (1970) *Pedagogy of the oppressed*.
- Hall, S., & Du Gay, P. (1996) *Questions of cultural identity*. Sage Publications, Inc.
- Ho, T. (2009). The relationship between culture and language. *ELT Journal*, 63(4), 371-380.
- hooks, b. (1994) *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*.

- Jund, A. (2010). Toward a pedagogy of intercultural understanding in teaching English for Academic Purposes. *The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language*.
- Kim, D; Li, M. (2020) *Digital storytelling: facilitating learning and identity development*. Journal of Computers in Education ISSN 2197-9987. Beijing Normal University.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2001). Towards a Postmethod Pedagogy. *TESOL Quarterly*.
- Kramsch, Claire. (1998) *Language and Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kristiawana, D., Ferdiansyah, S., & Picard, M. (2022) *Promoting Vocabulary Building, Learning Motivation, and Cultural Identity Representation through Digital Storytelling for Young Indonesian Learners of English as a Foreign Language*. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research* 10(1).
- Lamas, M. (1996) La antropología feminista y la categoría de “género”.
- Lamas, M. (2000) Diferencias de sexo, género y diferencia sexual. *Cuicuilco*, vol. 7, núm. 18. Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia.
- Lantolf, J. P. (Ed.) (2000). *Sociocultural theory and second language learning*, Oxford: Oxford University.
- Liu, K-P; Tai, S-J. D; Liu, C-C. (2018) *Enhancing language learning through creation: the effect of digital storytelling on student learning motivation and performance in a school English course*. Association for Educational Communications. Taiwan – China.
- Lucarevski, C. R. (2016). *The role of storytelling in language learning: A literature review*. Working Papers of the Linguistics Circle of the University of Victoria.
- Maynard, B. (2005) *The Importance of Story*.
- McCullum, M.M., Maldonado, N., & Baltes, B. (2014). *Storytelling to teach cultural awareness: The right story at the right time*. *LEARNing Landscapes*, 7(2), 219-232.

- McDrury, J., & Alterio, M. (2003). *Learning through storytelling in higher education*. Sterling, VA: Kogan Page Limited.
- McLaren, P. 1994. *Life in Schools: An Introduction to Critical Pedagogy in the Foundations of Education*. New York: Longman.
- Mejía, A.-M. (2006). *Bilingual education in Colombia: towards a recognition of languages, cultures and identities*. Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal, (8), 152–168.
- Mendieta, J. A., (2013). Narrative research: An alternative approach to study language teaching and learning. *Revista Folios*, (37), 135-147.
- Merriam, S. and Tisdell, E. (2016). *Qualitative Research. A guide to Design and Implementation*. Jossey-Bass A Wiley Brand 4th ed.
- Mitchell, R & F. Myles. (2004) *Second Language Learning Theories*.
- Moen, T. (2006). Reflections on the narrative research approach. *International*
- Muzammil, L & A. (2017) Teaching proficiency through reading and storytelling (TPRS) as a technique to foster students' speaking skill. *JEELS*, Volume 4, Number 1. Universitas Kanjuruhan Malang, Indonesia.
- Norton, B. (2000). *Identity and language learning: Gender, ethnicity and educational change*. Harlow, England: Longman/Pearson Education.
- Norton, B; Toohey, K (2004) *Critical pedagogies and language learning: An introduction*.
- Norton, B; Pavlenko, A. (2004) Addressing gender in the ESL/EFL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly* 38(3) DOI:10.2307/3588351
- Pavlenko, A. (2002). Narrative study: Whose story is it, anyway? *TESOL Quarterly*, 36(2), 213–218. doi:10.2307/3588332.

Pavlenko, A., (2004). Gender and sexuality in foreign and second language education: Critical and feminist approaches.

Pennycook, A. (2001) Critical Applied Linguistics: A Critical Introduction.

Pennycook, A. (1989) The Cultural Politics of English as an International Language.

Perez-Gomez, F & Cortes Cross, D. E. (2021) *On Intercultural Communicative Competence: Student-teachers' Accounts of Colombian Cultural Identity. English Language Teaching; Vol. 14, No. 12; 2021.*

Riley, Philip (2007) Language, Culture and Identity. London: Continuum.

Rodríguez Tamayo, I. Y., & Tenjo-Macías, L. M. (2019). *Children's Cultural Identity Formation: Experiences in a Dual Language Program*. GIST – Education and Learning Research Journal, (18), 86–108.

Tajeddin, Z., & Teimournezhad, Sh. (2014). Exploring the hidden agenda in the representation of culture in international and localised ELT textbooks. The Language Learning Journal, 1, pp. 1-14.

Van Lier, L. (2008). Agency in the classroom. In J. Lantolf & M. Poehner (Eds.), Sociocultural theory and the teaching of second languages (pp. 163-186). London: Equinox Publishers.

Viveros, M. (2016) La interseccionalidad: una aproximación situada a la dominación. Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

Weedon, C. (1997). Feminist practice and poststructuralist theory. London: Blackwell.

Appendix 1

Field Notes format

TITLE:

Research Question:

FIELD NOTE #

Date and location:

Session objective:

Criteria	Observation	Reflection
Engagement with the activities proposed		
Students' cultural identity expressions (values, behaviors, beliefs...)		
Manifestation of cultural elements (religion, ethnicity, nation, gender, social class)		
Attitudes towards storytelling		
Presence of social issues related to gender, race, or class		
English learning behavior		
Viewpoints about the foreign culture		

Appendix 2

Questionnaire 1



UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA NACIONAL
PROYECTO-PEDAGÓGICO INVESTIGATIVO:
IMPLEMENTACIÓN
ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS



CUESTIONARIO

El propósito de este cuestionario es recopilar algunas ideas sobre aspectos culturales en relación con la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de inglés para las estudiantes de grado once del Colegio Lorencita Villegas de Santos. Gracias por su participación.

1. ¿Quién eres? Describe.

2. ¿Qué edad tienes?

3. ¿Qué te identifica como colombiano?

4. ¿Qué aspectos te gustan sobre tu cultura?

5. ¿Qué otros aspectos no te gustan sobre tu cultura?

6. ¿Te gusta aprender inglés? ¿Por qué?

7. ¿Te interesa aprender sobre culturas en clase de inglés?

8. ¿Has aprendido sobre otras culturas al aprender inglés? ¿Cuáles?

9. ¿Qué aspectos te gustan de las culturas extranjeras?

10. ¿Qué otros aspectos no te gustan sobre las culturas extranjeras?

Appendix 3

Questionnaire 2



UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA NACIONAL
PROYECTO-PEDAGÓGICO INVESTIGATIVO:
IMPLEMENTACIÓN
ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS



WORKSHOP

Answer the following questions according to the story. If needed, use the original story as a guide but **DO NOT COPY** the same words or expressions that are written there.

1. Did you like the story "Chocolate"? Why?

2. What was your favorite character? Why?

3. Did you dislike any character? Why?

4. What kind of woman was Tara? Describe her.

5. Why did Tara love to eat chocolate?

6. What do you think about Abhay attitude and behavior during the story?

7. According to the story, how does a woman and a man should be?

8. Do you find any similitude or difference with being a woman and a man in our country?

9. Did you like the end of the story? Why?

10. Would you change anything about the story? Explain what and why. (It can be the setting, characters, or plot)

Appendix 4

Interview format

ENTREVISTA FINAL

El propósito de esta entrevista es conocer más acerca de las percepciones personales de los participantes respecto al storytelling de una historia relacionada al género y su posible impacto en la reconfiguración de la identidad cultural partiendo de lo trabajado en las intervenciones. Debido al carácter semiestructurado de la entrevista, algunas preguntas adicionales pueden emerger en el transcurso de la interacción y no estar presentes en este documento.

1. De acuerdo con lo que trabajamos en clase, ¿qué aspectos le llamaron la atención?
¿Por qué?
2. ¿Cuál considera que es el mensaje principal de la historia “Chocolate”?
3. ¿Cómo cree usted que era la relación entre mujeres y hombres en la historia?
4. ¿Cómo percibe el rol de la mujer y el hombre dentro de la historia teniendo en cuenta lo que sucede en nuestra sociedad colombiana?
5. ¿Cómo ha sido vivir siendo mujer dentro de nuestra sociedad?
6. ¿Podría compartir alguna anécdota o historia respecto a esa experiencia?
7. ¿Esa historia influyó de alguna manera en la forma en que concibe su papel como mujer? ¿De qué manera?
8. ¿Cuál es su percepción de lo que significa ser mujer luego de la lectura de “Chocolate”?
9. ¿Encuentra alguna relación entre las situaciones narradas en la historia y lo que sucede en su vida escolar? ¿Cuál?
10. ¿Qué aspectos culturales percibió en la historia? ¿Alguno de ellos le causó interés o curiosidad? ¿Por qué?

Appendix 5

Informed Consent

	FORMATO		
	AUTORIZACIÓN TRATAMIENTO DE DATOS PERSONALES Y DE MENORES DE EDAD		
	Resolución 767 de 18 de junio 2018		
FOR009GSI	Fecha de Aprobación: 18-06-2018	Versión: 01	Página 2 de 2

AUTORIZACIÓN TRATAMIENTO DE DATOS PERSONALES DE MENORES DE EDAD

Ciudad y fecha: _____, identificado con C.C. ☐ C.E. ☐ No.
Yo, _____ expedida en _____, representante legal del menor
_____, identificado con T.I. ☐ NUIP ☐ No.
declaro que he sido informado por **LA UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA NACIONAL** (en adelante la **UPN**), identificada con NIT. 899.999.124-4, con domicilio en la ciudad de Bogotá y sede principal en la calle 72 No. 11 – 86 de Bogotá, que, de conformidad con los procedimientos establecidos en la Ley 1581 de 2012, Decreto Reglamentario 1377 de 2013 y el *Manual de política interna y procedimientos para el tratamiento y protección de datos personales de la Universidad*, disponible en la página web www.pedagogica.edu.co, actuará como Responsable del tratamiento de mis datos personales¹, necesarios para el cumplimiento de la misión de la **UPN**, obtenidos a través de canales y dependencias institucionales y que podrá recolectar, almacenar, usar, actualizar, transmitir, transferir y poner en circulación o suprimirlos, mediante el uso de las medidas necesarias para otorgar seguridad a los registros, evitando su adulteración, pérdida, consulta, uso o acceso no autorizado o fraudulento incluso por terceros.

Que tratándose de datos sensibles² y de menores de edad no está obligado a autorizar su tratamiento, salvo las excepciones consagradas en la ley o que medie su consentimiento expreso. Que es de carácter facultativo responder a las preguntas que traten de datos sensibles o menores de edad.

Como representante legal del menor, debo velar por los derechos consagrados en la Constitución y la Ley sobre sus datos, especialmente el derecho a conocer, actualizar, rectificar y suprimir información personal, así como el derecho a revocar el consentimiento otorgado para el tratamiento de datos personales del menor, en los casos en que sea procedente. Las inquietudes o solicitudes relacionadas con el tratamiento dichos datos, pueden ser tramitadas a través del e-mail: quejasyreclamos@pedagogica.edu.co

La Universidad garantiza la confidencialidad, libertad, seguridad, veracidad, transparencia, acceso y circulación restringida de los datos y se reserva el derecho de modificar su Política de Tratamiento de datos personales en cualquier momento. Cualquier cambio será informado y publicado oportunamente en la página web.

Teniendo en cuenta lo anterior, autorizo de manera voluntaria, previa, explícita, informada e inequívoca a la **UPN** para tratar los datos personales del menor que represento, de acuerdo con el *Manual de política interna y procedimientos para el tratamiento y protección de datos personales de la Universidad* y para los fines relacionados con su Misión.

Leído lo anterior, manifiesto que la información para el Tratamiento de los datos personales del menor de edad que represento, ha sido suministrada de forma voluntaria y es veraz, completa, exacta, actualizada, comprobable y comprensible.

FIRMA _____

Nombre: _____

Identificación: _____

¹ La UPN garantiza la confidencialidad, libertad, seguridad, veracidad, transparencia, acceso y circulación restringida de mis datos y se reserva el derecho de modificar su Política de Tratamiento de datos personales en cualquier momento. Cualquier cambio será informado y publicado oportunamente en la página web.

² Son **datos sensibles** aquellos que afectan la intimidad del Titular o cuyo uso indebido puede generar su discriminación, tales como aquellos que revelen el origen racial o étnico, la orientación política, las convicciones religiosas o filosóficas, la pertenencia a sindicatos, organizaciones sociales, de derechos humanos o que promueva intereses de cualquier partido político o que garanticen los derechos y garantías de partidos políticos de oposición, así como los datos relativos a la salud, a la vida sexual, y los datos biométricos (Art. 5° Ley 1581 de 2012, art. 3° Decreto 1377 de 2013).

Appendix 6

Data analysis

QUESTIONNAIRE 1: CULTURAL NOTIONS				
Participant #1	Participant #2	Participant #3	Participant #4	Participant #5
Language	Personality	Accent	Sports	Citizenship
Appearance	Biodiversity (2)	Personality	Personality	Food
History	Tourism	Food	Accent	Personality
Music	Nature exploitation	Nature	Food	Nature
Food		People	Music	Justice
Communication	Communication	Insecurity	Values	Travel
Learn from other cultures	History	Justice	Personality	Communication
Power	Economy		Inequality	Behaviors
		Learn about other cultures		Expression
		Customs		Idioms
		Traditions	Traditions	Communicative issues
		Art	Way of living	
		Music	Rudeness	
		Cultural differences	Development	

Participant #6	Participant #7	Participant #8	Participant #9	Participant #10
Personality	Joy	Joy	Joy (2)	Kindness
Joy	Kindness	Customs	Empathy	Spiritual
Expression (2)	Sport	Accent	Traditions	Citizenship
Family	Accent	Music	Nature	People
Roots	Personality	Food	Food	Conflict
Food (2)	Citizenship	Clothes	Violence	Food
People	Food	Justice	Justice	Biodiversity
Traditions	Music	Gender		
Sport	Celebrations	Insecurity		Communication

Music	People	Learning about cultures	Customs	Customs
Justice	Learn about other cultures		Traditions	Discrimination
Insecurity		Customs		Religion
Discrimination		Way of living		
Justice		Expression		
		Rudeness		

Participant #11	Participant #12	Participant #13	Participant #14	Participant #15
Kindness	Kindness	Citizenship	Identity	Sport
Family	Customs (2)	Rules	Ambivalency	Appareance
Citizenship	Citizenship	Dance	Customs (2)	Citizenship
Food	Food (2)	Food (2)	Expression	Food
Diversity		Customs	Diversity	Insecurity
	Music (2)	History		Expression
Learn about other cultures		Biodiversity	Cultural learning	Nature
Food		Discrimination	Way of communicate	Discrimination
Way of living			Intolerance	
People				
Discrimination		Learn about other cultures		
		Classism		
		Language		
		Way of living		
		Rudeness		

Participant #16	Participant #17	Participant #18	Participant #19	Participant #20
Family	Autonomy	Customs (3)	Music	Travel
Food (2)	Music	Beliefs	Beliefs	Learning
Appareance	Cooperation	Food	Joy	Kindness
Accent	Straightness	Traditions	Food	Customs

History	Injustice	Dance	Discrimination	Food
Roots	Violence	Sexism	Gender issues	Nature
Customs		Intolerance	Communication	Tourism
Joy	Learn about cultures		Food	Diversity
Hardworking	Expression	Expression	History	People (2)
Injustice (2)	Development	Beliefs	Monuments	Roots
Religion	Discrimination	Cultural differences	Beliefs	Traditions (2)
Idioms		Violence	Discrimination	People
Behavior		Injustice	Stereotypes	Injustice
History				Discrimination
Cultural differences				Music
				Power

QUESTIONNAIRE 2: "CHOCOLATE"

Participant #1	Participant #2	Participant #3	Participant #4	Participant #5
Stereotypes (2)	Stereotypes	Confidence	Stereotypes	Gender issues
Abuse	Resilience	Empowerment	Abuse	Empowerment
Dependency	Lack of empathy	Selfishness	Dependency	Lack of support
Submission	Sexism	Submission	Submission	Dependency
Man dominance		Abuse	Man dominance	Sexism
Inequality		Sexism	Stereotypes	Stereotypes
			Inequality	Empowerment
			Autonomy	Autonomy

Participant #6	Participant #7	Participant #8	Participant #9	Participant #10
Passive	Empowerment (2)	Justice	Empowerment	Empowerment
Man dominance	Internalized sexism	Sexism	Lack of support	Sexism (2)
Stereotypes	Abuse	Stereotypes	Submission	Abuse
		Lack of support	Sexism (2)	Stereotypes
			Stereotypes	Inequality

			Privilege	Gender issues
			Justice	

Participant #11	Participant #12	Participant #13	Participant #14
Justice	Gender issues	Empowerment	Empowerment
Sexism	Empowerment	Abuse	Abuse
Stereotypes	Sexism	Autonomy	Empowerment
Lack of support		Sexism	Dependency
		Stereotypes	Sexism
		Inequality	Stereotypes
		Justice	Cultural traits
			Stereotypes

FIELD NOTES			
Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4
Femininity	Privilege	Stereotypes	Empowerment
Cultural traits	Cultural traits	Engagement	Internalized sexism
Cultural identity	Stereotypes (2)	Sexism	Injustice
Stereotypes	Cultural differences	Equality	Understanding
	Equality	Stereotypes	Abuse
	Curiosity	Cultural differences	Sexism
		Internalized sexism	Stereotypes
		Cultural identity	

CATEGORIES

Cultural identity formation	Questioning roles of gender	Repositioning as woman in society	Exploring a story to question identities
Language	Power	Personality	Communication (2)
Appearance	Stereotypes	Personality	Learn from other cultures
History	Insecurity	Justice	Communication

Music	Inequality	Development	Communication
Food	Rudeness	Personality	Expression
Biodiversity (2)	Communicative issues	Personality	Expression (2)
Tourism	Insecurity	Personality	Learn about other cultures
History	Discrimination	Justice	Learning about cultures
Economy	Insecurity	Personality	Expression
Accent	Rudeness	Joy	Communication
Food	Violence	Justice	Learn about other cultures
Nature	Discrimination	Justice	Expression
People	Discrimination	Joy	Cultural learning
Sports	Classism	Personality	Way of communicate
Accent	Rudeness	Joy	Memory
Food	Ambivalency	Justice	Learning
Music	Intolerance	Gender	Understanding
Values	Stereotypes (2)	Joy (2)	Innovation
Customs	Abuse	Empathy	Curiosity
Traditions	Dependency	Justice	Engagement
Art	Sumission	Kindness	Understanding
Music	Man dominance	Spiritual	Expression
Cultural differences	Inequality	Kindness	Learn about cultures
Traditions	Stereotypes	Resilence	Expression
Way of living	Lack of empathy	Confidence	Expression
Citizenship	Sexism	Empowerment	Communication
Food	Selfishness	Autonomy	Learning
Nature	Sumission	Empowerment	Learn about cultures
Travel	Abuse	Empowerment	
Behaviors	Sexism	Autonomy	
Idioms	Stereotypes	Empowerment (2)	
Family	Abuse	Justice	
Roots	Dependency	Empowerment	
Food (2)	Sumission	Justice	
People	Man dominance	Empowerment	
Traditions	Stereotypes	Justice	
Sport	Inequality	Empowerment	
Music	Gender issues	Empowerment	
Kindness	Lack of support	Autonomy	
Sport	Dependency	Justice	
Accent	Sexism	Empathy	

Citiizenship	Stereotypes	Empowerment
Food	Passive	Empowerment (2)

Music	Man dominance	Equality
Celebrations	Stereotypes	Equality
People	Internalized sexism	Empowerment
Customs	Abuse	Autonomy
Accent	Sexism	Development
Music	Stereotypes	Femeninity
Food	Lack of support	Empowerment
Clothes	Lack of support	Empowerment
Customs	Sumission	
Way of living	Sexism (2)	
Traditions	Stereotypes	
Nature	Priviledge	
Food	Sexism (2)	
Customs	Abuse	
Traditions	Stereotypes	
Citizenship	Inequality	
People	Gender issues	
Food	Sexism	
Biodiversity	Stereotypes	
Customs	Lack of support	
Religion	Gender issues	
Family	Sexism	
Citizenship	Abuse	
Food	Sexism	
Diversity	Stereotypes	
Food	Inequality	
Way of living	Stereotypes	
People	Inequality (2)	