

**Critical Discourse Analysis of the Suggested Curriculum: Predominant and
Marginalized Literacy Perspectives**

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Abstract

This research study critically analyzes the conceptualization of literacy within the suggested English language curriculum for elementary education in Colombia. Employing Fairclough's three-stage model of discourse analysis, the study identifies the predominant literacy perspectives as functional, discursive, and ideological, with a marginal consideration of sociocultural literacy and a complete absence of decolonial literacy. The analysis reveals that the curriculum's emphasis on global needs and international standards overshadows the importance of local contexts and critical consciousness. This disparity has implications for equity and empowerment, potentially alienating marginalized groups and hindering the development of critical literacy skills. The study concludes by advocating for a more balanced approach to literacy education that integrates sociocultural and decolonial perspectives to foster social justice and empower all learners.

Key words: Literacy, English language teaching, Bilingualism, Critical discourse analysis, language policy.

Resumen

Este estudio de investigación analiza críticamente la conceptualización de la literacidad dentro del currículo sugerido de inglés para la educación primaria en Colombia. Empleando el modelo de análisis del discurso en tres etapas de Fairclough, el estudio identifica las perspectivas de literacidad predominantes como funcional, discursiva e ideológica, con una consideración marginal de la literacidad sociocultural y una completa ausencia de la literacidad decolonial. El análisis revela que el énfasis del currículo en las necesidades globales y los estándares internacionales eclipsa la importancia de los contextos locales y la conciencia crítica. Esta disparidad tiene implicaciones para la equidad y el empoderamiento, potencialmente alienando a los grupos marginados y obstaculizando el desarrollo de habilidades de literacidad crítica. El estudio concluye abogando por un enfoque más equilibrado de la educación en literacidad que integre las perspectivas socioculturales y decoloniales para fomentar la justicia social y empoderar a todos los estudiantes.

Palabras clave: Literacidad, Enseñanza del inglés, Bilingüismo, Análisis crítico del discurso, política lingüística.

Table of content

Chapter 1: Delimitation of the Problem	6
Contextualization	6
Statement of the problem	9
Rationale	11
Research question	12
General objective	12
Specific objectives	12
Chapter 2: Theoretical foundations	14
Literature review	14
Literacy	21
Bilingualism	24
Chapter 3: Methodology	27
Research paradigm	27
Type of Investigation	28
Unit of analysis	36
Chapter 4: Findings	40
Predominant literacy perspectives	41
Underrepresented literacy perspectives	51
Conclusions and Implications	62
References	68
Appendices	72
Appendix 1. Analysis of OPP document	72
Appendice 2. Analysis of MAI document	75

Table of figures

Figure 1	30
Figure 2	45
Figure 3	46
Figure 4	53
Figure 5	60

Chapter 1: Delimitation of the Problem

To delimit the problem, this chapter aims to offer a concise introduction to the subject of interest, namely efforts, initiatives, guidelines, and public policy formulation concerning ELT (English language teaching). Additionally, *it will present an overview of the critical perspectives and debates surrounding these initiatives*. The chapter will also establish the research questions and objectives of this inquiry, while providing a justification for the significance of this topic. Lastly, it will outline the structure of the subsequent chapters in this study and explain how they will contribute to addressing the research questions.

Contextualization

The motivation to establish a public policy on bilingualism in Colombia can be traced back to the colonial era, when catholic institutions-imposed languages such Spanish, Latin and Greek. Later, during the independence period, the elite began sending their children to study in Europe, leading to the association of English and French with prestige, while native languages were devalued and marginalized. Subsequently, since the globalization stage that followed World War II, English and French began to strengthen as the most emphasized foreign languages learned in Colombian schools. Additionally, in more recent decades, at least four initiatives have influenced the field of foreign language teaching and learning in Colombia today: The English Syllabus; The COFE Project, the General Law of Education or General law N°115 presents a comprehensive proposal for bilingual technical education as well as languages renewal into curriculum.; Curricular Guidelines Currículo de Lengua Extranjera. However, it was only in 2005 that the

government introduced its own National Bilingual Program (Plan Nacional de Bilingüismo) — which unlike earlier ones, more sweeping and longer-term affected not just schools and universities but also public perceptions of foreign languages. This PNB was launched with a clear vision: to foster bilingualism and enhance Colombia's competitiveness on the international stage. It sought to achieve this by concentrating on three key objectives: providing bilingual education within indigenous communities, regulating foreign language teaching through flexible models, and prioritizing English language instruction in both monolingual and bilingual schools. Furthermore, in accordance with the MEN (2005), the formulation of a national bilingual plan is imperative to achieve proficiency in a foreign language (primarily English), enabling citizens to navigate effectively in this era of globalization. This program uses the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) to establish benchmarks for English proficiency. Furthermore, this policy is anchored in three fundamental pillars: language, communication, and culture, recognizing that language acquisition intrinsically involves cultural learning. One of the ultimate goals of this project is for students to attain a B2 level of proficiency upon completing secondary education and for higher education.

Over time, the MEN has implemented modifications to its bilingualism project. Of particular relevance to this research, in 2016, within the framework of the National Development Plan "Todos por un Nuevo País" (All for a New Country), which aimed to foster a more peaceful, equitable, and educated Colombia, the MEN established a new program called "Colombia Bilingüe" (Bilingual Colombia). This program introduced the Basic Learning Rights for English and the Suggested English Curriculum for primary and

secondary education, providing teachers with clear guidelines for instruction and outlining the desired level of English proficiency at each grade level.

Finally, addressing recent policy developments, the 2018-2022 administration prioritized students achieving B1 proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) by the conclusion of their secondary education. Key initiatives implemented to support this objective included the launch of the 'Be The One Challenge' mobile application, aimed at aiding student preparation for standardized tests. Furthermore, this period saw the creation of the Eco 2.0 website, established as a central repository of ELT materials specifically for teachers.

In short, Colombia's pursuit of bilingualism is a complex narrative woven through centuries of historical and sociopolitical influences. From colonial impositions to elitist educational practices and the forces of globalization, the nation's linguistic landscape has been continuously shaped and reshaped. Recent decades, however, have witnessed a proactive shift towards formalized bilingual education policies, culminating in ambitious programs like the National Bilingual Program and "Colombia Bilingüe." These initiatives, underpinned by a recognition of language's role in global competitiveness and cultural understanding, set the stage for a future where bilingual proficiency is not just a privilege but a fundamental right and tool for all Colombians.

Accordingly, the elevated priority assigned to ELT within the national education system implies its integration into contemporary conceptions of literacy in Colombia. It is therefore crucial to evaluate how specific ELT initiatives, particularly the suggested

curriculum analyzed in this study, conceptualize literacy itself and subsequently how it shapes this skill in students.

Statement of the problem

Academics and individuals with diverse perspectives have criticized these policies in various ways. In a review analysis of the ELT policies written by Gómez (2016) many questionable aspects can be found such as the inconsistencies and a lack of continuity in the program, the inadequate articulation of strategies, the misconception of bilingualism that emphasizes the Spanish-English dichotomy the overemphasis that could lead to the misconception [that Spanish is unsuitable for scientific discourse and the acquisition of knowledge](#), the adoption of foreign models, such as the Common European Framework, the perception that bilingual plans are only for affluent students and, finally the lack of contribution from Colombian teachers in the development of these policies.

Otherwise, analyzing the sociolinguistic landscape of Colombia, Guerrero (2009) posits a persistent historical marginalization of Indigenous and Creole languages, originating in the colonial period and frequently resulting in their dismissal as 'mere dialects'. This systemic marginalization is reflected in national linguistic policies wherein these languages continue to lack formal recognition. This situation persists notwithstanding the 1991 Constitution's designation of Colombia as a multicultural and multilingual nation—an act that explicitly codified the status of Indigenous and Creole languages and underscored the necessity of ethno-education. However, this constitutional mandate for ethno-education appears insufficiently integrated or remains largely unaddressed within

extant governmental policies and the operational framework of the National Bilingualism Plan.

Continuing the discussion regarding ELT policies, Cruz (2017) critiques the inherent contradictions evident in the application of English Language Teaching (ELT) initiatives across urban versus rural contexts identifying a significant disparity, whereby the rural domain is systematically disadvantaged. Consequently, the benefits and opportunities promulgated under national ELT policies tend to concentrate almost exclusively within urban centers which is especially problematic considering the demographic reality of Colombia that remains predominantly rural.

Lastly, focusing on external influences, Usma (2009) argues that international trends, processes, and reforms constitute primary drivers behind the promulgation of ELT policies in Colombia. As a result, these global factors fundamentally shape the ELT policy landscape.

In conclusion, based on the preceding overview of the principal criticisms directed at ELT policies, this analysis establishes that while bilingual policies have been studied and called into question, [there is a lack of existing research explicitly addressing literacy as central theme or key concept and how ELT policies through documents like the suggested curriculum can reveal a vision of literacy](#) with the exception of the research conducted by Salcedo (2016), which incorporates the concept of literacy to analyze the relationship between reading and writing [standards in both English and Spanish](#) and a specific school curriculum in Bogotá. However, the study's conceptualization of literacy proves markedly

superficial, adhering strictly to the traditional definition confined to basic reading and writing abilities. As result, it is precisely by adopting a more expansive understanding of literacy that an analysis of Colombia's suggested English curriculum for primary can significantly extend the critical discussion and further problematize national ELT initiatives.

Rationale

Since the inception of formal education, a primary objective has been to cultivate literate individuals. This goal persists, particularly given the complexities and demands of contemporary societies. Consequently, educational systems design policies and curricula with a specific vision of literacy in mind as for example, from a national perspective the PNLEO (Plan Nacional para la Lectura, Escritura y Oralidad) establishes as a vision of literacy as a tool for accessing knowledge and fostering enjoyment that can enable the appropriation of cultural richness from diverse communities and global societies (MEN,2022) Conversely, from an international scale, UNESCO launched the global alliance for literacy that primarily defines literacy as a fundamental human right and a crucial catalyst for sustainability comprehensive development, enhanced access to the labor market and poverty reduction (UNESCO,n.d.). Furthermore, the teaching and learning of English, due to its global significance, can also be considered a requisite literacy skill in today's world. This research gains relevance when contextualized within the historical understanding of literacy as an inherent outcome of schooling and the ascendant status of English as a mandatory subject in national educational institutions. It is, therefore, crucial to examine how the national ministry of education addresses these variables, thereby conceptualizing a notion of literacy that is intrinsically linked to the teaching of English and

that carries historical, social, and ideological underpinnings. As Macedo & Dendrinos (2003) suggest, the expansion of English is fundamentally a political process imbued with interests and power dynamics. Thus, it was imperative to investigate how literacy is defined in relation to these interests, as manifested in documents such as the suggested primary English curriculum that articulates the importance of English and provides specific guidelines that reflect a particular vision of literacy, outlining the modes and types of content students are expected to acquire.

At the same time, while a considerable body of literature exists regarding ELT policies in Colombia, none adequately addresses the variable of literacy within their critiques. Instead, these studies primarily focus on identifying the weaknesses of such policies. Consequently, this research enriches the field and fills an existing gap within the ELT policy research by identifying previously overlooked aspects that are achieved through the primary theoretical concept guiding the investigation, namely literacy, which, as previously emphasized, holds significant importance within the educational tradition.

Furthermore, this research study holds significant value for me as a prospective educator. It provided an opportunity to examine foreign language instruction through a literacy-based lens and prompted a critical analysis of not only curricula but also lesson planning, instructional materials, and the types of activities employed which facilitated a reflection on the specific type of literacy fostered in English language classrooms during my practicum. In light of the critiques and reflections presented herein, I am committed to developing my future classes by integrating more critical perspectives of literacy and prioritizing the selection of authentic and engaging materials to foster deep comprehension.

Research question

What are the predominant and underrepresented literacy perspectives within the suggested curriculum for ELT in Colombia?

General objective

To critically examine the predominant and marginalized literacy perspectives in the suggested curriculum for ELT in Colombia.

Specific objectives

- To analyze the predominant types of literacy promoted in the suggested curriculum for ELT in Colombia.
- To determine the literacy perspectives that predominate within the suggested curriculum for ELT in Colombia
- To unearth the implications of underrepresenting some literacy perspectives within the suggested curriculum for ELT in Colombia.

Chapter 2: Theoretical foundations

Within this chapter, the theoretical framework of this study is introduced. The exploration commenced with an examination of past research that has delved into the primary variables at the core of the investigation. Through an analysis of the existing literature on main variables that lead this investigation which are ELT policies and literacy. The objective is to enhance a comprehension of the fundamental principles, as well as the significant discoveries and deficiencies in current research. This scrutiny establishes the groundwork for the present inquiry, which expands upon and advances the existing literature in significant manners.

The main topics considered along the development of this investigation were related to ELT policies, literacy, bilingualism and Critical discourse analysis. This literature review covers a series of studies conducted on these topics.

Literature review

Since the implementation of the Colombian Bilingual Program (MEN,2004), the concerns regarding this program's suitability along with other policy documents have been raised by many academics. The main criticisms focus on the concept of bilingualism embedded in these policies, the emphasis on English and the marginalization of other groups and languages thus causing social inequalities and benefiting a few. In keeping with the previous ideas, some research studies have been carried out related to the contentious aspects of the ELT policies.

As for its main flaws, an article authored by Gómez (2017) highlights several recurring issues: its lack of consistency and continuity across proposals; the prioritization of English learning for employability purposes over social development; ambiguity surrounding the concept of bilingualism, the privileged position given to English; the adoption of foreign language models to measure English proficiency; the program being driven by commercial rather than equity concerns; and the exclusion of teachers' voices. The article proves valuable for this investigation since it affirms previous findings.

Likewise, Carvajal & Tejada (2016) came to the conclusion that the CBPs conceives English as a neutral tool for development and progress, ignoring the historical and political ties to colonialism and power imbalances. The authors also determine that the ELT policies tend to equate bilingualism with English proficiency, without considering other languages spoken in Colombia. Moreover, it is also concluded that the emphasis on English is primarily driven by economic motives in an aim to create a workforce for foreign corporations rather than fostering cultural understanding and diversity. Lastly, the authors also argue that the policies perpetuate a narrow view of education that gives privilege to technical skills and job training over critical thinking. As result, the findings of the study contribute to the understand why these policies are being called into question, by considering similar aspects as the previous article seen from a macro perspective without considering how these policies affect the practices inside Colombian classrooms.

Similarly, another article by Mora, Chiquito & Zapata (2019) considers the lack of consistency regarding the terminology addressed in the documents, particularly the notion of foreign language and second language. They also criticize the conception of bilingualism

associated to the English-Spanish dichotomy, the absence of other language initiatives further than English, and the exclusion of marginalized groups like indigenous, deaf and blind individuals. While considering some of the concerns raised in the previous articles, Mora, Chiquito & Zapata (2019) go further by reflecting on the ELT policies neglect of other language initiatives beyond English and its failure to address the linguistics needs of marginalized groups, such as indigenous, deaf, and blind individuals, aspects that could shape other literacy practices.

By their part, Usma (2009) by analyzing the international education trends and its relation with ELT initiatives reaches similar observations arguing that by the adoption of international discourses of the global educational trends the local knowledge that could contribute to the formulation of the policies has been excluded. In consequence of the internalization of external discourses, Usma (2009) suggests that this causes the instrumentalization of education limiting English learning to the economic profit which consequently leads to the stratification of languages, excluding Colombian native languages. Ultimately resulting from the internalization of discourses, the ELT policies promote the standardization and marketization of foreign language teaching and learning by having international institutions who control and validate English proficiency.

More focused on the issue of marginalization, Mackenzie (2020) analyzes the social justice implications of the Colombian Bilingual Programs through the lens of Young's "Five Faces of Oppression." The author argues that all five forms of oppression—cultural imperialism, exploitation, powerlessness, marginalization, and violence—are present in the policies. To begin with, the ELT policies promote cultural imperialism affording special

status to English and neglecting other languages, while facilitating exploitation by encouraging emigration of skilled individuals. The initiatives also contribute to teacher powerlessness when excluding them from decision-making and imposing top-down policies. Marginalization occurs as the bilingual policies disproportionately benefit wealthy, urban students, neglecting those in rural areas. Lastly, Mackenzie argues that the policies mainly perpetuate epistemic violence by valuing Western knowledge systems over local knowledge. The findings presented in this article are highly relevant since it reaffirms the observations from previous articles while taking a different approach, however, the conclusions seem to be quite similar to previous studies.

Related to the topic of oppression, Hurie (2018) discusses the relationship between Colombia's national foreign language policy, Colombia Bilingüe, and the country's efforts to build peace after decades of armed conflict. The author argues that the policy's discourse has shifted to promote "English for peace," framing English language instruction as a tool for peacebuilding. However, Hurie contends that this discourse is problematic, as it externalizes peace and conflict, placing the responsibility for peacebuilding on external actors and technical language skills rather than addressing the root causes of the conflict. The author also critiques the policy's neoliberal underpinnings, arguing that it prioritizes economic competitiveness and cultural assimilation over social justice and equity. Hurie concludes by suggesting that while English language teaching could potentially contribute to peacebuilding efforts, it must be approached from a decolonial perspective that prioritizes local knowledge and cultural diversity. The study is also relevant because it analyzes the discourses issued by the government regarding bilingual education from a decolonial perspective, taking into account the country's political context concerning the

peace process. It suggests, once again, that local knowledge should be considered, a very important aspect for this investigation that contemplates culture and local knowledge within the terms of literacy and biliteracy.

From a critical discourse analysis perspective, other studies have been conducted regarding ELT policies. In the first place, Guerrero (2008, 2010) presents a critical discourse analysis of the document launched by the Colombian Ministry of Education: *Estándares básicos de competencias en lenguas extranjeras: inglés. Formar en lenguas extranjeras: ¡el reto!*" (Basic standards for competences in foreign languages: English. Teaching in foreign languages: The challenge!). The analysis is conducted following the three-stage model of analysis proposed by Fairclough and theory of symbolic power proposed by Bourdieu in order to enrich the discussion and understand how bilingualism is constructed. As for the main findings, the author found similar aspects to various investigations such as the importance of English as the target language for bilingualism. Additionally, it proposes noteworthy aspects like the goal of English as a uniform achievable goal for all students ignoring the diverse realities of Colombian students. The document also discusses the standardized way of assessment that marginalized students who do not have the same access to English language education. Finally, the study relies about the neutrality and universality of English reinforcing its dominance and giving power to international institutions like the British Council. This investigation is highly relevant to the current study as it focuses exclusively on the analysis of a policy document, with a particular emphasis on the concept of bilingualism, which is a central term to this research.

Aligned with research utilizing a critical discourse analysis approach, Guerrero (2010) proposes another study that continues with the analysis of the Estándares básicos de competencia en lenguas extranjeras: El reto (Basic standards for competences in foreign languages: English. Teaching in foreign languages: The challenge) framed also into the Critical Discourse Analysis proposed by Fairclough. This time, the author aims to challenge the prevailing notion that learning English automatically grants access to the benefits of the modern world, such as wealth, technology, and power. In this article, the author argues that this narrative often serves the economic interests of English-speaking countries and institutions, while masking the actual limited benefits for many learners, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. In addition, the idea of belonging to a global community of English speakers is called into question since it creates a false sense of belonging and hide exiting inequalities. In addition, the author restates some points considered in the previous study such as the supposed neutrality of English and the unequal access to English education in Colombia. The document turns out to be significant for the current investigation since it provides a further discussion regarding ELT policies, while reaffirming some aspects and challenging the common narrative in Colombia about learning English.

Finally, in the category of critical discourse analysis, a more recent study is considered for this inquiry. The study presented by Ariza & Quintero (2021) evaluated how the Colombian Ministry of Education understand bilingual citizenship through the suggested curriculum (2016). Similar to previous investigations, the study's findings indicate that the curriculum promotes a model of "bilingual citizen" that is mainly focused on economic productivity and cultural assimilation to dominant English-speaking countries.

In this manner, the authors contend that this conception may neglect the broader social and political dimensions of citizenship and could exacerbate social inequalities. This particular inquiry is relevant as it considers the same corpus of analysis for the current investigation.

More focused on the issue of literacy, Salcedo (2016) examined the relationship between the Colombian Ministry of Education's (MEN) standards for reading and writing skills in Spanish and English, the official curriculum of a public school (IED) in Bogota, and the biliteracy practices in an 11th-grade classroom. The inquiry observed that there is a lack of connection between the Colombian Ministry of Education's standards, the school's curriculum, and classroom practices regarding biliteracy development. Furthermore, the author also highlighted the lack of integration between Spanish and English language instruction, limiting students' opportunities to apply language skills in real-world contexts. Another aspect indicates that family background significantly influenced students' literacy development and motivation to learn English, with students from less privileged backgrounds facing greater challenges. These findings underscore the need for a more integrated, contextually relevant approach to language instruction in Colombian public schools, emphasizing biliteracy practices that connect language learning to students' lives and fostering collaboration between Spanish and English language teachers. Nonetheless, the investigation falls short in its definition of literacy, referring to it merely as the ability to read and write in Spanish and English. A broader theoretical perspective on these two terms is needed to better understand the national government's aims regarding literacy within a supposed bilingual education.

In conclusion, all the investigations reviewed have well critiqued the ELT policies in the country considering its beginnings, the historical process of bilingual policies in Colombia, and the different documents issued regarding such policies, these studies provide a broad understanding of the main flaws and suggestions made regarding these policies. They identify recurring aspects such as the preponderance of English, the economic factor, and the exclusion of other knowledge systems. However, with the exception of Salcedo's (2016) study, which delves into literacy, biliteracy, and their relationship with some public policy documents, the analyses conducted so far do not fully demonstrate the context in which English must be used, the communicative intentions promoted by the policies, what students can or cannot do with the language, what topics should be discussed and which should not, and what type of knowledge is advocated, all these aspects linked to the term literacy from a broad perspective that considers context, culture, types of knowledge, identity, and discourse. This study aims to address this gap by considering all these aspects in the analysis of the suggested curriculum for primary.

Theoretical Framework

Literacy

Literacy is a well discussed term with diverse meanings, depending on the perspective and aspect considered. As Street (2017) states “Literacy, in this sense, is always contested; both its meanings and its practices”.

To commence the discussion of this concept, it is essential to define my perspective on literacy, a term deeply interwoven with my social and educational history. From this viewpoint, literacy is understood as an educational, but fundamentally social and

developmental phenomenon. It represents the convergence of oral, written, and reading practices, empowering individuals to express themselves, articulate their place in the world, and convey their emotions, opinions, and feelings. This allows them to self-identify and demonstrate who they are in the world. While early childhood acquisition of written code often receives significant attention, the development of literacy is a lifelong process, continually shaped by individual experiences and evolving reading, oral, and writing practices across diverse temporal and spatial contexts.

This research draws upon a diverse range of perspectives, including functional, sociocultural, ideological, discursive, and decolonial ones to provide a comprehensive framework for analyzing the suggested curriculum. By considering these perspectives, this study seeks to redefine literacy as more than just the ability to read and write but rather as a dynamic construct influenced by social, cultural, historical, and political contexts. This broader conception challenges the narrow definition criticized by García, Bartlett, and Kleifgen (2008), who argue against viewing literacy as "a singular knowledge or developmentally ordered skill set; as unvarying across contexts and situations; and as a primarily cognitive" (p. 207).

To begin, functional literacy is conceptualized as the capacity to participate in reading and writing practices that are normative for adults in a particular community (Gray as cited by Kirsch, 1977).

As for the sociocultural perspective (Barmiton & Hamilton, 2004) literacy is conceived as a social practice, an activity embedded in social interactions and cultural context. From this viewpoint, literacy is best understood by examining how people use reading and writing in their everyday lives, that is to say, the activities and events where written language plays a crucial role. Such practices are shaped by social structures,

cultural norms and individual motivations called “literacy practices”, a central notion for this perspective. Literacy seen from this perspective (Pérez, 2011) is also a cultural construct, a tool people employ for particular aims. Therefore, it is not about a universal unchanging skill, but rather a technology that evolves alongside communities, societies, contexts and needs. This way, literacy practices are also “culture-specific ways of knowing” (P. 8).

Echoing the sociocultural perspective, the New Literacy Studies (NLS), with a strong emphasis on ideology, challenge the notion of literacy as a neutral technical skill that can be universally acquired, coining this view of literacy as “the autonomous model of literacy”. This aforementioned model is countered by the “ideological model” which posits that literacy is not only linked to cultural practices but also relations of power. Therefore, it is concluded that literacy definitions are inherently shaped by particular interest (Street, 2017). Consequently, it is understood that literacy is never a neutral construct; rather, its very nature is shaped by dominant power structures that dictate not only the content and form of written communication but also the permissible modes of engagement. This extends to prescribing the suitable contexts, texts, and events through which literacy is to be approached.

Continuing the discussion, Gee (2012) views the concept of “discourse” as a central aspect to the development of literacy. He argues, as do others, that literacy is more than reading and writing. For this author, literacy involves acquiring secondary discourses throughout life through engagement with various public institutions. These secondary discourses are acquired in addition to primary discourses, which are acquired early in life through family and community. The acquisition of these secondary discourses can either continue or limit those early discourses. It is important to clarify that Gee’s definition of

discourse goes beyond the language itself, encompassing values, beliefs, actions behaviors and social identities that end up shaping the way individuals communicate.

To conclude this discussion, a more critical perspective informed by decolonial studies is considered. As explored by Hernández-Zamora (2019) in the context of ex-colonial societies like Mexico, this perspective challenges the notion of literacy as merely a neutral, autonomous skill or a set of cultural habits. Instead, decolonial literacy is understood as a viewpoint that contests traditional, often Eurocentric, understandings of reading and writing. It moves beyond the simple acquisition of technical skills in reading and writing the "standard" language, viewing literacy fundamentally as a cultural, political, and ideological process.

In closing, these four literacy perspectives are considered for this investigation as they offer the researcher a framework to shed light on the possible consequences regarding the application of bilingual policies in terms of culture and society. By moving beyond a mere cognitive approach or the language proficiency the students can achieve, this framework allows to explore a deeper level in which values, beliefs, and subjectivities are transmitted through ELT initiatives, potentially shaping Colombian individuals.

Bilingualism

The final construct considered for this investigation is bilingualism, with a focus of how it has been conceptualized within the ELT policies. As established by MEN (2006), the primary objective of the policies is to foster bilingual citizens, "Ser bilingüe es esencial en el mundo globalizado. Por ello, el Ministerio de Educación Nacional, a través del Programa Nacional de Bilingüismo, impulsa políticas educativas para favorecer, no sólo el desarrollo

de la lengua materna y el de las diversas lenguas indígenas y criollas, sino también para fomentar el aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras, como es el caso del idioma inglés.” (p.5).

Despite the mention of Indigenous, Creole, and other unspecified foreign languages, the Ministry of Education's conception of bilingualism primarily equates to the proficiency of English. As explained by Valencia (2005), due to the phenomena of globalization and the global hegemony of English, 'bilingualism' in Colombia has become synonymous with Spanish/English bilingualism. This narrow definition often overshadows the country's rich linguistic diversity, particularly the indigenous languages considering that indigenous communities who may fluently speak their ancestral language alongside Spanish.

In contrast to the official definition, the academic understanding of bilingualism is an inherently complex and multidimensional phenomenon (Cruz-Arcila, 2012). This view emphasizes that bilingualism encompasses far more than simply learning a second language code, therefore, there could be different types of bilingualism, such as additive bilingualism, where a second language is added, and subtractive bilingualism, where the second language potentially replaces the mother tongue. Conceptualizing bilingualism as such, detaches the from an exclusive association with "prestige" languages like English, arguing that a national policy should also embrace and value indigenous languages, recognizing their cultural heritage.

Furthermore, it is necessary to draw a distinction between programs merely teaching a second language and true bilingual education. Bilingual education, for its part, aims to foster equality and tolerance towards other linguistic and cultural groups which is not fully achieved within the current ELT initiatives. On the contrary, teaching a second language focuses on the mechanics of the language, usually for instrumental purposes like job opportunities without considering cultural understanding or fostering equality, a perspective

that is more in line with current ELT policies associated with English proficiency and standardized goals.

Another important consideration is the distinctions between bilingualism as an individual's linguistic ability and as a group or societal characteristic, involving shared attitudes and behaviors. Within this view, the nuances of proficiency are considered, distinguishing between basic interpersonal communication skills, which represent conversational fluency often acquired quickly in informal contexts, and cognitive academic language proficiency, which involves the more complex language abilities needed for academic success and takes longer to develop. Finally, taking into account a more holistic perspective, drawing on concepts like "multicompetence", suggests that comparing a bilingual's proficiency to a monolingual native speaker is inappropriate since bilinguals use their languages for different purposes, in different contexts, and with different people, reflecting their multiple competencies which implies to consider *when*, *where*, and *with whom* bilinguals use their languages. The preceding discussion gives rise to the need for policymakers to have a sensitive attitude towards Colombia's diverse cultural, ethnic, economic, and ideological landscape, advocating against rigid, standardized approaches and recognizing the varied reality of bilingual individuals and communities within the nation.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The primary aim of this Chapter is to provide a detailed description of the research design implemented in this study. This chapter offers an elaborated explanation of the research paradigm adopted which is the qualitative research paradigm, the type of investigation undertaken which is critical discourse analysis to explore and analyze the practices prioritized or overlooked by the Colombian Bilingual Policies (CBP) regarding literacy.

Research paradigm

The proposed investigation aimed to critically analyze the suggested curriculum to identify which literacy perspectives have been prioritized and which have been neglected. This process requires careful and thorough reading and interpretation of the selected documents of analysis. On that account, a paradigm that allowed for an interpretative and in-depth exploration of this phenomena was necessary. Consequently, for this study, the qualitative paradigm was chosen as the most suitable-

According to Cresswell (2007),³

Qualitative research begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. To study this problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns or themes. The final written report or presentation includes the voices of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher,

and a 'complex description and interpretation of the problem, and it extends the literature or signals a call for action. (p.37)

Based on the discussion above, even though this investigation did not require participant observation or a specific place for data collection, it focused on analyzing the curriculum documents that impact the Colombian population, particularly educational agents like teachers and students. Hence, this research also addressed a problem with social and human implications. Moreover, the study aimed to identify particular elements present in the selected documents that allude to literacy and biliteracy practices, in order to then proceed with a complex interpretation and critique of the elements associated with these concepts.

The qualitative paradigm encompasses a variety of approaches or lenses, depending on the research question and the subject being studied, the qualitative paradigm can use certain frameworks. “In other words, there are characteristics common to all forms of qualitative research, and the different characteristics will receive different emphases depending on the qualitative project” (Cresswell, 2007, p.35). As for this research, the specific approach adopted is critical discourse analysis, a methodology that would be framed within a qualitative paradigm.

Type of Investigation

This research study leverages critical discourse analysis (CDA) as its methodological framework denoting a critical description, interpretation, and explanation of how discourses create, sustain, and justify social inequalities (Wodak & Meyer, 2009 cited by Mullet). This methodology is appropriate considering the research question and the proposed investigative goals since it enables to evidence the hidden interests and ideology of a government-issued speech that therefore intends to shape the pedagogical and learning

approaches of the nation's educational stakeholders, encompassing students, teachers, and other agents involved in foreign language education. As Foucault states (2005), it is the discourses themselves that exert their own control; procedures that play somewhat as principles of classification, ordering, and distribution as if it were a matter of dominating another dimension of discourse: that of what happens and of the unforeseen. Subsequently, the suggested curriculum codifies a set of principles intended to exert a normative influence on the practices of individuals involved in the Colombian language education landscape, in this particular case, the set of principles underlying literacy and biliteracy practices being promoted.

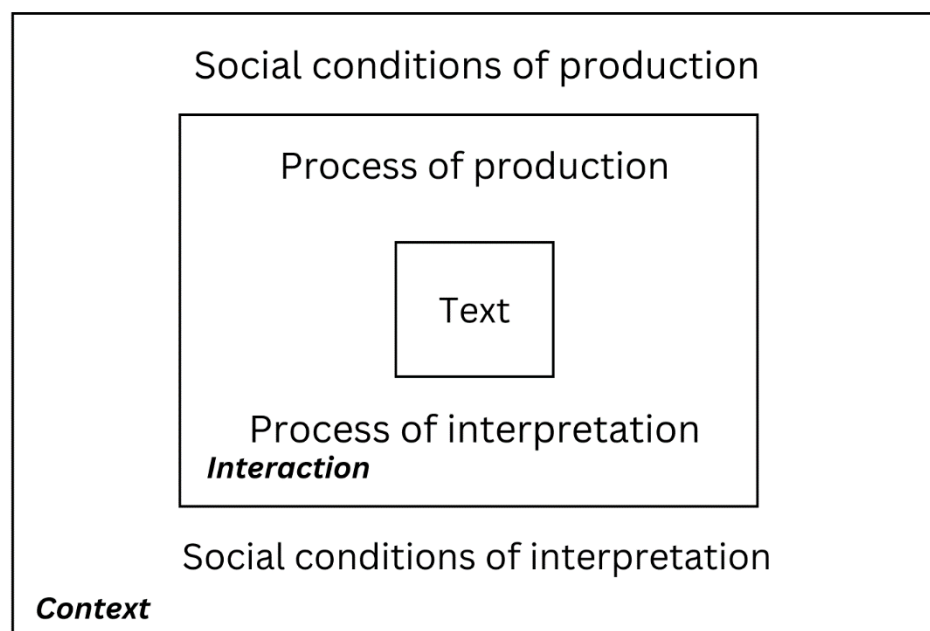
Given that CDA is a methodology that offers various ways to approach the text of analysis. The particular methodology selected for this study is the one proposed by Fairclough (1996). To understand this way of approaching discourse, it is essential to clarify the way discourse is conceived within this method. For doing so, Fairclough draws upon the definition given by the linguist Michael Halliday referring first to the conception of text, as a piece of spoken discourse. In this manner, Fairclough complements this idea by establishing that text is merely a product, discourse, on the other hand, entails to take into account the entire process of social interaction in which the text emerges. That is to consider the linguistic abilities, social conceptualizations, value systems, belief structures, and implicit assumptions involved in the production and interpretation of a text. In Fairclough's terms:

Discourse, then, involves social conditions, which can be specified as social conditions of production, and social conditions of interpretation. These social conditions, moreover, relate to three different 'levels' of social organization.: the level of the social situation, or the immediate social environment in which the

discourse occurs; the level of the social institution which constitutes a wider matrix for the discourse; and the level of the society as a whole. (p.25) (See figure #1)

Figure 1

Fairclough's scheme of discourse (2013)



Discourse as text, interaction and context (Fairclough, 1996, p. 25)

This definition of discourse aligns with the current research, since it affirms that texts are not neutral constructions, they are shaped by and reflect the social context in which they are created. These factors influence how a text is created, interpreted and implemented. The curriculum documents are not the exception. Both the authors and the readers, consciously or unconsciously, bring their own ideologies when writing and interpreting the text.

By Considering this vision of discourse, the analysis is not only focused on the text. it is also focused on “the relationship between texts, processes, and their social conditions both the immediate conditions of the situational context and the more remote conditions of institutional and social structures” (Fairclough, 1996, p. 26). Thereupon, a three-stage analysis is proposed: description (focusing on the text itself), interpretation (exploring interactions), and explanation (Examining contexts):

Description of the text

As stated before, this stage has to do with the text itself, particularly its linguistic features such as the vocabulary, the grammar and textual structures. This moment of analysis delves into the explicit elements of the text, which may harbor significant ideological intent and content. Thus, this analytic stage is centered on the identification of those elements and their respective ideological content. In conducting, this initial stage Fairclough establishes a set of guiding questions to facilitate the critical analysis of these components.

Vocabulary:

In order to analyze the aspect of vocabulary, Fairclough (2001) provides four key questions that guide this process:

- What experiential values do words have?
- What relational values do words have?
- What expressive values do words have?
- What metaphors are used?

These questions explore how vocabulary selection encode ideological conceptualizations of the world, creates power dynamics between participants evokes motions and attitudes in readers and harbors ideological meanings through the usage of metaphors.

Grammar:

Within this category of analysis, Fairclough (2013) formulates four principal questions to frame this part of the analysis:

- What experiential values do grammatical features have?
- What relational values do grammatical features have?
- What expressive values do grammatical features have?
- How are simple sentences linked together?

These questions aim to reveal how grammatical choices shape the way language represent events and aspects of reality by structuring sentences to emphasize specific details, employing nominalization for particular effects, and utilizing active or passive voice strategically. Furthermore, this part of the analysis considers the grammatical moods used in the text that can create power dynamics and social hierarchies. Additionally, this aspect also takes into account the use of modality that can elicit certain reactions in readers.

Textual structures:

For this last category of the text analysis, Fairclough (2001) proposes two questions:

- What interactional conventions are used?

- What larger-scale structures the does the text has?

The first question focuses on spoken discourse, where two or more people interact, analyzing aspects like conversation turns. In contrast, the second question delves into text organization. It considers how information is distributed, with some aspects being mentioned first and others later. The type of order can indicate the author's intention to emphasize certain points over others.

In the interests of this investigation, applying this first stage to the curriculum documents allows for a focused analysis of the linguistic and structural features that implicitly or explicitly define literacy. As Fairclough's (2013) framework suggests, these linguistic elements carry ideological weight and can reveal underlying assumptions about what counts as 'literacy,' whose literacy practices are valued, and how literacy is positioned within broader social and power dynamics.

Stage of interpretation

This stage of analysis is concerned about the relationship between text and interaction of readers to interpret the text. In this way, the interpretation is made having in mind the type of discourse in the author's perspective and the interpretation of the readers.

Thus, these categories are divided into different sections, namely, the context is interpreted according to their situational or intertextual function, and the type of speech is divided into the scheme, framework and script. According to Fairclough (2013), the division corresponds to parameters presented below:

1. Context:

Situational: refers to participants' knowledge of power structures, types of discourse implemented according to the situation and the particular context of enunciation. Fairclough (2001) proposes four questions to perform this analysis:

- a. What is happening?
- b. Who are the participants?
- c. What are the participants' relationships?
- d. What is the role of language?

Intertextual: refers to “assumptions of previous speeches related to the current, and these assumptions determine what can be taken as the meaning of the common experience” (Fairclough, 2013, p. 145).

2. Discourse type:

Diagram: it is the representation of the structure that must be used according to the function and purpose of different types of texts.

Frame: it refers to mental images or frames that are enabled about a subject presented in the text, according to the existing representations of themes exposed.

Script: it shows the discourses or behaviors that are typified and given to different subjects of the community according to their role in society and pre-existing ideologies.

The explanation of the text

In the final stage of discursive analysis, the explanation makes it possible to discover which are the existing relationships between interactions with the text and the social context of enunciation. That is, the texts are understood according to the interpretative processes of authors and readers, but at the same time they are unconsciously reproduced in society (Fairclough, 2013).

So, in the analysis of documents as products and producers of power relations of the company, there are three categories to analyze:

Social determinants: they refer to the explanation given to the texts according to a situational perspective, an institutional and societal perspective, where relations are established according to historical typification and ideologies built.

Ideologies: they establish the assumptions made and constructed through power exercised by dominant institutions and authors, which identities and actions of participants in the discourse.

Effects: This aspect shows how authors and readers of texts reproduce or transform social determinants. The text producers show norms and ideologies that they want to implement, while the interpreters are those who have the power to continue or transform information given by the author of the speech.

In line with the research aim of uncovering how literacy is conceptualized within the suggested curriculum for English language teaching, the following guiding questions were developed. These questions structured the ensuing analysis, presented herein via a matrix (Appendix 1 and 2) that delineates each stage of the model proposed by Fairclough (2013):

1. Description:

- Analysis of the formal properties in the curricular grids. This includes:
 - **Textual elements:** Identify key terms and phrases related to literacy. How is literacy explicitly defined? Are there any synonyms used?
 - **Structure:** Examine how literacy is positioned within the grids. Is it a standalone category? Does it intersect with other subjects or skills?
 - **Visual elements:** Are there any visuals that represent literacy? How are they used?

2. Interpretation:

- Go beyond the surface level and consider the underlying assumptions about literacy.
 - **Discourse practices:** How is literacy presented? Is it portrayed as a passive skill (decoding text) or an active process (critical thinking)?
 - **Intertextuality:** Are there references to other documents or educational philosophies? How do these references influence the conception of literacy?

3. Explanation:

- Link the identified aspects of literacy to the broader social context.
 - **Power relations:** Who created the curricular grids? How might their position influence how literacy is presented?
 - **Social effects:** What are the potential outcomes of this particular conception of literacy for students?
 - **Ideology:** What underlying values or beliefs are embedded within the curricular grids regarding literacy?

Unit of analysis

Based on their relevance to curriculum design and the potential to illuminate how the suggested curriculum conceptualizes literacy,, two relevant documents were selected for analysis: the "Currículo sugerido" (MEN,2016) (suggested curriculum), specifically the "Mallas de aprendizaje para transición a quinto de primaria" (Learning grids from kindergarten to fifth grade) and "Orientaciones y principios pedagógicos para grados de primaria" (Pedagogical orientations and principles for primary grades).

Firstly, "Mallas de aprendizaje para transición a quinto de primaria" (Learning grids from kindergarten to fifth grade) belong to a set of documents which shape the suggested curriculum for teaching English from primary to secondary levels as well as the basic rights in English. These learning grids suggest some curriculum standards and requirements that Colombian teachers can follow in order to improve the teaching practices for the students to achieve the expected English level in each grade. Through these curriculum grids, five different cross-cutting themes are incorporated into the English language instruction: health, coexistence, peace, environment, and globalization. These curriculum grids are organized into chapters corresponding to each grade level. Each chapter encompasses three sections:

- **Scope and Sequence:** This section outlines the English proficiency level as per the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), the language functions, and the overall objectives.
- **Learning Grids:** The learning grids are structured into modules aligned with the cross-cutting themes. Each module includes the suggested time frame for completion and concludes with performance indicators, which are the various actions students must perform to achieve the learning goals.
- **Methodological and Evaluative Routes:** The methodological route provides a task-based and project-based approach to instruction. The evaluative route offers recommendations for comprehensive, formative, and summative assessment strategies.

Secondly, "Orientaciones y principios pedagógicos para grados de primaria" (Pedagogical orientations and principles for primary grades) is also a document that makes part of the set of documents that shape the suggested curriculum. The objective of this

booklet is to show the principles that build and justify this pedagogical proposal. For doing so, the document starts with a brief description of the initiatives taken by the government to promote bilingualism in the country. The document delves into the realities considered in this curricular proposal, examining both legal aspects and catering to the needs of children aged 5 to 12, aligning with their developmental stages. Subsequently, the document highlights the challenges faced by teachers, envisioning them as mediating agents who foster a conducive learning environment. Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of a national curriculum that guides educational institutions and serves as a valuable resource for schools. It also establishes an action-oriented curricular approach, aiming to ensure that students can apply classroom learning to other contexts. Within this framework, it also addresses the sociocultural aspect, recognizing language as a social phenomenon, the transversality to foster cross-disciplinary dialogues, and diversity to safeguard children's right to education. Finally, the document acknowledges the actors contributing to the development of this curriculum: students, teachers, parents, and educational institutions.

The selection of these documents holds particular significance given the interest of the researcher in the Colombian primary school setting. Therefore, analyzing how the literacy is understood within the suggested curriculum for these grade levels offers important considerations directly applicable to that setting, particularly when considering pedagogical interventions carried out by the teacher-researcher are regarding storytelling, a topic intrinsically linked to literacy development. Likewise, the documents provide detailed information on what the students must achieve regarding the English language and how they are supposed to use the language, by suggesting the vocabulary, expression, grammar usage, sociolinguistic and intercultural elements in every grade, revealing certain positions regarding literacy and literacy practices, conceived here as a more complex term

beyond the mere ability to read, write and the general usage of language, but as an ever-changing term that is always redefined thanks to relations of power (Street,2017). Thereby, the documents would unveil how literacy could be envisioned according to the Ministry of Education, letting us see the contexts in which English is proposed to be used as well as the communicative intentions promoted along this proposal, which implies what the students might do with language (Hamilton & Barton, 2004) and, by the same token, preconizing a series of practices around language.

Timetable of research procedures

Phase	Key Activities	Timeframe
Project Initiation & Design	Defining the research topic, formulating research questions and objectives, initial project outlining.	Second Semester 2023
Literature Review & Theoretical Framework	Conducting a comprehensive review of existing literature, developing the theoretical foundation for the study.	First Semester 2024
Data Analysis	Applying Fairclough's critical discourse analysis model, matrix of analysis, interpreting data.	Second semester 2024
Conclusions & Final Revisions	Synthesizing findings, drawing conclusions, discussing implications, final writing, editing, and adjustments.	March 2025

Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter presents a critical discourse analysis of the suggested English language curriculum for elementary education, specifically focusing on two key documents: the "Mallas de Aprendizaje del Inglés (MAI)" (English Learning Grids) for kindergarten through fifth grade, and the "Orientaciones y Principios Pedagógicos (OPP)" (Pedagogical Guidelines and Principles) also for kindergarten through fifth grade. Employing Fairclough's (2013) three-stage model of discourse analysis—description, interpretation, and explanation—.

The descriptive phase of the analysis involves a close examination of the linguistic features of the texts. As for this study, particular attention is paid to the selection of key vocabulary and terminology, exploring how specific word choices might reveal underlying intentions and ideological stances regarding English language teaching and learning.

Moving to the interpretative phase, the study analyzes the relationship between the curriculum documents and their broader context. This involves considering how the texts interact with other relevant policy documents, educational discourses, and societal perspectives on literacy. This interpretation is informed by the theoretical framework adopted for this research, which encompasses diverse perspectives on literacy. Both the descriptive and interpretative stages of this study are interwoven throughout the chapter, examining the lexical features of the excerpts followed by the interpretation informed by the theoretical framework of literacy perspectives.

The explanatory phase seeks to articulate the potential social effects of the proposed curriculum, which involves considering how the curriculum might shape classroom practices, student experiences, and broader societal understandings of English language

proficiency. Based on this last stage of analysis, the chapter concludes by offering recommendations for curriculum refinement, specifically focusing on how the curriculum could better incorporate and reflect a wider range of literacy perspectives, thereby promoting more equitable and effective English language education for elementary students. This last stage is presented at the end of the chapter in order to offer a broad overview of the consequences of adopting certain literacy perspectives over others, as well as considerations for a possible reformulation of this curriculum or other pedagogical guidelines regarding language teaching in the country. In addition, the chapter is divided into three sections. Initially, it analyzes the privileged literacy perspectives, revealing a prioritization of functional, discursive and ideological perspectives. Subsequently, there is another segment that examines underrepresented literacy perspectives, demonstrating a marginal consideration of sociocultural literacy and a complete absence of decolonial literacy. Finally, the chapter culminates with an analysis of the social effects of considering certain literacy perspectives over others corresponding to the explanation stage proposed by Fairclough (2013).

Predominant literacy perspectives

Fairclough (2013) contends that ideological perspectives within a text can often be revealed through the analysis of its vocabulary choices. Following this idea, it was possible to identify various fragments of the documents analyzed which consistently emphasize on globalization, with phrases like “globalized world”, “global environment”, “global citizens” “global community”, “global consciousness”, “global level”, and “international standard” frequently paired with terms like “demands”, “needs” and “priorities”. These suggest a clear intention to equip the students not only with the English language skills for effective

participation in a globalized society but also with a set of value-laden beliefs about ELT education. The following excerpts illustrate this:

La educación en el siglo XXI exige cada vez más que, además de los saberes disciplinares, los estudiantes desarrollen habilidades que les permitan desenvolverse en un mundo globalizado (MEN,2016, OPP, p.31)

La participación de los niños y niñas en esta situación de aprendizaje fomenta actitudes y valores de colaboración con otros con un objetivo común que tiene implicaciones en la comunidad global. (MEN, 2016, MAI, p.66)

In the first fragment, for example, the curriculum acknowledges that beyond the disciplinary knowledge that refers to language skills, it is necessary for the students to acquire abilities that would allow them to navigate in the global context. In a similar way, the second fragment that is part of the curricular grids states that what is proposed in one of the modules contributes not only to language skills, but rather develops values and attitudes that have global implications, that is, visions and beliefs legitimated and valued globally.

By continuing with the interpretative phase of these and other similar excerpts, and situating also the analysis within the theoretical framework, it is possible to argue that the suggested curriculum, as articulated in many of its statements, aligns strongly with a functional literacy. Within a functional literacy vision, literacy is conceptualized as the capacity to participate in reading and writing practices that are normative for adults in a particular community (Gray as cited by Kirsch, 1977). Consequently, it can be inferred

that there is an aim to develop functionally literate individuals in English, encompassing not only linguistic proficiency but also the development of behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs to participate in global dynamics.

Moreover, functional literacy is considered to be necessary to individuals to effectively participate in economic, sociopolitical, cultural issues (Davidson,1990). Being globalization a process that involves economic, political, and cultural dimensions the suggested curriculum explicitly fosters language proficiency that enable students to engage in the economic and cultural integration associated to the process of globalization. The following fragment illustrates this aspect in a more concrete way:

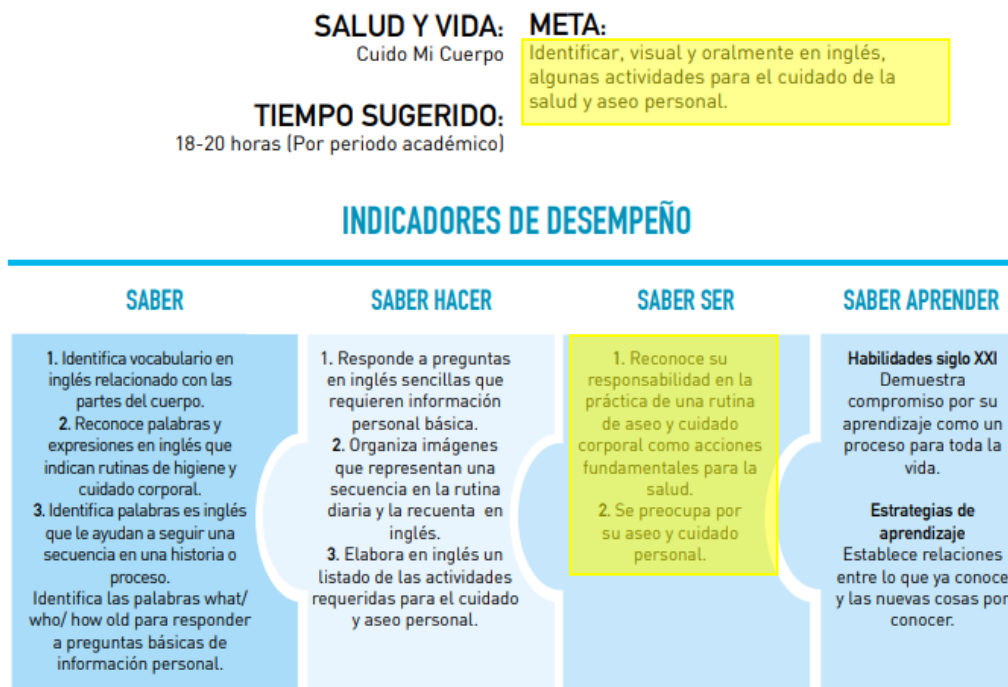
Es fundamental partir de la propuesta inicial de 6 a 11 y así presentar a los y las docentes del país, un diseño curricular sugerido que recoja y dé respuesta tanto a las necesidades del mundo globalizado como a las particularidades contextuales de las instituciones en los entornos rurales o urbanos en los que se encuentren, brindándoles una carta de ruta que pueda guiar su práctica pedagógica y que, además, se convierta en una herramienta de formación para ellos, teniendo en cuenta las realidades de los y las docentes de primaria del país. (MEN,2016, OPP, p. 21)

According to the aforementioned, the Ministry of Education emphasizes the imperative of a curriculum proposed to address global needs, thus facilitating integration into the economic, cultural and political spheres inherent to globalization and to acquire only the competencies needed for that context, a notion that aligns with functional literacy.

Within this interpretation, a conceptualization of discursive literacy (Gee,1989) also emerges, which is closely linked to beliefs and values. In accordance with discursive literacy, language use is not merely a matter of grammatical correctness but a means of constructing social identities since the acquisition of grammatical rules leads to the internalization of a discourse. Accordingly, the curriculum also fosters the development of discursive literacy by stating explicitly that education nowadays need to transcend disciplinary knowledge in order to cultivate a comprehensive set of skills, attitudes, values, and beliefs that align with the demands of the globalized world. Following the intersection of functional and discursive literacy subsequent passages taken mostly from the curricular grids offer more insights regarding these conceptualizations not from a global perspective but rather focusing on language use in authentic contexts:

Figure 2

Performance indicators, module 1 for first grade



(MEN,2016, MAI, p. 90)

Figure 3

Performance indicators, module 2 for third grade



(MEN, 2016, MAI, p. 162)

Focusing first on the textual features, both passages refer to real-life situations in which English is proposed to be used. The first excerpt deals with activities related to personal hygiene and healthcare, while the second one is oriented toward the duties of a community member, which are shaped by societal expectations. Later, the performance indicators, particularly the ones in “Saber ser” emphasize specific attitudes and behaviors including “demonstrating responsibility for personal hygiene” and “cultivating a respectful attitude towards others”. The aforementioned implies adopting a series of values and behaviors related in this case to personal hygiene and respect for others, which are ideally desired within a global context that the curriculum is increasingly advocating within its

pedagogical orientations and principles. Preceding the interpretation, these and other goals stated within the curricular grids associate with both functional and discursive literacy.

On the one hand, the curriculum establishes a connection with the functional element by trying to engage students in common daily life activities. As a consequence, it seeks to prioritize literacy skills that are directly relevant to adults' daily lives by providing context-specific instruction (Jakobson, 2023). On the other hand, these notions are linked with a discursive literacy approach since “demonstrating responsibility for personal hygiene” and “cultivating a respectful attitude towards others” are ultimately discourses that constitute ways of thinking and acting. In Gee’s words “A Discourse is a sort of "identity kit" which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act, talk, and often write, so as to take on a particular role that others will recognize.” (p.7). As a result, by offering lessons with activities related to personal hygiene and duties as a member of a community, the curriculum explicitly indicates that beyond the vocabulary and the grammatical structures, it aims to prepare students’ abilities to act in specific ways thereby shaping identities that are relevant to the proposed context.

By the same token, the document of pedagogical orientations states the following: Esta concepción a través de la acción, trasciende el enfoque comunicativo al motivar y comprometer a los estudiantes a través de un aprendizaje significativo y bien dirigido. En este sentido, es crucial plantear a los aprendices de lenguas, tareas claras, concretas y basadas en el uso real y no manipulado de la lengua. (MEN, 2016, OPP, p. 30).

From a lexical analysis, the use of terms such as “action” suggests a practical application of language which is reinforced by also mentioning to “clear task based on real world use” confining English language use to what is considered socially appropriate

within the specific contexts deemed relevant by the curriculum. The preceding observation suggests again a clear affinity with both functional and discursive literacy, indicating that language use is constrained to real-world that is socially accepted language practices while also contributing to the formation of specific identities tailored to these settings.

Finally, as another prevalent conceptualization of literacy within the corpus of analysis, this investigation asserts that these fragments also align with a vision of literacy as an ideological construct, which posits that literacy is always shaped by particular interests (Street,2017). As for this curriculum, clear international interests are identified that shape the learning objectives for English, thus not modelling literacy not only associated with the interests of globalization but also explicitly referencing international demands made by the Common European Framework and UNESCO, thereby establishing a type literacy aligned with these references. The following examples taken from the document of pedagogical orientations demonstrate the preceding point:

La enseñanza de las lenguas a nivel mundial ha experimentado un avance importante desde la publicación del Marco Común Europeo de Referencia (MCER) (Consejo de Europa, 2001) El documento propone un enfoque orientado a la acción, es decir, el desarrollo de ciertas tareas a través de las cuales los aprendices podrán desarrollar las competencias necesarias para desempeñarse efectivamente en otros entornos comunicativos diferentes al propio. (MEN,2016, OPP, p. 24.)

Los objetivos principales de la educación para la ciudadanía global son según la UNESCO: Estimular a los aprendices a analizar críticamente situaciones y conflictos de la vida real para identificar posibles soluciones de manera creativa e innovadora (MEN, 2016, OPP, p.24)

Embarking on the descriptive stage, the preceding passages mention the Common European Framework (CEFR) and the UNESCO, the first being a document produced by the European Council and the second one an international organization focused on education at a global level. The first passage grants significant authority to the CEFR as a global benchmark for language teaching including in Colombia which implicitly proposes that this framework holds the power to dictate curricular inclusions for foreign language education. Similarly, as a globally recognized organization, also exerts an influence on the decisions made for this curriculum. When interpreting these fragments through the lens of the theoretical framework it is apparent that there is an ideological factor in shaping literacy within these documents since “literacy's features and consequences, taken together, can only be understood as a particular ideologically loaded formulation which serves to maintain and justify the dominance of those in power” (Auerbach, 1991, p.74). In this regard, the literacy promoted in the curricular proposal is a formulation deeply embedded within the agendas of CEFR and UNESCO.

Likewise, the curriculum outlines provide a more comprehensive and detailed account of the influence and articulation of the CEFR:

El Currículo Sugerido de inglés de sexto a undécimo (MEN, 2016) propone una “reasignación de los niveles del MCER en los grados escolares 6° a 11°, dada la reconocida dificultad de tener procesos sólidos de formación en lengua extranjera durante la primaria” (MEN, 2016, MAI, p.30)

In this section, for example, despite recognizing the difficulties when trying to articulate this framework, the CEFR continues to be given precedence and credibility in defining English language proficiency levels even for elementary school. Demonstrating again that some powerful external exigences need to be achieved.

Later the curricular outlines explain the integration made for elementary school claiming the following:

En correspondencia con lo anterior, el Currículo Sugerido para Transición y Primaria propone el desarrollo de un nivel preparatorio pre A1 de la lengua en los grados transición a tercero, y un trabajo inicial en el nivel principiante A1.1 en los grados cuarto y quinto. Esto quiere decir que, durante estos grados, las tareas y proyectos a realizar permitirán el desarrollo de bases comunicativas (lingüísticas, pragmáticas, y sociolingüísticas), con procesos de aprestamiento en las cuatro habilidades de la lengua con el fin de que los estudiantes puedan estar preparados para iniciar el proceso propuesto por el currículo de grados sexto a once. (MEN, 2016, MAI, p.31)

As a consequence, English literacy in primary education is also mediated by these external guidelines, thereby aligning with the requirements of this framework. Additionally, as Fairclough (2013) also suggests, unexamined institutional practices frequently embed underlying assumptions that, whether overtly or subtly, reinforce prevailing power structures. Consequently, the incorporation of these guidelines from international institutions reinforces and legitimizes certain practices originating from dominant groups, thereby maintaining specific power structures.

Underrepresented literacy perspectives

Whereas there is a strong preference for promoting functional, discursive and ideological literacy, there is less consideration given to sociocultural literacy, and a total disregard for decolonial literacy.

For instance, according to the following passage, the curriculum seems to struggle to address the role of the context and does not afford it in the same level as it does to global

imperatives, revealing a predominant emphasis on functional literacy to the detriment to the detriment of sociocultural literacy by giving less importance to situated literacy practices:

un diseño curricular sugerido que recoja y dé respuesta tanto a las necesidades del mundo globalizado como a las particularidades contextuales de las instituciones en los entornos rurales o urbanos en los que se encuentren. (MEN,2016, OPP, p. 21)

Initially, taking into account the sociocultural dimension, a tension seems to emerge between the global agenda and sociocultural considerations. In this sense, the curriculum's focus remains ambiguous, as it emphasizes global needs by explicitly using the term “needs” while referring to the Colombian context with “particularities”, therefore, there is ambiguity and asymmetry between the two aspects as the term “needs” denotes a pressing requirement that must be fulfilled whereas “particularities” diminishes the significance of the contextual element and weakens its position within the statement. Building upon the foundation established above, as an interpretation the statement appears to prioritize a functional literacy geared towards global objectives while relegating sociocultural literacy, defined as the use of literacy within social and cultural contexts, to a more peripheral position. The subsequent pedagogical guideline further exemplifies this vague tension between the global and the contextual aspects:

El enfoque sociocultural para el aprendizaje del inglés, en este currículo, busca promover el desarrollo de la lengua en ambientes colaborativos que favorecen la interacción de los niños y niñas con sus semejantes y en escenarios que son conocidos, y que pueden ir expandiéndose hasta alcanzar la interacción con el mundo (MEN,2016, OPP,p.27)

When describing this assertion, the word “sociocultural” is explicitly mentioned, thereby centering on familiar settings that allude to the specific characteristics of the Colombian context. However, it seems that such particularities are only emphasized when they can be “extended” and prove useful in interactions with the wider world. This hints at a limited view of the cultural context, as if it was only valuable when it can be applied to universal standards. Accordingly, while the sociocultural literacy is acknowledged within the curriculum, it is given less prominence as greater emphasis is placed on skills that are perceived as more functional in the world.

However, the following affirmation taken from the pedagogical guidelines, explicitly references Vygotsky’s work that contributes to the sociocultural theory and makes emphasis on the context for the learning process: La teoría sociocultural de Vygotsky (1978) se basa, entonces en la influencia del contexto para el desarrollo del niño o la niña” (MEN,2016, OPP, p. 27)

To highlight the significance of sociocultural literacy within the context of learning, key elements are quoted in the pedagogical guidelines. However, while this aspect is considered important, it does not receive equal emphasis in the curricular grids, with only one kindergarten goal explicitly addressing it. Of all of the modules proposed in the curricular grids, the following is the one that offers the most proximate approach to a sociocultural understanding of literacy:

Figure 4

Performance indicators, module 4 for kindergarten

TIEMPO SUGERIDO: 18-20 horas (Por periodo académico)

META:

Mencionar en inglés su rol actual y futuro dentro de la comunidad, reconociendo su identidad cultural

SITUACIÓN DE APRENDIZAJE: ME RECONOZCO COMO MIEMBRO DE UNA COMUNIDAD

El módulo 4 busca fortalecer en los niños y niñas su reconocimiento como miembro importante de una comunidad (familia, escuela, y grupo de amigos) y su expresión en inglés. El propósito de las experiencias propuestas es que puedan articularse para fomentar la autoestima de las niñas y los niños al tiempo que les permita soñar y proyectarse como

actores visibles dentro de una comunidad a futuro, empezar la construcción de un proyecto de vida. A través de juegos de roles y otras propuestas que involucren activamente a los niños y niñas se pretende desarrollar sus habilidades interpersonales, su imaginación y creatividad, con miras a promover procesos de transformación personal y social.

INDICADORES DE DESEMPEÑO

SABER	SABER HACER	SABER SER	SABER APRENDER
1. Identifica de manera oral vocabulario en inglés relacionado con costumbres de su familia. 2. Reconoce de manera oral léxico en inglés sobre representaciones culturales de su comunidad: música, lengua, tradiciones. 3. Reconoce de manera oral léxico en inglés sobre roles y trabajos en la comunidad.	1. Describe en inglés de manera breve y sencilla algunas costumbres familiares. 2. Intercambia información sencilla en inglés sobre costumbres y tradiciones familiares. 3. Comprende textos orales descriptivos sencillos en inglés sobre roles y trabajos en la comunidad. 4. Responde en inglés preguntas simples previamente estudiadas sobre información personal.	1. Reconoce su identidad cultural como miembro de su familia. 2. Aprecia las diferencias culturales con sus compañeros y compañeras. 3. Valora las enseñanzas de sus abuelos. 4. Se proyecta como miembro importante de su comunidad.	Habilidades siglo XXI Se inicia en la comprensión de la interacción entre las partes de un todo (sí mismo - familia - sociedad). Estrategias de aprendizaje Usa tarjetas (flashcards) para recordar palabras que aprende en inglés

(MEN,2016, MAI, p. 76)

A description of this section reveals terms such as cultural identity and community, often accompanied by the possessive pronoun 'their,' thereby emphasizing the unique characteristics of each student. As a consequence, in contrast to previous sections, this passage delves more deeply into the principles of sociocultural literacy since this view “considers and seeks to understand the cultural context within which children have grown and developed. It seeks to understand how children have learned to process, interpret and encode their world” (Pérez, 2011, p.4). As evidenced in this module, there is a keen interest

in exploring children's unique ways of understanding the world, taking into account their sociocultural contexts, which is a hallmark of sociocultural literacy.

Based on the previous premises, this study finds that both documents of the curriculum promote the development of sociocultural literacy. However, there is a more pronounced emphasis on fostering functional and discursive literacy, aligning with global guidelines which indicates that while a sociocultural perspective is included, its representation is less prominent. By examining the functional, discursive, and ideological dimensions of literacy, this research exposes a significant gap in the consideration of decolonial literacy. To begin with, the decolonial literacy perspective critiques educational policies, particularly those related to literacy and English language teaching, for their overemphasis on coverage and speed. Rather than asking how to quickly teach more people to read or how to accelerate English language acquisition among the individuals of a country, a decolonial approach would question the purposes and contents of literacy (Hernández-Zamora, 2019). The following portions taken from the pedagogical guidelines highlight the imperative for these policies to have a universal impact across the country:

Asegurar, a través de esta propuesta de currículo general, un tratamiento equitativo para toda la población y con especial acento a la que está “expuesta a la exclusión, la pobreza y los efectos de la inequidad y la violencia de todo orden. (MEN, 2016, OPP, p.23)

La equidad ha sido establecida como uno de los pilares en el Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2014-2018, con la cual se “contempla una visión de desarrollo humano integral en una sociedad con oportunidades para todos” (p. 1). Siguiendo esta línea de pensamiento, la equidad dentro de esta propuesta curricular parte de una visión de la educación con un enfoque de derechos (MEN, 2016, OPP, p.30)

By first focusing on the textual features, an emphasis on the word “equity” is evident in the excerpts indicating a propensity for the content of the suggested curriculum to reach all Colombians, with a particular priority or “special emphasis”, as stated in the first assertion on the population that is subject to exclusion and poverty. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that the curriculum, as outlined in the first statement seeks to “ensure” access or impact for the entire population, with a particular focus on specific populations. In this context, “ensure” could imply both the protection and guarantee of content delivery to these populations, as well as a certain imposition of what all populations should acquire. Notably, the “special emphasis” placed on excluded populations, whose identities remain unspecified, suggests an urgent need for English language instruction among these groups.

According to the previous description and in contrast to previous interpretations of functional, ideological, and discursive literacy related to global aspects, this inquiry suggests that the curriculum truly ignores the possibility of a decolonial approach to literacy. Although excluded populations, victims of inequity and poverty, are mentioned superficially, the idea of how these populations could benefit from a curriculum focused on their needs is not well developed. A genuine opening to decolonial literacy would elucidate how the contents of this curriculum would empower those ambiguously defined as an excluded population given that a decolonial literate individual reappropriates language to construct their own meanings and to author their identity within the world (Hernández-Zamora, 2019). Consequently, in a potential reformulation of this curriculum, there should be a more precise and detailed development concerning vulnerable populations exposed to exclusion and the effects of multifaceted inequity. It needs to explicitly address how English language learning could reduce this inequity gap and clearly articulate the profound

significance of English acquisition for these groups, moving beyond mere superficial reflection.

Continuing with this line of thought regarding the empowerment of the subject, which is poorly reflected in the suggested curriculum there is an insistence that this curriculum be a general directive outlining the basic and minimum common content that any student must acquire throughout their English language learning process. The two documents present the following as illustrated by these examples:

Proponer un documento abierto que sirva de insumo para la discusión de las comunidades educativas, en torno a los aspectos comunes que deben guiar el desarrollo de las competencias comunicativas en inglés en las regiones, ciudades y municipios. (MEN, 2016, OPP, p.21)

Visibilizar los componentes curriculares y los contenidos básicos o enseñanzas mínimas comunes a los que tienen derechos los niños y niñas colombianos. La intención es estimular la discusión sobre las posibilidades de reorganizarlos y acoplarlos al contexto. (MEN, 2016, OPP, p, 21.)

Los Estándares básicos de competencia (EBC) han sido definidos por el Ministerio de Educación como los criterios claros y públicos que permiten establecer cuáles son los niveles básicos de calidad” que deben alcanzar todos los niños, niñas y jóvenes del país. Estos estándares presentan “una expectativa de aprendizaje para desarrollarse en un lapso largo de tiempo”, es decir que no se establecen para ser alcanzados en un grado específico. Los Derechos Básicos de Aprendizaje, por otro lado, son definidos como un conjunto de saberes y habilidades

acerca de lo fundamental que cada estudiante debe aprender al finalizar el grado.
(MEN,2016, MAI, p.39)

To begin with the description, words such as 'minimum,' 'basic,' and 'common' are identified as being associated with the long-term and short-term learning outcomes expected within this curriculum. In this sense, the use of these terms indicates, firstly, that there are essential criteria to be followed, but also suggests a conception of learning as a process of acquiring a predetermined set of basic skills and knowledge implying that there is no need to go beyond the established curriculum, suggesting a lack of ambition to foster deeper learning or critical thinking. In addition, the so-called fundamental learning content and pedagogical approaches demonstrate a lack of consideration for the identities of students, without providing any justification for how this content might be either meaningful or beneficial to them. It is also pertinent to note the absence of explicit information regarding the basis for these fundamental contents and teachings. It is unclear whether they are the product of a rigorous analysis of national exigencies or, as suggested in other sections of the text, a response to exclusively global imperatives.

The preceding description reveals a colonial gaze by describing the content and teaching as 'minimal' or 'basic' implies a standardization of knowledge that risks irrelevance and meaninglessness for some, particularly marginalized communities whose depiction within the curriculum is minimal and ambiguous which reinforces the existing power dynamics, privileging certain forms of knowledge while marginalizing others. Moreover, the lack of transparency surrounding the principles guiding the curriculum's core content raises concerns about whose interests are being served, potentially those of external powers or global agendas as explicitly stated within the curriculum. As for this section, a crucial aspect of any curriculum or educational document reform should be to abandon the notion

of offering minimal learning content. Such a designation inadvertently signals a lack of commitment to fostering deep and meaningful learning experiences. Instead, the focus ought to be on developing situated and intentionally crafted content that significantly resonates with the students' contexts and needs.

To conclude, a final argument regarding the curriculum's disregard for a decolonial literacy approach is the superficial manner in which learning objectives are framed, particularly through the use of verbs that suggest a shallow understanding of the discourses intended for students to internalize:

META:

Reconocer y expresar con lenguaje sencillo en inglés, normas y responsabilidades para la prevención de problemas de salud en su contexto local.” (MEN, MAI,2016, p.154)

META:

Identificar y expresar en inglés los efectos de sus acciones en su medio ambiente local (barrio, corregimiento, municipio, ciudad), usando frases sencillas. (MEN, MAI,2016, p .170)

Beginning with the description, the use of verbs such as “to recognize” or “to identify” implies a passive approach to information acquisition, focusing on rote memorization. From this view, students are expected to simply accept established norms for health and environmental issues without accounting for alternative perspectives on, for example, diverse cultural viewpoints or sustainability.

As a result, within the interpretation it is worth saying that decolonial literacy is not being considered within the curriculum since some literacies teach only reading the word that is to say, understanding the literal meaning of words but do not really teach reading the world, which empower people to express their own ideas, write their personal or social history, or become agents of individual and social change (Zamora, 2018). Given the above, by focusing solely on superficial recognition and expression reveals a basic understanding of health and environmental norms, without connecting to the world surrounding the students. On the contrary, it would perpetuate the passive assimilation of “useful actions”, but without a real transformative impact which underscores the point made by Zamora (2018) that true educational projects cannot simply offer “immediate emotional comfort” but must empower individuals to confront systemic issues that dominate their lives. This is particularly relevant when considering vulnerable and marginalized populations, for whom the curriculum lacks clear guidance on how issues on social justice, equity and systemic oppression should be addressed. In that case, such topics require to enable students to understand, for instance, how systemic inequalities contribute to disparities in health outcomes.

To further illustrate, the curricular grids include another module addressing health issues, specifically healthy diet and habits:

Figure 5

Performance indicators, module 1 for second grade



(MEN, MAI,2016, p.120)

Previous interpretations have made it clear that the curriculum is interested in guiding the acquisition of linguistic skills through certain discourses that promote values and beliefs. As for this case, there is discourse of wealthy living oriented towards good nutrition and healthy habits and there is a performance indicator that aims for the learner to promote fundamental actions of good bodily and nutritional habits to have a healthy life, which, if read superficially, indicates a positive intention. Nonetheless, regarding the effects that this might bring to the so-called marginalized population, the discussion

regarding how to approach such topics requires a more critical lens. Many things could be questioned since these intentions will not have a real echo and impact, knowing, for example, that in Colombia 54.2% of households suffer from food insecurity (Garzón &Castillo, 2022), which would refer to a vulnerable population. So, how can this curriculum ensure that a student promotes fundamental actions for the practice of good bodily and nutritional habits to have a healthy life or that they can say "I have healthy habits". In this view, the emphasis on “wealthy living” and individual responsibility exacerbates the disconnection between its aims and the realities of marginalized students. This kind of narrative can be alienating and disempowering for learners whose communities struggle with food. A decolonial literacy approach would consider other ways to address this topic highlighting the structural factors that creates barriers to the access of health and well-being so children can reflect about the external factors that influence healthy eating and lifestyles, extending beyond individual choices.

Conclusions and Implications

This research study sought to analyze the conceptualization of literacy within the suggested curriculum for English instruction from kindergarten to fifth grade. The analysis was conducted using critical discourse analysis, following the methodology proposed by Fairclough (2013) aiming to respond the initial research question *What are the predominant and underrepresented literacy perspectives within the suggested curriculum for ELT in Colombia?* For this, an initial literature review was undertaken to explore the concept of literacy considering literacy as a social phenomenon with profound impacts on individuals within society. Accordingly, five distinct perspectives of literacy were selected: functional, discursive, ideological, sociocultural, and decolonial. Once a solid understanding of the concept was established, the curriculum documents were subjected to a detailed reading having in mind the methodology proposed by Fairclough which involved selecting segments of the archive that demonstrated relevance to the concept of literacy for afterwards paying close attention to the vocabulary employed and its potential to reveal and underlying of literacy advocated in the curriculum.

Thus, in alignment with the first objective, *to analyze the predominant types of literacy perspectives promoted in the suggested curriculum for ELT in Colombia* it was determined that the curriculum predominantly emphasizes functional literacy, followed by discursive literacy, and then ideological literacy. In the first place, it is concluded that the curriculum mainly embraces a functional literacy perspective intrinsically linked to the phenomenon of globalization, with the aim of equipping students with the necessary skills to engage effectively within a global society. Secondly, the curriculum is also found to incorporate a discursive literacy, which primarily centers on the acquisition of specific discourses that shape beliefs, values, behaviors, and ultimately, identities that may or may

not align with the discourses initially encountered within students' homes and communities. Finally, in accordance with the first objective, a tendency towards literacy as ideological construct is apparent which is demonstrated by the curriculum's adherence to the interests of certain international organizations, notably the Common European Framework and UNESCO.

As a result, in fulfillment to the second objective of this research, *to determine the literacy perspectives that predominate within the suggested curriculum,* the findings confirm that functional, discursive, and ideological literacies are indeed those that prevail within the curriculum. This conclusion is supported by the recurrent use of key terminology throughout the curriculum, which highlights the imperative to adapt to a global society, the importance of acquiring identity-constructing discourses, and the reliance on international guidelines in the curriculum's design. Similarly, the curriculum demonstrates a weak integration of sociocultural literacy. While isolated segments touch upon sociocultural factors, a persistent conflict emerges between global imperatives and context-specific requirements. As mentioned before, the global perspective predominates, with a notable scarcity of curricular provisions for cultivating sociocultural literacy. In addition, despite acknowledging the importance of supporting disadvantaged populations, the analysis reveals a complete disregard for decolonial literacy since the curriculum's stated goals and directives prioritize adherence to a global framework, failing to adequately respond to the unique needs of marginalized populations within the country, whose lived experiences differ substantially from those envisioned by global agendas.

Finally, in response to the concluding objective, *'To unearth the implications of underrepresenting some literacy perspectives within the suggested curriculum,'* it is concluded that the dominant literacies promote a superficial acquisition, one that is merely

declarative. These literacies aim for students to recognize and memorize certain patterns, which may or may not be applicable to their lives and experiences. Conversely, the inclusion of sociocultural and decolonial literacies could foster a more critical literacy, connecting students to their environments and raising awareness of relevant issues that affect them cultivating a student with heightened consciousness and disposition toward transformative action in their communities, regions and even the country. The omission of sociocultural and decolonial literacy from the curriculum precludes the equitable benefit of the entire Colombian population, and furthermore, presents the potential for curricular contents to alienate and disempower marginalized groups.

As for the social implications, taking into account that the most outstanding aspect revealed in this study is the excessive consideration of functional literacy, there is a need to problematize and propose certain consequences of favoring this type of literacy, in Fairclough's words (2013) "Linguistic phenomena are social in the sense that whenever people speak, or listen or write or read, they do so in ways which are determined socially and have social effects" (p. 19). Thus, the design of this curriculum, encompassing its linguistic features and the inherent ideological implications highlighted before, will have social effects, especially for the target population: Colombian primary school students.

To commence, although it is true that one of the main objectives of education is to prepare students to engage the best possible in a society that is now global, this intemperate contemplation can cause a certain disconnection to the immediate reality of the students, since certain guidance is laid down on primarily how to act in certain situations that have global implications, it is not given relevance then to think about how to intervene in the everyday environment. The aforementioned can be problematic because the result may be students who can distinguish superficially what has to be said or done in certain situations

that might be related or not to their daily lives especially when it comes to marginalized populations, it would be more about receiving orientations that they will eventually never apply, and also not allowing them to reflect and take sides on issues which really affect their environments and themselves as individuals. The consequence is an individual who is not concerned with what happens in their environment, nor in their region, nor even in their country because what has to be assisted in the first place according to this curriculum is only to certain needs that can be present or not within the student's life. This, in turn, may result in complete disengagement with the proposed class activities, as the material taught lacks of practical application, particularly marginalized populations whose contextual realities and social dynamics differ substantially from the paradigms presented within the broader societal framework. Thus, an emphasis on functional, discursive, and ideological literacies disproportionately benefits students whose contextual realities align closely with the paradigms of a globalized society, thereby facilitating their effective navigation of social dynamics within which they are already embedded. Therefore, the suggested curriculum in its present form is incapable of fostering equity or empowering students from marginalized communities and will be at the end ineffective impeding not only the acquisition of the values, beliefs, and behaviors promoted by the curriculum, but also the acquisition of English itself, as language learning is most effective when content is relevant to students' lived experiences. On another note, if the Ministry of Education seeks to foster genuine equity and serve vulnerable populations, it is imperative to develop targeted pedagogical approaches that demonstrate how English language acquisition can specifically address their needs. Moreover, the curriculum should be designed with content and objectives that reflect national realities, rather than solely adhering to broad international frameworks. In other words, it is imperative to cultivate a balanced approach to literacies,

extending beyond mere functional literacy to encompass decolonial sociocultural literacy, thereby fostering more comprehensive and critically engaged students.

Now then, from this teacher-researcher's perspective, it is important to highlight that as a result of exploring the types of literacy addressed within the suggested curriculum, it was possible to first broaden the conceptualization of literacy as a social phenomenon that impacts society, which is of great relevance to almost any teacher, especially language teachers who contribute directly to the literate formation of individuals, demonstrating that literacy is posed and re-posed according to various perspectives that can be analyzed at a curricular level. Likewise, this experience has allowed for an account of the analysis of the power that discourses have in shaping ways of thinking, worldviews, and ultimately subjectivities, which suggests a great responsibility for the practicing teacher with their students since it is the teacher who ultimately transmits practices and representations that students can observe and internalize. For this reason, it is important to critically examine guidelines, educational policies, orientations from foreign institutions, or even teaching materials created by outsiders that arrive at schools, often as unquestionable references that must be followed. Finally, bearing in mind the concept of literacy and its social impact also cultivates an expanded consciousness regarding the meaning of teaching and learning a foreign language. In particular, during my English teaching practicum with second-grade students, immersion in the various literacy theories explored in this study prompted me to reflect critically on the literacy being promoted within the classroom. This was particularly evident in the use of didactic materials, which frequently clashed with local discourses that could have been more relevant to the students. For instance, the inclusion of vocabulary within units on food, outdoor activities, and city locations often featured elements not aligned with the children's context, rendering them difficult to comprehend. This led me to

question the type of literacy being fostered in the classroom, which seemed to emphasize foreign concepts associated with global ideals rather than the immediate surroundings of the children.

In concluding this chapter, the primary limitations of this study are articulated, offering valuable considerations for future research. Initially, this investigation confines its scope to a segment of the suggested curriculum for primary. The broader bilingualism policy framework encompasses additional documents that could provide a more comprehensive understanding of literacy conceptualizations within Colombian bilingual policies. Secondly, this study exclusively analyzes written curricular materials, omitting an exploration of their interpretation and implementation within actual Colombian classroom settings, a facet that could be addressed in a more extensive study. Finally, it is imperative to acknowledge that, in accordance with Fairclough's (2013) tenets, critical discourse analysis is inherently interpretive and subject to the researcher's biases and perspectives, consequently, this study presents a substantiated viewpoint regarding the conceptualization of literacy as embedded within the curriculum.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Analysis of OPP document

Fragment	Description: Vocabulary/Grammar	Interpretation
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(1) es necesario ahora el desarrollo de un Currículo Sugerido para Transición y Primaria con sus respectivos Derechos Básicos de Aprendizaje, que direccionen sus esfuerzos al aprestamiento y al Desarrollo de habilidades comunicativas para un nivel Pre-A1 y A1 inicial, para así garantizar el mejor desempeño posible de los niños y niñas, una vez ingresen a la Educación Básica Secundaria. El nivel Pre-A1 se considera, en esta propuesta, como la plataforma de preparación y aprestamiento que permita a los niños y niñas una familiarización con el idioma, y les brinde herramientas comunicativas iniciales para afrontar el aprendizaje del inglés una vez ingresen a la básica secundaria.

By saying “ es necesario ahora el Desarrollo de un Currículo Sugerido” the statement highlights that it seems that currently the development of a curriculum for teaching English it is utmost importance at the present time. As if nowadays one had to learn new demands that didn’t exist before and earlier . This then reveals that there are certain things that need to be learned which are currently relevant regardless the context.

“que direccionen sus esfuerzos al aprestamiento y al desarrollo de habilidades comunicativas para un nivel Pre-A1 y A1 inicial”

The statement refers to the intention of the curriculum to focus the effort on “ aprestamiento” (tightening) , that is to say, in school terms a preparation for the learning of other things at more advanced levels of school, mentioning later for secondary grades, that is to say, children will have to learn certain skills to be prepared for others in high school in order to fulfill the demands of the present time when they finish the school.

“y al desarrollo de habilidades comunicativas para un nivel Pre-A1 y A1 inicial”

The statement also refers to the development of communicative skill having as reference the Common European Framework, realizing that it is necessary to comply with the established at an international level.

Taking into account the descriptive paragraph and the theory of literacy considered this statement draws on functional literacy, since it only looks for the student to acquire English abilities that will be useful for a future process and that meets international requirements.

(2) Es fundamental partir de la propuesta inicial de 6 a 11 y así presentar a los y las docentes del país, un diseño curricular sugerido que recoja y dé respuesta tanto a las necesidades del mundo globalizado, como a las particularidades contextuales de las instituciones en los entornos rurales o urbanos en los que se encuentren, brindándoles una carta de ruta que pueda guiar su práctica pedagógica y que, además, se convierta en una herramienta de formación para ellos, teniendo en cuenta las realidades de los y las docentes de primaria del país.	The statement makes reference to both the globalized world (mundo globalizado) and the particular context (particularidades contextuales en los entornos rurales y urbanos). By mentioning first that this curriculum seeks to meet the needs of a globalized world, shows how intensely their efforts are directed to globalized needs, giving a secondary role to the particularities of the country.	According to the criteria of analysis, this statement draws mainly on a perspective of functional literacy since it aims with the application of the curriculum to meet primarily the demands of the globalized world and secondly those of each particular context, so that students acquire certain communicative skills in English to thrive in a globalized context.
(3) Proponer un documento abierto que sirva de insumo para la discusión de las comunidades educativas, en torno a los aspectos comunes que deben guiar el desarrollo de las competencias comunicativas en inglés en las regiones, ciudades y municipios.	Even though this a suggested curriculum, which somehow takes away the whole term of mandatory, this statement manifests that there are some common aspects that must (deben) guide the communicative skills in different parts of Colombia regardless the location. By using this modal verb, the curriculum is then establishing there is common framework that institutions must follow.	On one hand, this fragment adheres to a vision of literacy from an ideological point of view, given that literacy as an ideological conception is always defined from positions of power. In this case, the Ministry of Education establishes common guidelines for learning and teaching English that apparently should not change around the country. On the other hand, this statement adheres again to a vision of functional literacy since it suggests that there could be certain common skills that every Colombian should acquire.

(4) Visibilizar los componentes curriculares y los contenidos básicos o enseñanzas mínimas comunes a los que tienen derechos los niños y niñas colombianos. La intención es estimular la discusión sobre las posibilidades de reorganizarlos y acoplarlos al contexto.	By saying “visibilizar los componentes curriculares y los contenidos básicos o enseñanzas mínimas” it seems that the ministry of education recognize that Children must have access to the minimal components so they are well-educated. However, the usage of terms likes “básicos” y “mínimos” suggests that education could go further, in this case English learning. By saying that there are possibilities to reorganize and adapt the components according to the context, it is warning at the same time that these components must not be ignored.	The fragment reveals both visions of functional and ideological. Ideological because there is a stance on the common and basic aspect surrounding English learning. And functional because the terms basic and minimum also refer to forms of literacy that will be the most commonly needed.
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Appendice 2. Analysis of MAI document

Fragment	Description: Vocabulary/Grammar	Interpretation
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En la parte superior de la sección de alcance y secuencia se presentan los Derechos Básicos de Aprendizaje (DBA) para cada grado, los cuales son saberes y habilidades claves que indican lo mínimo que los estudiantes deben aprender en cada grado escolar, desde transición hasta quinto, para el área de inglés (ver cartilla de DBA para mayor información).	Minimum, 'basic,' and 'common' are identified as being associated with the long-term and short-term learning outcomes expected within this curriculum. In this sense, the use of these terms indicates, firstly, that there are essential criteria to be followed, but also suggests a conception of learning as a process of acquiring a predetermined set of basic skills and knowledge implying that there is that there is no need to go beyond the established curriculum, suggesting a lack of ambition to foster deeper learning or critical thinking.	Ignoring decolonial literacy
El primero de ellos es el conjunto de ejes temáticos sobre los que se desarrollan las tareas y proyectos propuestos. Para Transición y Primaria, los ejes temáticos son: salud y vida, convivencia y paz, medio ambiente y sociedad, y una aldea global. Estos ejes se articulan de manera progresiva, conservando el elemento espiral del currículo. En cada grado se desarrollan cuatro módulos relacionados con dichos ejes temáticos.	The thematic axes correspond to topic integrated within the English learnin but that go beyond English, inding other ways of knowing within the English class.	As a result of the description, this can be understood as way of understanding literacy from a discursive view, because topic, like health and life are discourse , ways to understand the world.

Este documento muestra la progresión en el alcance y la secuencia de las metas sugeridas en esta propuesta curricular, tanto de forma horizontal como vertical. De esta manera, horizontalmente podemos notar que el alcance de las metas va desde un plano interno hacia un plano externo. Es decir, desde lo individual hacia lo colectivo; partiendo en transición desde lo personal, tocando luego el aula de clase para terminar después en la comunidad educativa y el entorno global en el grado quinto.	By linking curricular goals to the global environment (entorno global) , it is implied that education should cultivate citizens who are aware of the challenges and opportunities presented by an interconnected world. This involves developing competencies for a global scale	By emphasizing the global context, the curriculum primarily promotes a vision of functional literacy, whereby students must learn English to navigate the global environment effectively.
META: Seguir normas en inglés de cuidado propio y hacia los demás, al participar en juegos individuales y grupales.	The phrase 'to follow the rules' indicates the need to regulate certain behaviors in order to be accepted within a given context, in this particular case, when participating in individual and group games. In other words, English language learning provides a framework for students to behave appropriately in game contexts that are also suitable for their level and age, considering that this is a goal for kindergarden.	Considering the reason why kindergarten students (transición) are expected to follow rules, the fragment aligns with a view of functional literacy, as it merely expects students to follow a set of rules to navigate effectively in a play-based situation.

TIEMPO SUGERIDO:
15 min. (Dos períodos académicos)

META:

METAL
Mencionar en inglés su rol actual y futuro dentro de la comunidad, reconociendo su identidad cultural

SITUACIÓN DE APRENDIZAJE: ME RECONOZCO COMO MIEMBRO DE UNA COMUNIDAD

El módulo 4 busca fortalecer en los niños y niñas su reconocimiento como miembro importante de una comunidad [familia, escuela, y grupo de amigos] y su expresión en inglés. El propósito de las experiencias propuestas es que puedan articularse para fomentar la autoestima de las niñas y los niños al tiempo que les permita soñar y proyectarse como

actores visibles dentro de una comunidad a futuro, empezar la construcción de un proyecto de vida. A través de juegos de roles y otras propuestas que involucren activamente a los niños y niñas se pretende desarrollar sus habilidades interpersonales, su imaginación y creatividad, con miras a promover procesos de transformación personal y social.

INDICADORES DE DESEMPEÑO

SARFER

1. Identifica de manera oral vocabulario en inglés relacionado con costumbres de su familia.
2. Reconoce de manera oral léxico en inglés sobre representaciones culturales de su comunidad: música, lengua, tradiciones.
3. Reconoce de manera oral léxico en inglés sobre roles y trabajos en

SABER HACER

1. Describe en inglés de manera breve y sencilla algunas costumbres familiares.
2. Intercambia información sencilla en inglés sobre costumbres y tradiciones familiares.
3. Comprende textos orales descriptivos sencillos en inglés sobre roles y trabajos en la comunidad.
4. Responde en inglés preguntas simples previamente estudiadas sobre información personal.

SARER SFR

1. Reconoce su identidad cultural como miembro de su familia.
2. Aprecia las diferencias culturales con sus compañeros y compañeras.
3. Valora las enseñanzas de sus abuelos.
4. Se proyecta como miembro importante de su comunidad.

SABER APRENDER

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. Reconoce su identidad cultural como miembro de su familia.</p> <p>2. Aprecia las diferencias culturales con sus compañeros y compañeras.</p> <p>3. Valora las enseñanzas de sus abuelos.</p> <p>4. Se proyecta como miembro importante de su comunidad.</p> | <p>Habilidades siglo XXI</p> <p>Se incluye en la comprensión de la interacción entre las partes de un todo (sí mismo - familia - sociedad).</p> <p>Estrategias de aprendizaje</p> <p>Usa tarjetas (flashcards) para recordar palabras que aprende en inglés.</p> |
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Habilidades siglo XXI

Habilidades siglo XXI
Se inicia en la comprensión de la interacción entre las partes de un todo (sí mismo - familia - sociedad).

Estrategias de aprendizaje
Usa tarjetas (flashcards) para recordar palabras que aprende en inglés.

A description of this section reveals terms such as cultural identity and community, often accompanied by the possessive pronoun 'their,' thereby emphasizing the unique characteristics of each student.

In accordance with the description this passage delve into the principals of sociocultural literacy since this view “considers and seeks to understand the cultural context within which children have grown and developed. It seeks to understand how children have learned to process, interpret and encode their world”