



**Critical English language education (CELE): A situated collaborative didactic framework
in a Northern Colombian tourist area**

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Dedicatoria

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Resumen

Esta disertación la enfoco en la investigación decolonial de la enseñanza del inglés en Morindó Florida, una zona rural con potencial turístico del municipio de Puerto Escondido del norte de Colombia, la cual tiene un currículo globalizado que invisibiliza las voces y conocimientos locales. Utilizo la investigación-acción participativa a través de los lentes teóricos de tres categorías principales: literacidad crítica, diálogos interculturales y prácticas multimodales para responder a la pregunta de cómo un marco de enseñanza situado, hecho de manera colaborativa atiende las necesidades de los estudiantes.

Junto con los co-investigadores, caminé por las sendas de una inserción inicial, media y alta para recapturar las prácticas pedagógicas críticas existentes, identificar tensiones pedagógicas y co-construir un marco didáctico situado. Utilicé el análisis de documentos, entrevista, grupos de discusión y retorno sistemático. Identifiqué tres patrones emergentes principales en el análisis de datos: navegar por las restricciones institucionales, resonancia cultural y empoderamiento a través de las prácticas multimodales para desarrollar el marco didáctico basado en el conocimiento local, la agencia colaborativa y la re-existencia.

Este marco no es un modelo estático, sino una producción viva que responde dinámicamente a la realidad del territorio del norte de Colombia. Posiciona a los estudiantes como creadores de significado y al docente como un agente crítico de cambio. Esta investigación tiene implicaciones para la educación del inglés, pone en el centro las posibilidades pedagógicas del pensamiento fronterizo, la decolonialidad y la creación de significados multimodales en el desarrollo de materiales en contextos del Sur global. Me posiciono como una activista-educadora que visiona futuros ciclos de reflexión, acción y esperanza colectiva.

Palabras claves: literacidad crítica, pedagogía decolonial, diálogos interculturales críticos, prácticas multimodales, investigación-acción participativa y educación del inglés.

Abstract

I situated this dissertation on decolonial research on English language education in Morindó Florida, a prominent rural tourist region of the municipality of Puerto Escondido of the northern Colombia, characterized by a globalized curriculum that invisibilizes local voices and knowledge. I utilize participatory action research through the three major theoretical lenses informing my study: critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices. I aimed to answer how a situated didactic framework, designed collaboratively, can integrate critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices into English education to meet the needs of students in a northern Colombian tourist area. I walked alongside the co-researchers through an initial, middle, and high insertion to recapture existing critical pedagogical practices, identify pedagogical tensions, and co-construct a situated didactic framework. I used institutional document analysis, an interview, classroom work documents, discussion groups, and a systematic return of findings to collect the data, identifying three main emergent patterns in my data analysis: navigating institutional constraints, cultural resonance, and empowerment through multimodal practices. I used these three paths to develop the didactic framework based on local knowledge, collaborative agency, and re-existence.

The framework we produced is not a static model but a live production that dynamically responds to the reality of the northern Colombian territory. It positions the learners as meaning-makers and the teacher as a critical agent of change. The implications for English language education: pedagogical possibilities of border thinking, decoloniality, and multimodal meaning-making. They are central to materials development in Global South contexts. I position myself as an activist-educator and look forward to future cycles of reflection, action, and collective hope.

Key words: critical literacy, decolonial pedagogy, critical intercultural dialogues, multimodal practices, participatory action research, and English-language education.

Chapter One - English Education Hegemony: Resistance and Intercultural Oppressive Practices

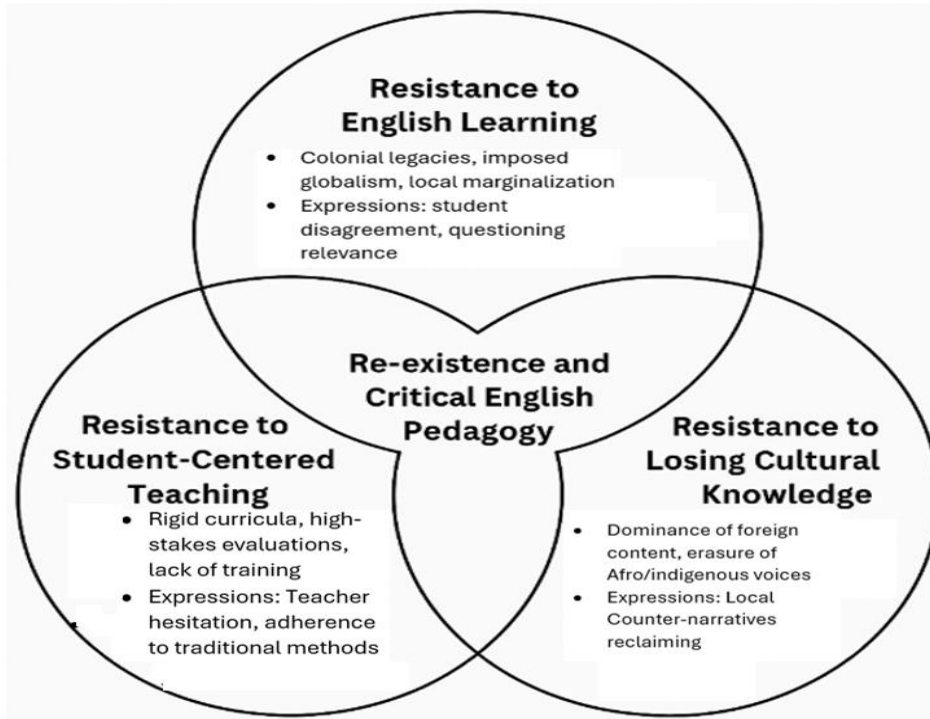
Once I had a conversation with a 'Cimarrona' in San Antero, Córdoba, who was selling 'bollo 'e coco' to some 'gringos' who were enjoying the sun on the beach. I noticed she barely understood the signs, so I approached her and asked her whether she would like to learn English; her answer was, '¿Por qué más bien no aprenden ellos el español?' From her gestures, I understood she did not feel much affection for foreigners.

I also remembered one of my students in 9th grade who got bored in my class because I asked him to write down some grammar-based sentences in his notebook. He argued that he did not see the relevance of learning English. Another anecdote is that many teachers from other subjects usually approach me to criticize English teachers when promoting Anglo-Saxon culture.

As the opening vignettes illustrated, resistance to learning English is a permanent source of tension in Colombia despite decades of policy initiatives (Mora et al., 2019; Usma, 2009). This resistance reflects tensions rooted in colonial legacies, cultural exclusion, and standardized curricula that overlook the lived realities of students, particularly in marginalized coastal regions. Traditional English teaching practices often perpetuate transmissive models and reaffirm cultural hegemony and dominant oppressive ideologies (Apple, 1993; Darder & Mirón, 2006; Giroux & McLaren, 1987; Shor, 1992), contributing to what Freire (1970) called a culture of silence.

In particular, textbook-centered instructions, still the primary resource for teaching and learning English (Castañeda & Rico, 2015; Davcheva & Sercu, 2005; Núñez-Pardo, 2018b; Tomlinson, 1998; Valencia Giraldo, 2006), tend to ignore the cultural complexity of learners, promoting a narrow view of language proficiency tied to foreign norms (Núñez-Pardo, 2018). This situation permits naturalization and perpetuation of isolated modes of being, understanding, learning, interacting, and coexisting, which exclude and marginalize people from peripheral nations, including those in Asia, Africa, and Latin America (Núñez-Pardo, 2020). For students in Northern Colombia's tourist areas, this disconnect between the curriculum and local knowledge leads to disengagement, exclusion, and the loss of cultural identity (Boriboon, 2004) and places them in an oppressive experience (Khamratana & Adunyarittigun, 2021). At the same time, many teachers face institutional constraints and training gaps that hinder their ability to adopt more student-centered or contextually relevant pedagogies (Thamraksa, 2003; Mora et al., 2022). They fail at encouraging learners to use language as a resource for the deconstruction of social issues (Mora et al., 2022) and lead to the use of literacy as a means of segregation (Freire & Macedo, 1987).

In other words, the unequal capital that marginalized students bring to their learning can reciprocally lead classroom teachers to domesticate them, both culturally and linguistically (Khamratana & Adunyarittigun, 2021). This situation is inconsistent with the current worldview of social reality (Rashidi, 2011). Figure 1 illustrates three types of resistance identified in this study—resistance to learning English, to student-centered teaching, and to the loss of cultural knowledge. These tensions arise from colonial legacy, rigid curricula, and the dominance of foreign content, and are manifested through student disengagement, teacher hesitation, and local counter-narratives.

Figure 1.*Intersecting Forms of Resistance in English Language Education*

(Source: Own elaboration)

The convergence in the three forms of resistance in Figure 1., underscores the need for a critical, situated, and re-existential approach to English language education in northern Colombia. At their intersection lies a space of re-existence and critical English pedagogy, where these resistances are acknowledged, problematized, and transformed into pedagogical action. In this way, I, as an educator from the Global South, position myself within a decolonial and emancipatory tradition (Mora et al., 2022; Walsh, 2010), and engage in academic activism aimed at reimagining English Language Education (ELE) not as an imperial project but as a practice of resistance, re-existence, and empowerment. This dissertation responds to these tensions by

proposing a critical and situated pedagogical alternative grounded in three intersected constructs: critical literacy, critical intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices.

I build on the work of Freire and Macedo (1987) to frame critical literacy not merely as decoding text but as a means of interrogating power, reclaiming voice, and fostering transformative social participation. I also provide a counter-hegemonic (Chisholm, 2015; Granados-Beltrán, 2016) space through critical interculturality (De Souza, 2010; Dussel, 2005; Maldonado-Torres, 2008; Nuñez-Pardo, 2020a; Quijano, 2000); Walsh, 2010), integrating a decolonial stance that values relationality and plural ways of knowing, rather than tokenistic celebrations of “otherness.” Finally, I expand, through multimodality (Mora, 2017, 2019), the communicative repertoire of students, allowing them to create meaningful, contextually grounded expressions of identity through images, sound, gesture, and digital media.

Together with a local teacher and an academic coordinator, I use a novel approach (Nagashima & Hunter, 2020) to co-construct a situated didactic framework that addresses the sociocultural and pedagogical challenges of teaching English in a northern Colombian tourist context. I use the participatory action research (PAR) process to center the lived experiences, languages, and literacies of Afro-descendant, Indigenous, and working-class students (DANE, 2018) whose cultural practices are often excluded from official curricula. By integrating critical literacy, intercultural dialogue, and multimodal practices, the framework aims to shift English teaching from a colonial instrument to a tool for critical thinking, cultural affirmation, and community transformation.

Ultimately, this study explores contested spaces marked by cultural, racial, and ethnic struggles (Baszile, 2006) and contributes to the call for English language education that resists hegemonic impositions and affirms the dignity of learners in the Global South. It envisions

classrooms not as sites of compliance, but as spaces of possibility, where students can reflect, question, and co-construct futures that honor both local knowledge and global dialogue.

From a socio-critical perspective, I use Critical English Language Education (CELE) to challenge dominant Anglo-Saxon paradigms in language education (Noriega, 2022), promote social change; enhance the critical consciousness of racialized students and their teachers (Bourdieu, 1991; McLaren, 1992; Janks, 1993; Freire & Macedo, 1995; Alim, 2005; Gramsci, 2011; Luke & Dooley, 2011; hooks, 2012) and resist standardized norms (Rosa & Flores, 2015, 2017) that keep inequality going (Smith, 2019), particularly in Northern Colombian tourist areas.

The setbacks of the hegemonic curriculum are widespread in Latin America (Cahapay, 2020), and it also includes a pronounced gender gap in English proficiency (English Proficiency Index, 2022), what underscores the intersectionality of educational inequities, pointing to the need for inclusive and equitable English language education practices that consider racial and gender disparities. In the case of Colombia, the current bilingualism policies, which follow the Basic Standards of Foreign Language Skills linked to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), are also criticized for forcing outside ideas and methods that make both students and teachers uncomfortable while ignoring local knowledge (Usma, 2009; Mora et al., 2019) and marginalizing local identities and needs. Therefore, it is crucial for English education to move beyond viewing it merely as an economic asset or industry. Instead, adopting critical and emancipatory perspectives can transform English education into a tool for meaningful cultural exchange, reconciliation, and community empowerment. This approach addresses local realities and social justice better by integrating traditional knowledge and critical practices into the curriculum, fostering genuine intercultural dialogue, and supporting the unique linguistic heritage of the community while enhancing English proficiency.

This dissertation aims to transform English Language Education (ELE) through a critical approach that integrates critical thinking into English education, transcends hegemonic practices (Bianchi, 2009), and empowers those who employ critical research methods in contemporary (Ateljevic et al., 2007), digital education (Comber, 2013). The purpose of this qualitative study, grounded in participatory action research principles, is threefold: (a) to characterize the praxis of a teacher in relation to the critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices that support English language education in a northern Colombian tourist area; (b) to identify the key elements that enable the construction of a situated didactic framework that integrates critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices in English language education in a northern Colombian tourist area; and (c) to collaboratively configure a situated didactic framework that transforms English language education by integrating critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices to meet the needs of students in a northern Colombian tourist area.

To do so, I propose three research questions:

1. How does a teacher in a northern Colombian tourist area incorporate critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices into English language education?
2. What are the key elements necessary for constructing a situated didactic framework of a pedagogical practice that integrates critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices in English language education in a northern Colombian tourist area?
3. How can a situated didactic framework designed collaboratively integrate critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices into English language education to meet the needs of students in a northern Colombian tourist area?

To achieve these objectives, I designed and implemented a three-phase PAR process with a public school teacher and an academic coordinator in a tourist region of Northern Colombia. The

phases correspond to levels of practice insertion and reflection: The initial insertion included the diagnostic event, where we could identify dominant discourses and tensions within English language education, and examined the current pedagogic landscape through documentary analysis and the teacher's ideological perspectives. The middle insertion focused on identifying practices in the classroom and students' voices through reflection groups and students' multimodal productions. Finally, high insertion was a process of a collaborative construction of a situated didactic framework through critical dialogue, pedagogical experimentation, and co-reflection sessions. These phases were not only methodological pathways but also opportunities for enacting critical literacy, intercultural dialogue, and multimodality in practice. We did not consider the objectives as isolated tasks, as they were intertwined processes of meaning, travelling through recursive cycles of reflection, action, and transformation. By preparing ourselves in this way, we ensured the study would remain situated in the actual realities of the classroom while theorizing toward broader possibilities for pedagogical development.

The next section addresses a recent overview of the relevant categories for this dissertation: Critical literacy pedagogy in English language education, critical intercultural dialogue in English language education for students in a northern Colombian tourist area, and multimodal practices for social justice and equity in English language education.

A Recent Overview of Pedagogical Considerations for Critical English Language Education

As an English teacher working in a context where students often struggle to see the relevance of English and based on the identified needs in the research questions, I began confronting practices that helped me avoid imposing a language that overshadows local identities and instead teach English in ways that bridge cultural divides while upholding and celebrating my students' cultural identities, intersecting critical literacy with intercultural principles.

In the following paragraphs, I synthesize scientific studies on critical and decolonial pedagogy in English Language Education (ELE) by georeferencing publications across international, national, and local contexts. I started this systematic review following Boolean searches in electronic databases (JSTOR, SAGE, Education Research, ScienceDirect, Dialnet, Google Scholar, ERIC, Taylor & Francis, Redalyc, and Scielo) using keywords such as critical, English, language, teaching, tourist, context, and education. This first search resulted in 456 publications, which became 99 documents after reading abstracts, introductions, or skimming to assess relevance to critical literacy development processes and the purpose of the study. The final selection included 48 documents related to critical literacy pedagogy (CLP), 15 to critical interculturality, 24 to criticality in tourism education, and 12 to multimodality. From 2000 to 2023, 2021 saw the most studies.

All consulted documents were qualitative, using methodologies like participatory action research, autoethnography, duo ethnography, critical ethnography, case studies, and counter-narrative. Data sources included focus groups, individual interviews, class plans, video recordings, class recounts, in-depth interviews, documentary analysis, discussions, surveys, questionnaires, autobiographies, memory work, diary writing, and group discussions.

Critical Literacy Pedagogy in English Language Education: (Anti) Hegemonic Practices and Social Justice

Critical Pedagogy (CP) has been studied in different educational contexts for decades (Lankshear & McLaren, 1993b; Pandya & Ávila, 2014; Comber & Simpson, 2001) and is evident in countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the U.S.A., and the U.K. In English education, CP is manifested in critical literacy, critical language awareness, critical reading, and critical writing (Lin, 2000). Critical literacy in English language education is about exposing unequal power relations and enabling students to begin to understand how their use of language and grammatical choices generate reality and social identity and to subsequently question injustice and inequality (Poulus & Exley, 2018). In Colombia, studies are moving beyond traditional critical thinking or reading, aiming to foster justice and social practice through language that interrogates texts about power and dominance (Mora et al., 2021). Colombian education policy still requires a deeper critical orientation to teaching methodologies that enable society to “not only read the word but also the world behind each textual construction” (Mora et al., 2021, p. 156).

Development and Methodologies in English Language Education

The evolution from traditional grammar-translation methods to communicative and learner-centered approaches signifies a major turning point in ELE. Early methodologies such as the grammar-translation method relied heavily on rote learning and translation tasks, while speaking and listening remained peripheral (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). The Direct Method, which originated in the late 19th century, redirected emphasis toward oral language competence and immersion in the target language (Gouin, 1892). The mid-20th century witnessed the emergence of the Audiolingual Method, shaped by behaviorist ideas that emphasized repetition and drilling (Skinner, 1957). Despite these advancements, critics highlighted the lack of meaningful communication in these methods, paving the way for the Communicative Language Teaching

(CLT) approach in the 1970s. CLT emphasized interaction and real-life communication (Hymes, 1972; Canale & Swain, 1980) and integrated an emphasis on interaction and real communication (Hymes, 1972; Canale & Swain, 1980).

In recent years, the use of methodologies in English language education has included sociocultural theories, such as Mustafa et al.'s (2017) adaptation of Vygotsky's idea of the Zone of Proximal Development, and critical pedagogies that acknowledge power relations and social justice (Luke & Dooley, 2011; Reagan & Osborn, 2020). These developments also support the claim that the view of language learning has shifted to being a fluid, socially situated practice that not only builds linguistic competence but also cultivates critical awareness and intercultural understanding.

Multimodal Practices in English Language Education: Integrating Diverse Literacies

Epistemologically, methodologies in English language education have undergone changes over time and have accounted for varied epistemologies (Baker, 2011; Burnett, 2016; Pennycook, 2010). As compared to the historical paradigms of English Language Teaching (ELT), English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), and English as a Foreign Language (EFL), new paradigms include English as an Additional Language (EAL), World Englishes (WE), and English Language Education (ELE). In EAL, we view the learning of English as important, but it is not only to complement students' existing bilingualism and multilingualism (Baker, 2011; Pennycook, 2010). WE welcomes the variations of English as the language of a pluralistic and multilingual character (Leyi, 2020; Leung, 2015, 2016). ELE seeks to move away from seeing English strictly as a foreign language associated with Anglo-Saxon connections and seeks opportunities to be seen as broader (Al-Jarf, 2022; Gelman & Legare, 2011). Traditional English textbooks often present Anglo-Saxon cultural content, which does not reflect the contemporary, global nature of English (Shin et al., 2011); materials, particularly those that do not offer a robust interrogative about intercultural

communication, place an uncritical definition of cultural and ideological notion (Peng, 2010), which in turn limits users of culture to that small superficial notion of narrowly understanding concepts of culture. Moreover, the native speakerist ideology dominant in ELT maintains a single-story view of culture that inhibits or restricts the representation of the multiplicity and fluidity of English (Liu & Fang, 2017).

Decolonial Perspectives and Critical Intercultural Practice in English Language Education

Freire's notion of dialogue has contributed to the emergence of critical theory with critical pedagogy in English education, especially in countries that do not speak English, emphasizing the importance of voice from the Global South (Awayed-Bishara, 2021; Mora et al., 2024) of deconstructing oppressive structures. According to Mignolo (2012), deconstructing systems of oppression in language education, especially in English education, is of utmost importance. He calls for intellectual and empirical efforts to deconstruct the structures and strategies perpetuating the hegemony of global North thought and culture.

Recent studies show that decolonization has involved a shift in knowledge production (Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Walsh, 2010) and power relations (Myers & Eberfors, 2010; Awayed-Bishara, 2021), well-being (Gutiérrez et al., 2021), and the establishment of counter-hegemonic pedagogy (Awayed-Bishara, 2021). Thus, this dissertation focuses on transforming marginalized communities by enabling them to design and critically consider authentic intercultural possibilities while reevaluating non-hegemonic epistemological resources (De Souza, 2019).

ELE in the Colombian context is undergoing a profound transformation as it engages with decolonial perspectives and critical intercultural practices (Lucero & Londoño, 2021; Ubaque-Casallas, 2025). This transition is influenced by a variety of scholars and researchers who have focused on the effects of language policies, cultural patterns, and educational practices (e.g., Ensuncho, 2023; González, 2010; Kumaravadivelu, 2012). Decolonial approaches to education

critically engage the legacies of conventional pedagogies and offer educational practices that take into account indigenous knowledge systems and local cultural contexts. Such perspectives are increasingly shaping English-language education to speak to historical and social injustices. For example, Núñez-Pardo (2020) examined the significance of decolonial thinking for English language teaching in Colombia. Colombian scholars advocate pedagogical processes that can deconstruct legacies of colonialism in language education and present alternative practices that support linguistic and cultural diversity. Fandiño-Parra (2021) argued for an educational framework incorporating local cultural narratives and indigenous perspectives, opposing the dominant Western-centric models of language instruction. There is an emphasis on the importance of developing curricula that resonate with the socio-cultural realities of Colombian students.

Granados-Beltrán (2022) joined the conversation by analyzing how decolonial perspectives could shift English-language teaching practices in the Colombian context. He indicated that decolonial practices should center the knowledge of the local context, including awareness of the colonial histories and their effects on language education practices. In addition, he provided concrete examples for how decolonial practices can support new ways of participating in the classroom and new ways to engage with more localized educational practices. Critical intercultural practices reflect critically on power, social inequality, and cultural engagement in language educational contexts. In Colombia, it supports a more profound respect for and understanding of cultural differences while being mindful of inequality and marginalization.

Soto-Molina and Méndez-Rivera (2022) examine the possibility of integrating critical intercultural practices into English language education in order to address social and cultural inequalities. Their article highlights the need to develop intercultural competencies that deal with deeper issues of power and representation, rather than just superficial cultural knowledge. They

propose an integrated approach to English language education in Colombia that encompasses decolonial and critical intercultural perspectives, and they identify specific actions that the decolonial-critical-transitional study and context can be translated into classroom practice in the Colombian context (e.g., curriculum design, professional development, and assessment). Fandiño-Parra (2021) takes on the task of applying critical interculturality in English-language classrooms in Colombia. Generally, the authors discuss ideas for creating authentic intercultural dialogue and critical thinking in student engagement and their curriculum to counteract and dismantle systemic inequities. An integrated decolonial and critical intercultural approach provides a comprehensive framework for reimagining English language education in Colombia. Such integration will allow education practitioners to confront colonial legacies and advocate for modern issues of intercultural communication and social justice. Carvajal-Medina et al. (2022) provided an analysis of the applied decolonial-critical intercultural approach in serving the relevant Colombian community while creating socio-culturally teaching through the lens of case studies. Their findings show that decolonized and interculturally engaged learning was able to make initial steps in having a positive impact on student learning, evidenced through linguistic and intercultural competencies of the additional language.

Incorporating decolonial perspectives and critical intercultural practices in English language education is an important step towards more inclusive and equitable educational practices in Colombia. Many scholars agree that local contexts must be represented in curriculum work, colonial legacies must be challenged, and critical intercultural practices should be approached and developed. Despite the challenges that Colombia faces, it is crucial to continue researching and experimenting with pedagogical practices concerning English language education in order to make meaningful advances towards institutional change.

Integrating Critical Intercultural Pedagogy in a Tourist Area

Critical theory has transformed how we think about tourism and many other things. The primary focus of critical theory is on questioning dominant systems that hinder participation, fairness, freedom, and emancipation. The Frankfurt School has had a lasting legacy (Celikates & Jeffrey, 2023), as has Paulo Freire's (1970) intersection with critical pedagogy (Giroux, 2022). Scholars have documented critical pedagogical approaches within a tourism context for Latin America (Nava Jiménez & Castillo Nechar, 2017). With this critical pedagogy approach, researchers have built democratic, collaborative, critical-reflective, and glocal pedagogies in an effort to nurture critical tourists and global citizens (Lai & Kan, 2020; Swain & Hall, 2007). The purpose of this approach is to facilitate authentic intercultural learning experiences (Biagi, 2013) to assist students in developing a deeper understanding of the world (Amey & Brown, 2005). Glocalization (Lusianov, 2020) is congruent with Freire's goal of helping marginalized groups recognize and transform their social situations through dialogue (Freire, 1998).

Critics have pointed out the exploitative side of tourism while acknowledging its potential for progressive change (Boluk & Carnicelli, 2015; Carnicelli & Boluk, 2020; Werry, 2008). Researchers have focused more on the aspects that are not sustainable in our current tourism models (Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019), while still holding space to acknowledge the positive impacts of tourism on mental health and wellbeing (Buckley, 2020). New tourism forms that have emerged are determined to deconstruct power dynamics and take into account the orientation towards local communities (Pritchard & Morgan, 2007). The Academy of Hope (Pritchard et al., 2011) model is an example of transformative education, focused on empowering students with the understanding and the skills to address 'otherness' and power differences in tourists' experiences (Pritchard et al., 2011; Cave, 2010). They advocate for critical intercultural practice in tourism education, inviting educators to purposefully empower residents to engage with cultural

differences, provide appropriate services, and improve relations with different tourists, while creating conditions to support peacebuilding (Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2022). Indigenous cosmologies and intercultural practices challenge dominant language teaching ideologies and governmental policies (Walsh, 2009) in a critical decolonial pedagogy that is breaking down societal structures (Mignolo, 2011), reconfiguring the histories of marginalized communities, and occupying a space for empowerment and belonging (Becerra-Posada & Ehret, 2024). Embracing a decolonial perspective gives educators the chance to interrogate and disrupt existing paradigms to promote reflective practice and meaningful intercultural dialogue (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). Education should prioritize acknowledging and validating the wealth of meaning behind local voices and experiences (Becerra-Posada & Ehret, 2024).

Integrating critical intercultural pedagogical approaches into English language education for a northern Colombian area can contribute to a more equitable and reflective society by emphasizing decolonial perspectives. This research aimed to empower teachers and students to challenge hegemonic narratives and equip them with critical literacy skills; this empowerment leads them to analyze and question the socio-cultural and economic impacts of their surrounding community and engage in intercultural dialogue that respects and promotes local cultures and identities. Through this research, I intend to broaden the framework of critical English language education through multimodal literacy approaches and to provide a more equitable and inclusive learning experience for marginalized communities. In the following chapter, I examine the conceptual configurations that are at the core of this research and consider the pedagogical issues regarding critical English language education in a tourist region in Northern Colombia.

Chapter Two - Conceptual Configuration of Pedagogical Considerations for a Situated Didactic Framework in Critical English Language Education in a Northern Colombian Tourist Area

Within this theoretical framework, I started to see the challenge of placing reading and writing as a political act instead of something neutral (Foucault, 1980; Freire, 1970, 2000; Gee, 2015; Giroux, 1988; Janks, 2010; Luke, 2012; Pennycook, 1998; Shor, 1999; Street, 1984). In this chapter, I explain the emancipatory framework inherent in critical pedagogy, which underscores the recognition of individuals within their active contexts. I emphasize the imperative of interaction and dialogue while fostering a sense of belonging to the construct those individuals collectively shape. I draw from a myriad of interpretations of decolonial approaches to explain the conceptual underpinnings and the core tenets in the context of English education within a tourist area. These pedagogical orientations configure critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices as foundational elements that weave into the proposed educational framework.

Critical Pedagogies: Tackling the Resistance

Based on Giroux and McLaren's (1994) pioneering study, the following justifications underscore the recognition of the classroom as a situated space and a secure environment that contributes to fostering an interdependent relationship between students and practitioners. We, as educators, are enjoined to uphold the ethos where we acknowledge and honor the diverse reservoirs of knowledge and experiences that each student brings to the learning environment.

Thus, we should view education as a praxis; we must embrace the concept of liberation and assume the role of transformative intellectual agents, conscientiously affirming students' entitlement to learning. We must cultivate critical consciousness among students, equip them to interrogate prevailing inequalities, and advocate for transformative changes in circumstances

deemed problematic (Freire, 2005). In the next sections, I elucidate the foundational tenets of critical pedagogy as they pertain to the domain of English language education. I start with critical literacy instructions.

Critical Literacy: Toward the Construction of a Situated Critical English Education

To elaborate on the concept of critical literacy within the emancipatory framework, I took into account Anderson and Irvine's (1993) thoughts that define critical literacy (CL) as the acquisition of literacy (reading and writing) skills as an integral process of becoming aware of one's experience as historically constructed within specific power relations. I also took into account Hull's (1993) and Morrell's (2007) perspectives on examining the representation of power and domination in texts. Luke's (2004) position also resonated with mine; he considers that CL is the use of technologies such as print and other communication media to analyze, critique, and transform the norms, rules, and practices that govern the social fields of everyday life. Reading Bobkina and Stefanova (2016), I found that social critical theorists who coined the term 'critical literacy' were primarily concerned about social injustice and inequality, and, as a result, they gave dominant power structures and the role of education in both reducing and escalating inequalities some thought. It means that one should not only read the text but also consider political, historical, and cultural factors while interpreting it.

Then, critical literacy entails envisioning various ways to construct and reconstruct texts that convey messages that promote social justice and equity, thereby having a more significant impact on real life (Vásquez et al., 2019). This approach requires an attitude toward texts that goes beyond just using methods, skills, or techniques. It encourages individuals to adopt a stance, enabling them to support, reject, adapt, or reshape texts (Janks, 2010; Luke & Dooley, 2011).

Wray's (2006) assumptions continued illuminating my understanding. He argues that education on language can make a difference in people's lives by questioning, evaluating, and

challenging the relationship between social practices and language. Every text holds an additional significance and message, demonstrating why CL is all about analysis and evaluation. The notions of active citizenship and social awareness are inseparable from CL. CL encourages people to become agents of social change by promoting a future characterized by equality and justice, free from discrimination. It aims to transform the world by helping individuals articulate their ideas on controversial topics like gender, politics, and race while respecting differing opinions (Saygılı et al., 2018).

Critical literacy in classroom dynamics is characterized by an emphasis on learners' voices and dialogue as tools with which they reflect on and construct meaning from texts and discourses (Beck, 2005). The primary goal is to cultivate responsible citizens who can challenge various forms of social inequity and actively work to combat injustices (Beck, 2005; Mora, 2014). Thus, learners are expected to acquire some critical skills, such as knowing how to listen to each other's views by tolerating and respecting them, being efficient communicators, activating their decision mechanism, being analytical and questioners for some issues, being able to make connections and inferences, being problem solvers, and being action takers for the problems (Saygılı et al., 2018). In this view, Sánchez & Honeyford (2021) draw from sociocultural and critical literacy perspectives, and propose a framework that challenges the invisibility of students' local knowledge and emphasizes the need to "widen the who" and "leverage the where" in curriculum design. Their work highlights how community literacies—rooted in students' cultural, linguistic, and social geographies—can serve as epistemic resources for transforming pedagogy.

The work of Janks (2000) profoundly shaped my understanding, particularly her emphasis on multiple social skills and practices that position investment in identity and the constitution of subjectivities within complex, multimodal, and intertextual social spaces, comprehending and managing the relationship between language and power. She highlights that critical literacy is a

shifting skill that involves the interdependent negotiation of pedagogical dominance, diversity, access, and design within social practices. I found her comprehensive view (Janks, 2000, 2010, 2012, 2013) of what CL teaching involves and how to bring it into language teaching orientation and literacy applicable for the purposes of this study. She stated four main realizations of critical literacy: domination, access, diversity, and design. Each of these approaches is based on different conceptions of the relationship between language and power. They are interdependent and need to be held in “productive tension to achieve what is a shared goal of all critical literacy work: equity and social justice” (Janks, 2010, p. 27).

Domination

This critical discourse analysis approach is a way to break down the language and images in dominant texts to find ideas and spark debate and change about what they emphasize, what they leave out, and whose interests they serve. Dominant forms encompass dominating languages, literacies, knowledge, genres, modes of visual representation, and various cultural practices associated with social interaction.

Access

This approach involves the explicit use of genre features that carry social power. It asks teachers of languages and literacies to meditate on providing learners access to the dominant forms that contribute to perpetuating marginalization. Those forms include analytical essays and reports, assumed to be already in some learners’ heads.

Diversity

This realization comprises various modalities and resources, including students’ own diverse languages. It means reading and writing about the world to change consciousness through new alternative discourses in the classroom regarding equity and inclusivity.

Design

This concept permits connecting the productive power of diverse students to create their own meanings through the reconstruction of texts. By using media and technologies, students can take control of their productions and avoid relying on traditional print media. They can revisit texts and create ones that are meaningful to them, which is crucial for identity change and agency. In the redesigning linguistic process, translanguaging can allow multilingual students to use their entire linguistic repertoire, including their mother tongue, to reflect, co-construct meaning, learn, and communicate. By allowing students to draw upon their full linguistic repertoires, educators can foster a more equitable and empowering learning environment

I am in favor of seeing CL as a way of being and doing. Vásquez et al. (2019) integrated critical perspectives across all teaching practices rather than as isolated units of study. It leverages students' cultural knowledge and multimodal practices to make learning relevant and meaningful. Texts are considered socially constructed and never neutral, prompting readers to question their perspectives and to engage in self-analysis of their interpretations and views of the world, which should be critically examined. It encourages questioning socio-political systems, focusing on issues like race, class, gender, and disability, to promote equity. These practices prepare students for informed decision-making, democratic citizenship, and ethical actions, contributing to a more just world. Text design and production are emphasized for their potential to address real issues meaningfully. Ultimately, critical literacy aims to reimagine texts and practices to convey equitable messages with real-world impacts, such as promoting sustainability.

Some critical literacy activities that we can do in the classroom to get students involved in their communities, think critically about things, and take action to make changes in society are protesting verbally; writing to people in power (Vásquez et al., 2003); talking to newspaper editors; handing out flyers about an issue; doing community service (Bender-Slack, 2010); researching to

improve information (Wolk, 2009); presenting documentaries on cultural experiences (Comber, 2011); writing for local newspapers (Rashidi & Safari, 2011); or putting on live performances (López, 2011). The subsequent concepts, influenced by Paulo Freire's work, may be modified for English language instruction as proposed by Khamratana and Adunyarittigun's (2021) integrated framework.

Freedom of Thought

In democratic classrooms, this approach emphasizes participation, engagement, and intellectual curiosity (Freire, 1970). It especially fosters open dialogue and encourages students to question various aspects of life, including social, cultural, political, and environmental issues. It creates a democratic learning environment where both teachers and students learn from each other's experiences and cultures (Moll et al., 1992). Teachers play a facilitating role by starting lessons with real-life problems related to students' lives, encouraging multiple perspectives, and eventually integrating expert knowledge and social issues into the curriculum (Shor, 1992).

Dialogue

Educational empowerment through dialogue is achieved by adopting a dialogic approach, which promotes two-way communication and helps students grasp academic discourse conventions (Wong, 2022). This approach empowers students to engage in language learning and establish a reciprocal relationship with authority figures (Giroux, 2021). Key elements that enhance students' speaking, writing, listening, and reading skills include avoiding predetermined conclusions, guiding students in metacognitive awareness, and creating a safe space for critical and respectful expression of opinions (Khamratana and Adunyarittigun, 2021).

Problem-Posing

In educational transformation, problem-posing education encourages students to identify real-life problems and work toward transformative solutions (Lewison et al., 2002; Schleppegrell

& Bowman, 1995). Teachers pose questions based on students' interests, guide them in analyzing various perspectives, and facilitate critical discussions to develop literacy skills and logical discourse. This approach aims to help students transform their lives and question their circumstances, extending beyond cognitive and psychological development.+

Funds of Knowledge

This concept enriches the curriculum (Moll, 1992) as an approach rooted in critical pedagogy that values local knowledge and student identity. Teachers leverage these qualities by becoming field researchers, collecting data on students' diverse cultural values, skills, and social networks. These resources fill the knowledge gap in learning, particularly for students from underrepresented groups. Teachers classify this knowledge into various fields, adapting lessons and transforming students' real-life experiences into valuable learning resources (Moll, 1992; Perry, 2021). For example, Vélez-Ibáñez and Greenberg (1992) classified the collected funds of knowledge from their students' households into mining, construction, railroads, and industrial forms of agriculture. Turning real-life experiences into knowledge can be promoted through students' own native language and life knowledge; they would serve as their learning resources. Educators could transform students' subordinate cultural backgrounds into rich resources for learning (Moll, 1992; Scherff & Spector, 2011).

To address the oppression that underprivileged students face, I incorporated critical pedagogy concepts into English courses designed for a tourist area of northern Colombia. I also integrated their real-life experiences into the classroom to transform them into valuable knowledge and create a balance between transformative theory and mandated curricula through alternative teaching approaches (Khamratana & Adunyarittigun, 2021). For the purpose of this dissertation, I put forward a definition of critical literacy that aligns with the framework of English education for marginalized students in a tourist area in northern Colombia. I define it as an educational approach

that goes beyond traditional reading and writing skills, aiming to empower students to analyze and challenge the power structures and ideologies embedded in texts and discourses. It involves a deep interrogation of the socio-political contexts in which these texts are produced and consumed. This framework matches the considerations of democratic education to empower students to create a more inclusive and engaging learning environment. I also portray this position in critical intercultural practices, as I explain it in the next paragraph.

Critical Intercultural Dialogues: A Democratic Perspective on English Language Education by Reading the Context of Tourism

After a deep reading about intercultural practices, an inherent subject in the teaching of English as a language of international communication, I decided to use a decolonial lens that helped me to reconceptualize the relationship between language and culture. It included a multidimensional approach that integrates the cultures of the various communities that use the language and a focus on students' needs. I considered the idea that we teachers must cross borders to permit the negotiation of conflicting cultures and discourses (Blanc et al., 2021). As a result, I acknowledged the significance of Kumaravadivelu's (2003) suggestion to decolonize the teaching of English to speakers of other languages and found the fundamentals of the decolonial turn (Blanc et al., 2021) applicable to this study. The following sections define some important concepts and expand on their relevance.

The Decolonial Turn

Walsh (2005) revisits the works of Freire and Fanon to conceptualize decolonial education as a space of ongoing resistance, where alternative ways of thinking, living, and being are possible. The goal of decolonial pedagogy is to challenge, disrupt, and overturn the concepts and practices inherited from colonialism; it can be achieved through interventions, constructions, creations, and emancipatory practices (Blanc, Branda, & Calvete, 2021). At the same time, recognizing the subaltern condition (Granados-Beltrán, 2016) and resisting an educational system that is deeply rooted in white supremacy, capitalism, and dehumanization (Stovall, 2018).

Resistance

In the context of an anti-hegemonic writing construct of social justice, Tsuda (2008) refers to the term 'resistance' in the orbit of the oppressor, who grants freedom to another oppressed to make use of it according to the will of the oppressor. Scott (1990) and Ryan (2015) posit that resistance comprises everyday actions, not only for survival but also embodying spontaneity, anonymity, and informal organization; it subsequently serves as a vehicle for protest rather than a mere survival tactic of marginalized groups. These acts of resistance become politicized and culturally recognizable. Canagarajah (2003) suggests that linguistic resistance involves efforts to combat isolation, rewrite counter-narratives, and reject the oppression inherent in occupation. It necessitates the acquisition of skills to resist using Western languages to disseminate messages globally.

Critical Intercultural Dialogues

I define critical intercultural dialogues as a point of intersection of transgressive pedagogies (critical, indigenous, feminist, and queer), which include not only acknowledging other cultures but also learning from and engaging with them (Granados-Beltrán, 2015). It implies uncovering contradictions and transforming realities, based not only on the reading of the world but also on the reading of the word (Freire & Macedo, 1987). This approach aims to transform teachers and students, build communities of learning, acknowledge different voices, and respect and incorporate personal experience as part of constructing knowledge. According to Mignolo (2013), critical intercultural literacy requires the following approaches:

- **Decolonial Perspective.** It seeks to decenter Eurocentrism and explore non-European and Indigenous ways of knowing and being.
- **Power Relations.** It advocates for conditions to question and challenge structures of domination and exploitation that have shaped intercultural relations historically.

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- **Pluriversalism.** It values diversity and creates spaces for the coexistence of different cultural perspectives without imposing a single dominant worldview.
 - **Epistemic Justice.** It seeks to achieve a more equitable distribution of knowledge and resources, rectify historical injustices, and elevate the voices and knowledge of marginalized and subaltern groups.
 - **Border Thinking.** It aims to erase the intricate and historical boundaries between cultures and fixed viewpoints; 'thinking otherwise' beyond binary logics (center/periphery, developed/underdeveloped, civilized/uncivilized), and real struggles about dignity, recognition, and liberation.

Perspective on Critical Intercultural Dialogues in English Language Education

Critical Intercultural Practices in English Language Education encourages creating a classroom environment that promotes open dialogue and mutual respect. This approach invites students to engage with and understand diverse cultural narratives, challenging hegemonic discourses and promoting a more inclusive and equitable learning experience. This viewpoint is particularly pertinent to the northern Colombian tourist area, since it addresses the dynamic that interplays local and global cultures, promoting critical literacy and a nuanced understanding of intercultural communication. This comprehensive approach includes democratic engagement, critical awareness, and decolonial principles. It takes into account the language and cultural needs of students and gives them the tools to navigate and change their social realities through critical and reflective educational practice.

Challenges in Research and Practices. Critical intercultural dialogue research often focuses on "Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) societies, especially communities that are part of elite settings" (Henrich et al., 2010, p. 29). Researchers in these regions can easily access these societies; they have more money, and they are thought to

be more typical of how people act today. Language textbooks and classroom practices often reduce intercultural practices to descriptions of other cultures or comparisons between regions and nations, neglecting the transformative potential of intercultural engagement (Kramsch, 2011; Risager, 2018). This approach perpetuates a modernist view of culture as merely the study of specific characteristics of a place or people (Risager, 2007).

Beyond Fixed Cultural Knowledge. I agree with the position that successful intercultural communication instruction should go beyond fixed cultural knowledge, especially in the context of globalization and English as a lingua franca. Thus, it is essential to incorporate critical intercultural literacy to challenge essentialist views of culture, a task that requires systematic instruction and reflection (Baker, 2012) and considers language and culture closely connected and interdependent (Risager, 2007). This way, intercultural literacy embodies a form of intercultural scholarship and activism that addresses systemic power imbalances and prepares individuals for their future careers and lives (Fang & Baker, 2018).

Addressing Exclusion and Discrimination. Critical paradigms in Latin America address issues of exclusion, discrimination, and racism. Walsh (2005) describes intercultural practices as an equitable exchange between cultures, established under conditions of equality. She invites us to understand intercultural practices as a permanent process of relationships, communication, and learning between people, groups, knowledge, values, and traditions that promote mutual respect and the full development of individuals' abilities above cultural and social differences. Shor (1999) adds that critical literacy involves examining our ongoing development to understand the subjective positions from which we make sense of the world. We grow up and live in local cultures within global contexts where multiple discourses shape us. Neighborhood life and schooling are two significant sites where the local and global converge.

Decolonial Perspective and Border Thinking. From a functional perspective, intercultural dialogues aim to break the hegemony of dominant cultures and reinforce the identities of excluded groups that build legitimacy for all social groups through respectful coexistence (Walsh, 2005). A critical approach requires recognizing practices and knowledge grounded in respect, equality, and the recognition of differences, all of which are vital for democratic cohabitation. Mignolo (2013) refers to critical intercultural practices as both a perspective and an ongoing project, which differs from the functional perspective. It sees the difference between coloniality and the concept of race itself as both an idea and an inaugural moment of modernity, one that reflects a racialized hierarchical structure and racialized subjects. Its power lies in its decolonial capacity, its ability to break free from the functional framework, and its insurgency from the margins, peripheries, and subaltern spaces. This approach no longer aims to integrate into the logic of Euro-American societies and cultures or align with their epistemes. Rather, it is about gradually shaping a borderline, sentimental, and bilingual existence. It seeks to challenge dominant Western paradigms and foster more equitable, respectful ways of engaging with different cultures.

Addressing Linguistic Colonialism. In hybrid positions in Colombian contexts, Granados-Beltrán (2018) and Soto-Molina and Méndez (2020) talk about how linguistic colonialism manifests in textbooks and the way they present the teaching of modern or colonial languages as “the” English, as the definitive version of the language. This influences both the teaching methods and the learning experiences of students. They state the necessity of decolonizing people’s minds and embracing a critical understanding of how critical intercultural teaching is made up of political and cultural forces that lead to actions. They warn us that English teachers’ relational identification with the English language can make them tools of these new colonizations. They ask teachers to become intellectuals for actions to resist linguistic colonialism

in English language education and for the decision-making process to favor a fair and equitable teaching style in relation to culture.

My Roles as an English Language Intellectual in Northern Colombia

Decolonial Option. I act like an intellectual to change the dominant discourse of Eurocentric science to create a different space for the production of knowledge. By drawing on colonial differences, I should advocate stopping the spread of global colonialism, which creates hierarchies and supports one cultural, political, and social order over others (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018).

The Resistance Option. I propose using a different nomenclature to teach English to dismantle the hegemony of English language teaching. International language, language of international communication, world language, global language, and foreign language reflect an Anglo-centric perspective that serves colonial and neoliberal interests. Blanc et al. (2021) proposed the nomination of Teaching English Language as Another, which implies teaching English with the conscience of having seen the trap and having disengaged from the colonial matrix of power. It implies pedagogies of resistance and re-existence, awakening of conscience, and epistemic disobedience (Mignolo, 2013).

Advocating for Transformation. The role of a critical practitioner positions me as an organic intellectual whose efforts extend beyond the limitations of the established hegemonic order to transform my subalternized communities. Thus, I am committed to contesting hegemonic structures, narratives, and practices. This implies that I need to delink to foster an epistemic break (Darder & Mirón, 2006). Kumaravadivelu (2012) proposes a grammar of decoloniality, “a framework for strategic plans drawn by subalterns deriving from their own lived experiences, and hence it will vary from context to context” (p. 79). It means my role as a local actor committed to coordinating actions should be to be aware of the local situation and create and carry it out.

In light of Fandiño's (2021) discussion on emancipation in the Colombian context, the grammar of decoloniality emerges as a pivotal framework for transforming English education. He proposes three decolonial efforts of particular interest for the community:

- **Spaces of Speech.** The ELE community requires creating spaces for pluralistic discussions that allow various types of knowledge to come forward and create new ideas. By engaging the pluriversal spaces of speech, local linguistic practices such as coastal Spanish dialects in creating narratives that reflect their daily realities should be accepted and celebrated.
- **Flattened Hierarchy.** The ELE community should work to share knowledge and responsibilities more equally and to challenge unfair power dynamics by treating all language practices as legitimate tools for meaning-making, affirming the cultural identity and agency of learners. In this way, the classroom becomes a site of linguistic re-existence rather than assimilation.
- **Teacher Agency.** The ELE community must be committed to empowering teachers to actively participate and influence their professional environment.

Critical intercultural practices become a transformative tool by supporting teachers in decolonizing power, guiding educators in decolonizing knowledge, and assisting teacher-researchers in addressing the decolonization of identity. It not only transforms marginalized students by integrating their lived experiences into the classroom but also aligns with bilingualism policies to foster an emancipatory and socially just educational practice.

Critical Intercultural Practices in a Northern Colombian Tourist Area

For the purpose of this dissertation, I define critical intercultural practices as an approach that deeply interrogates and addresses the intricate power dynamics and social inequalities that are inherent in cultural exchanges and educational practices. This framework transcends mere

cultural appreciation by actively engaging students and teachers in critical dialogue about their lived experiences, enabling them to become active participants in their learning processes.

Critical intercultural practices include critical dialogue and praxis that incorporate the principles of critical pedagogy, particularly a pedagogy of voice, dialogue, and praxis. Teachers and students critically reflect and challenge the socio-economic, political, and cultural conditions in which they live to create a reality in which they can change or affect their environments, fostering a process of conscientization. The topic is also about empathy and understanding and how these two processes can help both educators and learners by promoting democratic and supportive educational environments. Critical intercultural dialogues also advocate for a critical interrogation of the often exploitative and uneven nature of the tourism industry in northern Colombia. It encourages students' critical consideration of who profits from tourism versus those who are marginalized or exploited and, consequently, promotes sustainable and ethical tourism practices that prioritize social justice and the well-being of local communities. Finally, the curriculum can include real-life scenarios to transform pedagogical praxis.

My colleagues and I configured methods to foster critical thinking, transform marginalized students, and cultivate a nuanced understanding of cultural exchange. This approach equips learners, as members of the local community, to hold meaningful and respectful interactions with tourists. We outline educational strategies that create an environment where students can critically engage with and transform the social conditions affecting their lives while learning English at the same time. Our framework incorporates multimodal practices that promote greater equity and social justice.

Multimodal Practices for Social Justice and Equity in ELE

Multimodality in literacy involves integrating various forms of communication beyond traditional text. The theories of New Literacy Studies (NLS; Chakrabarty, 2020; Pahl & Rowsell,

2006; Street, 2003) recognize that literacy includes visual, auditory, and digital modes, not just reading and writing. In today's technology-driven society, multimodality highlights the need to understand how different modes interact and create meaning. Digital platforms often combine text, images, videos, and interactive elements, requiring users to interpret information across formats. This approach broadens the concept of literacy, emphasizing the need for education to equip learners with skills for engaging with and producing multimodal texts, reflecting the evolving nature of literacy in the digital age.

Multimodal texts denote alternative communication modes and literacy practices; learners integrate diverse meaning-making modalities to construct ideological representations (Janks, 2013). This perspective posits that texts do not possess fixed meanings as intended by authors; they rather embody implications that are multifaceted, dynamic, and subject to influence by other textual contexts (Bull & Anstey, 2005). Such approaches prioritize students' autonomy in bodily, cognitive, and expressive manifestations (Kress, 2010). Mora (2017) coined the notion of Multimodal Critical Consciousness (MCC) as a way to combine concepts from critical consciousness, Freire's interpretation of *conscientização* (Freire, 1970), and critical literacies with ideas from multimodality and multimodal design. MCC acknowledges the strength and potential of semiotic forms of meaning-making as the foundation of critical praxis, particularly in the case of younger and less experienced students. MCC has the potential to broaden these students' communicative toolkits and transform the language classroom into a truly transformative environment; student agency and teacher empowerment become defining characteristics of both learning and teaching (Defining the Term, para. 1). Multimodal literacy goes beyond making videos and utilizes all available resources to achieve deeper and more meaningful communicative goals, allowing language users to become more actively involved in global issues.

Building on MCC, Mora and his colleagues (2022) proposed Multimodal Conscientização (MCZ) as a space that invites teachers to not only use multimodal text creation to announce and denounce social inequity; they also propose better worlds. This approach connects texts to students' social and contextual realities and encourages reading with and against the texts. Their positions include facilitating culturally relevant resources and engaging learners in text construction and problem-solving tasks. They highlight the link between criticality, a critical mindset, and multimodal design, emphasizing the importance of moving from reflection to praxis. MCZ thus refers to critical knowledge that becomes a source of hope, denouncing inequity and critically questioning society to engage in actions and propose a new society.

Components of Multimodal Literacy

Cognitive skills. Critical thinking (Gee, 2014) and interpretation (Kress, 2010) enable learners to analyze and evaluate the diverse modes of communication they encounter in a globalized, tourism-driven context. These skills are essential for understanding the nuanced ways in which English is used as a tool for communication and power.

Digital and Media Literacy. Digital literacy (Hague & Payton, 2010) and media literacy (Buckingham, 2013) further equip learners to navigate and produce multimodal texts, enhancing their ability to engage with the digital landscapes that are increasingly prevalent in tourist areas. By mastering these technical skills, residents can better participate in the local and global economies, thereby challenging the dominant narratives that often marginalize their voices.

Social and Cultural Awareness. Socio-cultural practices allow learners to recognize the influence of cultural, social, and situational factors on the interpretation of multimodal texts (Street, 2003). Understanding how identities and social relations are shaped and represented through multimodal practices (Gee, 2014) can empower learners to challenge stereotypes and advocate for more equitable representations of their communities. This awareness is particularly important

in this tourist area, where cultural representations are often commodified and distorted for commercial purposes.

Creative Skills. Design, creative compositions (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), and innovation (Jewitt, 2009) play a significant role in enabling learners to create effective multimodal texts that resonate with diverse audiences. By encouraging creativity, the proposed pedagogical practices foster a sense of agency among learners, allowing them to articulate their perspectives and experiences in ways that challenge dominant discourses. This creative engagement also promotes a more profound understanding of the complexities of identity and culture as learners experiment with combining different modes to convey meaning.

Collaborative Skills. Communication (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009), feedback, and reflection (Wenger, 1998) are important to promote a participatory learning environment where students can engage in a dialogic space with their peers and educators. This collaborative approach enhances the learning process through constructive feedback and a more inclusive and responsive educational experience.

Incorporating these pedagogical considerations into the situated didactic framework combined with critical literacy and critical intercultural dialogues represented an effective way to meet the needs of an English language classroom in a tourist region in northern Colombia. I, together with the co-researchers, built on cognitive, social, cultural, creative, and collaborative skills, as indicated by different scholars, to create an educational environment that not only helps develop students' language proficiency but also critical engagement and intercultural dialogues. This approach helped learners to self-direct their learning and advocate for social justice in their communities.

Defining a Didactic Framework: A Situated Collaborative Approach to Critical English Language Education in Northern Colombia

As I address the resistance to learning English in a tourist area of northern Colombia, my colleagues and I developed an alternative didactic framework that transforms English Language Education (ELE). We proposed ways to uphold and celebrate students' cultural identities, allowing them to see their voices reflected in texts, amplifying them, and beginning to dismantle dominant narratives that can weaken students' identities. This framework addresses the complex space where critical literacy and cultural identity overlap, seeking to bridge the gaps in cultural differences without compromising cultural identity.

In this dissertation, I pose a didactic framework as a dynamic resource that aids in constructing equitable, meaningful, and situated relevant learning experiences in English language education classrooms. Didactic comes from the Greek word *didaktikos*, which means 'teaching' or 'instructive'. Hopmann's (2007) position is that the historical development of Didaktik and the focus it places on sequence, order, and choice are valuable to both teaching and learning. Students need to have a roadmap to follow as they learn to organize information and how it relates to a broader context.

I define the art of didactics as the way teachers use their knowledge and experience to create meaningful practices and procedures and lead students through complex materials. I contend that didactics is more than a systematic or intentional approach to teaching; I pose it as practices that foster care, reflection, and commitment to advocate for critical literacy, intercultural understanding, and multimodal competencies in English Language Education (ELE). Richards and Rodgers (2001) posit didactics as a planned and deliberate process of instruction that uses learning activities, teaching strategies, and content to achieve more comprehensive and in-depth educational goals. Thus, I believe teaching and learning should respond to the specific contextual realities of students and teachers.

The paradigm I use in this dissertation includes critical pedagogical approaches (Freire, 2005) to create a situated framework that prioritizes local knowledge, fosters cultural pride, and encourages critical engagement. I adapted the instructions to the needs of both teachers and students to balance their broad objectives with the complex realities of the classroom. Kumaravadivelu's (2003) postmethod pedagogy, particularly its emphasis on balancing micro-level realities with macro-level goals, inspired me. The didactic framework for this dissertation reflects decolonial perspectives (Mignolo, 2013) and centers on co-constructing knowledge through participatory and collaborative practices. I see this process as a way to encourage both teachers and students to question dominant paradigms, reclaim their cultural narratives, and engage in education as a transformative and liberatory act. The principles and considerations described in this chapter guided the development of a critical pedagogical framework that aligns with the research objectives of promoting a more equitable and reflective English education in this tourist area.

In this chapter, the theoretical frames of critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices constitute the theoretical basis for a reconfiguration of English language education. These frames provided pedagogical possibilities analyzed throughout the following chapters, demonstrating the connections between theory and lived practices.

Chapter Three - A Qualitative Study of Critical English Language Education: Decolonial Paths and Participatory Encounters

In this chapter, I present the research methodologies that shape the decolonial journey of this dissertation, underlining the qualitative participatory research approach aligned with the critical emancipatory perspectives of the study. I began by defining the research paradigm, referring to the relationship of this study with the Participatory Action Research (PAR) principles

that unfold a collaborative walk alongside a teacher co-researcher, a coordinator co-researcher, and student participants grounded in dialogues, local contexts, and the development of transformative educational practices within English language education in northern Colombia. I detail the data collection methods, the techniques, and the instruments I selected for the study. I aimed to collect data to describe the multiplicities of critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices in an English education classroom, which I situate in an area impacted by the tourism economy.

I describe how I intended to ethically collect data using techniques that aligned with the decolonial and critical intercultural lenses outlined in the state of the art and that were culturally relevant and contextually responsive to the research participants. This approach allowed me to achieve the purpose of the study. I then returned to describe the procedures for data organization and analysis, which I understood as iterative and reflexive, and the ways that I could continue to engage with the data to reflect on what was happening with the co-researchers and student participants as the lived experience of data collection unfolded. I included a discussion of the multiple forms of analysis given the challenges that complex data presented.

Paradigmatic Approach for Self-Transformation and Social Transformation

Given the goals mentioned in chapter one, which follows a qualitative and freeing approach backed by Fals-Borda's (1986) principles of Participatory Action Research (PAR), I use an exploratory-descriptive method. The socio-critical paradigm, along with PAR, was foundational to this project. The main objective was to involve co-researchers and student participants in their context-specific social change processes. I framed this study into a decolonial and justice-oriented perspective and adopted culturally contextualized methodologies and approaches that were relevant to exploring lived experiences and inextricable socio-historical aspects of marginalization.

This research is exploratory in nature (Hernández et al., 2014). Through this, I sought to examine pedagogies of critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices in terms of power, emancipation, critical thought, and self-agency. I viewed the elements as forms of contestation against the hegemonic canon of English language education. My goal was to generate knowledge, expand research on these topics, and understand the processes underlying decolonizing practices. I followed a descriptive logic (Lambert & Lambert, 2012), analyzing the significant properties of innovative methodologies for critical English education. My focus was on subjectivity, particularly the perspectives and arguments of criticality in teaching English in a tourism context, which provided essential elements for analysis. This study highlighted the most important circumstances faced during the research process, ultimately contributing to a more profound understanding of critical literacy practices and aiding education in transcending hegemonic practices. It added a richer understanding of critical literacy practices and supported education moving beyond hegemonic practices. This PAR process, which has a critical stance toward research and aims to understand how power relations shape society (Chilisa, 2019; Shannon-Baker, 2016), revealed meanings through counter-hegemonic practices (Avelino et al., 2019) and fostered more equitable, open, and just societies (Omodan & Dastile, 2023).

Through this process, I implemented interpretative analysis (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2013), which enabled me to explain overarching theories of critical English (literacy, interculturality, and multimodality) in an accessible language. This combination of thought-provoking intellectualism and tangible applications made conceptual analysis a valuable tool for making sense of complex concepts (Pfadenhauer et al., 2017). Additionally, PAR facilitated the establishment of active partnerships with the co-researchers, as the methodology relies on the expertise of both researchers and the communities to find solutions that use not only theory but also the community members' lived experiences (Kelly, 2005; Baum et al., 2006; Sherwood &

Kendall, 2013). In this way, the co-researchers and I engaged in finding solutions that met local needs in a culturally appropriate manner while considering the values and practices of the community.

PAR is an evidence-based approach to studying social phenomena (Abad-Corpa et al., 2010; Friesen-Storms et al., 2015) and involves the active participation of the community studied as co-researchers with the researchers (MacDonald, 2012). This way, I focused on solidarity, collectivism, and processes of democratization to create knowledge validated by the co-researchers (Fals-Borda, 2008; Kekäle & Pirttilä, 2006; Kindon & Elwood, 2009; Mubuke & Leibowitz, 2013). This approach embraced inclusive research processes, recognized the contributory roles of all stakeholders, and promoted a non-hierarchical structure. I also reflected on the actions taken by marginalized communities, encouraging their meaningful civic participation. I used the resources of this approach as tools of change and collective power to actively promote transformative social justice. Finally, PAR served as a tool for collective activism, fostering dialogue, understanding, and lasting change.

Omodan and Dastile (2023) state that the PAR techniques provide a decolonized approach to research. The authors make connections between the principles of decolonization and the assumptions of PAR, such as recognizing the marginalization, fostering self-empowerment and autonomy, questioning power relations, supporting inclusive practices, and aiming for meaningful change. These connections highlight that PAR reflects decolonial values because it challenges conventional top-down research approaches by emphasizing the role of participants and seeking transformative change.

I emphasized three key points: (a) respecting local communities, (b) recognizing participant agency through dialogue, and (c) promoting self-determination based on communal strength and grassroots organization. Therefore, I found that participatory action research was

effective in conducting it in accordance with decolonization principles. It fostered inclusivity, acknowledged the significance of participants, and served as a catalyst for positive change. This approach reflected my commitment to dismantling dominant power structures, addressing historical erasure, and empowering impacted communities to determine our course of action.

PAR facilitated authentic participatory engagement and reflection (Smolare, et al., (2021) and helped me reconstruct anti-colonial teaching principles that led to reimagining English language education. Participants engaged in continual cycles of self-reflection and action, aligning with Freire's (2011) concept of praxis. This approach not only cultivated critical researchers but also produced analyses grounded in epistemology aimed at effecting change by addressing power imbalances within research dynamics (Filipović & Filipović, 2015).

My intention with this research was to collaboratively configure a situated didactic framework for reshaping elements of formative processes (through the recognition of subjectivities). I characterized the educational realities and identified the key elements that enabled that construction. In English language education, we saw the educator and students as subjects with "the power to originate actions for certain purposes" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). This framework promoted the intentional and conscious creation of self-organized educational environments for the agents' self-transformation while they simultaneously transformed their environments. No one treated the research subjects as objects, and no one 'educated' them in the traditional sense. Instead, all members contributed to fostering everyone's capacity (Freire, 1976).

With a focus on emancipatory, reflective, and democratic knowledge as the foundation of a liberating intention and as the epistemological basis of this dissertation, I began with reflection, dialogue, and collective action in a commitment to generating changes and transformations in educational praxis. The outcomes included a shift in awareness and applicability, the *ecologization*

of knowledge, and the ability to reconnect knowledge in ways that allowed for its deconstruction and reconfiguration within a new structure. This change brought about a shift in the ways that people teach and learn English, allowing for recursive and ecologically based teaching and learning situations (González, 2012).

Co-Researchers and the Tourist Context

For this research, I chose the Universidad de Córdoba's Language Center. The university is a public institution located to the north of the urban perimeter of Montería, in the department of Córdoba in the Colombian Caribbean. The Language Center, where I work as a part-time English teacher, is an extension program affiliated with the BA in Foreign Language Education (Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras) housed within the Faculty of Education. This program offers instruction in foreign language training, specifically English and French, and assesses the students' advanced skills, certifying them with high-level English skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

The Language Center is an outreach program focused on job and human development training, providing general academic knowledge in English, French, and Portuguese for children, youth, and adults. Its goal is to respond to developing everyday life experiences in terms of holistic development for students through foreign languages that permit students to communicate, to share cultural experiences, and to advance professionally. This program targets individuals to respond to the skills needed to prepare students in a global context for academic, work, and cultural opportunities, especially in Colombia and its surrounding areas. The program adheres to the highest quality standards, as guided by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR; Council of Europe, 2001). It seeks to develop citizens capable of communicating according to internationally comparable standards, thereby contributing to the

integration of the country into global communication, the global economy, and cultural openness (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2006).

I was concerned with the program aimed at young people and adults, which is designed to develop the skills of communication at the B2 level on the CEFR. The methodology follows the tenets of the Communicative Approach and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), considering opportunities for interaction. The CEFR defines the form and structure for curricula, curriculum guidelines, curriculum examinations, teaching materials, and textbooks in the program. Students must develop communicative competence, as the ability to use their knowledge of the formal and sociolinguistic aspects of the language to communicate effectively in real-life situations.

The program consists of 588 hours of instruction, with a maximum of 25 students per group. There are 20 teachers in this program, all of whom have demonstrated at least C1 or B2 level proficiency in the language, as confirmed by an Oxford University Press or Cambridge Placement Test qualifying exam.

The research took place in a course offered by the Language Center on the campus in Puerto Escondido, a rural tourist area in the department of Córdoba. This multicultural and multiethnic context, as previously noted, exhibits high levels of poverty and deprivation. The majority of inhabitants are Black, Indigenous, Mulatto, and Raizal (DANE, 2018). Consequently, this area is a contested space characterized by cultural, racial, and ethnic struggles (Baszile, 2006).

For this study, I selected a teacher and an academic coordinator who worked in the tourism sector, which is the focus of this research. They are my colleagues, Álvaro and Luis (they consented to using their real names). They had expressed willingness to participate in the research process to change our educational realities. Because we shared the same issue, we participated in the PAR process by engaging in planning, practice, reflection, and action. In this

study, I acted as a teacher-researcher and participant-observer. This relationship helped to build the trust and rapport necessary for a successful research process. I clarify here that when I started this research, the Universidad de Córdoba and the Municipality of Puerto Escondido had an administrative agreement, but at the moment of collecting the data, the agreement had stopped. However, I continued the process in the school of Morindo, Florida, with the same students and the same teacher. I provided informed consent and adhered to the ethical standards of confidentiality in this study

Álvaro's Background

Alvaro has more than 15 years of teaching experience with multiple populations (children, young adults, and adults) at different levels in private and public schools and at a university language center. He has a bachelor's degree in English language teaching. He initially thought that learning English was vital for improving one's life by offering opportunities for jobs, travel, and living abroad. Currently, he advocates for cultural identity to counteract the dominance of English, which signifies reliance on foreign power. Thus, in the course contents, he emphasizes the local culture using local materials that represent indigenous, Black, and Colombian customs and heritage instead of relying on traditional elements from the U.S. or U.K. He is currently working in the context of the municipality of Puerto Escondido. He teaches students of a rural area named Morindo Florida in the school, and he also teaches some of them in the language center offered by Universidad de Córdoba, under an agreement with the local mayor, as part of the tourism program on his government agenda. The National Ministry of Education also asked the teacher to develop a plan for the 'Bilingualism Program'.

Luis's Background

Luis works as the academic coordinator for the language center. He has more than 20 years of experience in teaching various student populations (children, young adults, and adults) at all levels in private schools, public education, and in a university language center. He has a

bachelor's degree in English language teaching, a master's degree in ELT for self-directed learning, and a doctorate in education. For his academic work, he wrote a dissertation on the sociocritical-discursive English curriculum and dialogic interweaving, which focuses on developing human agency within the school environment to recognize and adapt to a new educational landscape. He is currently producing work on understanding and modifying educational methodologies. He started exploring and challenging decolonial practices when he realized the limitations of the traditional English curricula that left little room for considering the socio-cultural realities of Colombian students, particularly in marginalized parts of northern Colombia.

Student Participants' Background and Demographics

The four student participants in this study were enrolled in a beginner-level English course at a language center located in Puerto Escondido. Simultaneously, they attended a public secondary school in Morindo, Florida, a rural locality in Puerto Escondido, a northern Colombian coastal area envisioned for tourism development. Alvaro was their teacher in both contexts. They are descendants of Indigenous and Afro-descendant, working-class households comprising artisan fishermen, domestic laborers, and informal workers in agriculture and tourism. They ranged in age from 14 to 17 years. Their linguistic vocabulary encompassed numerous coastal Spanish dialects, alongside instances of ancestral languages like those cultural expressions manifested through Bullerengue dances; still, the students exhibit ambivalence towards English. They acknowledge its potential economic benefit but clarified that they consider it challenging to communicate in the language and that the material occasionally appears peculiar to them. These realities influenced the students' involvement in English learning, rendering them active participants in the collaborative development of a critical and context-specific pedagogy.

I selected this small group due to some research convenience. Firstly, they shared the condition of studying in the language center, in the same school, and in the same rural area. Additionally, this contextually embedded small group reflects the qualitative/interpretive nature of

the study with depth of insight, allowing for a more robust, triangulated account of the tensions, resistances, and transformative possibilities within English education in the locality.

My Positionality from the Territory I Speak

I write and walk from a place where memory, territory, and resistance meet, as a daughter of the Caribbean winds, born of the soils of northern Colombia, a white-passing mestiza teacher who acknowledges privilege but is committed as a co-learner and as a solidarity builder. I understand that research is inherently burdened with the baggage of memories, the weight of histories, the envelope of silences, and the legacy of resistance. I intend to walk with those who teach, dream, and resist within the walls of classrooms. I embrace decolonial research as an act of collective re-existence, through dialogue, weaving the voices, the collective knowledge, and the hope for a future in education of a more dignified nature.

In qualitative inquiry, researchers operate under the assumption that participants bring their backgrounds and experiences, which shape the data they share. Hence, researchers' "personal experiences, roles, and interests" (McKinney & Giorgis, 2009, p. 115) impact how they approach a study. Thus, I label myself as a white-passing mestiza (this condition gives me a different access to the hegemonic group), born in a rural area, cisgender, heterosexual, a native Spanish speaker, and able-bodied. Within my twenty-two years of teaching experience, I spent fifteen years as a schoolteacher in Planeta Rica, a municipality close to my hometown, Buenavista, Córdoba, Colombia. Then, I moved to another school in Montería, Córdoba, Colombia, my current workplace, where I have worked for ten years. This teaching stint has provided insights into how ICT in education has transformed classroom dynamics. I have engaged in curriculum transformation and reflected on teaching beliefs and practices. I also worked with preservice teachers in the BA program for Foreign Language Education at Universidad de

Córdoba for two years. Additionally, I have worked as a part-time teacher in the Language Center at the same university for 14 years.

In both cases, as a school teacher and university educator, I have had the chance to learn about course design and have modified it according to political education changes. I am also part of an ongoing research team that has looked at issues within teacher education. I have participated in national and international face-to-face and virtual workshops, conferences, and debates about English language acquisition and teaching, and the use of ICT in education.

My research experience and teaching beliefs favor content-based instructions; however, my experience with criticality in English language education started with some courses in my doctoral program before starting this research. I have known Luis for approximately 14 years and Álvaro for two years. We work together at the English Language Center. We have been in substantial collaboration and dialogue, which means all voices have been fully represented in this study. To this end, I explained to them that I positioned myself as a teacher-researcher, participant-observer, but also as a learner. I aim to understand their views and insights on critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices based on their prior understanding of these concepts and the preparation they underwent during this research process. As such, I am not traversing this path of knowledge as a purveyor of universal truths, but rather as a single voice among many, intertwining stories, struggles, and dreams into a shared horizon of critical hope.

As a teacher educator in northern Colombia, my positionality is closely connected to socio-historical realities within the region. My cultural, linguistic, and geographical connections with participants contributed to a level of trust and openness with accessing data, as well as my interpretation of events, since I was able to discern nuances in language, gestures and context that an outsider may have missed. My positionality in relation to decolonial and critical pedagogies meant that I read resistance not as a deficit, but as agency, and saw both students' and teachers'

local knowledges as epistemic resources. I was also aware that my socialization could lead me to impose my own expectations on participants' narratives. I practiced systematic reflexivity through memo writing and validation sessions with my co-researchers to try to ensure that my interpretations were negotiated, rather than imposed. Given that I acted as both colleague and researcher, I also had the ethical responsibility to honour participants' voices, while recognizing that participatory action research emphasized co-construction of meaning.

Ethics of Walking Together: Care, Voice, and Responsibility

In this research, I treated ethical considerations as a living commitment to care for the voices, dignities, and territories that shaped this collective journey; it was my priority to care for the wellness of co-researchers and student participants (Seidman, 2006). In that sense, and to ensure co-researchers' comfort throughout the study, I obtained their permission to use their real names. Regarding the students, I decided to assign each of them a pseudonym. In line with the guidelines that Mora Vélez (2010) suggested in his dissertation, I used gender-neutral pseudonyms, formed by just including the first syllable of their real names. Thus, to minimize gender bias, all pseudonyms are neutral, and I assigned them to each participant in alphabetical order on a first-come, first-served basis. I believe that this procedure fits the goals of my study because this systematic procedure for assigning names minimizes any possible sense of hierarchy in the assignment of names, regardless of age, rank, gender, etc. I considered all opinions equally important, necessary, and useful to construct my arguments based on the findings. (Mora Vélez, 2010, p. 78).

Framing the Data Within Participatory Action Research Principles

This research required the collaborative execution and awareness of actions that facilitate new forms of interaction and observation of reality, generating uncertainties and seeking creative ways to address and transform them. To achieve the proposed objectives and the construction of

knowledge, I incorporated elements of Participatory Action Research (PAR). PAR operates on four common principles (Cammarota & Fine, 2008; Kemmis, 2007; McIntyre, 2008; Torre et al., 2012): (1) Engaging in collective inquiry to explore a problem, phenomenon, or situation. (2) Focusing on and utilizing indigenous knowledge to inform all aspects of the research process. (3) Emphasize actionable steps toward transforming the world for a more just society. (4) Involvement of critical reflexive practices throughout the research inquiry (in both collective and individual reflections) to interrogate issues of power and privilege inherent in the research process.

I particularly emphasized the fourth principle, which focuses on critical reflection. The degree of participation in this study was high; participants (students and co-researchers) did contribute to the data collection and were actively involved in the reflection, analysis, and interpretation processes. They became agents of self-transformation and contextual transformation and engaged in a reflective process that encouraged a personal, social, critical, and autonomous perspective (Elliott, 2000b). By positioning participants as essential collaborators in the knowledge production process rather than merely as subjects (Omodan & Dastile, 2023), I ensured their voices and experiences were central. The result contributed to a socially just methodology (Campbell, 2016; Chawla & Atay, 2018) aimed at building critical consciousness (Vang et al., 2023).

The Role of Facilitator or Mediator in Emancipatory Action Research

The group of practitioners in this study jointly assumed the development of practice, reflection, and action on it. We brought to light habits, uses, traditions, control, and bureaucratic routines and contradictions. We collectively decided on how to engage, challenge, and distribute pedagogical considerations for critical English education. We assumed the task of changing ourselves to change institutions through practical features of emancipatory action research in a collaborative context (Becerra-Hernández & Moya-Romero, 2010).

As an English teacher-researcher and product of a rural region adjacent to the site of the study, my shared cultural, language, and geographic affiliations with the participants allowed for trust and willingness to share data, played a role in shaping my understanding of the events, and heightened my awareness of nuances in language, gesture, and context that an outsider would most likely miss. My decolonial positionality also allowed me to read resistance as agency, and to view students' and the teacher's local knowledges as epistemic resources. However, I remained constantly aware of the danger of overlaying my expectations onto participants and narratives. I addressed this potentiality for bias by using systematic reflexivity through memo writing and co-researchers' consensus validation sessions to interpret data dialogically and not just a product of my own will. This notion of undertaking my dual positionality as both colleague and researcher also invited deliberation on my ethical obligation to faithfully represent participant voice while acknowledging the co-construction of meaning inherent in participatory action research.

In what follows, I discuss the steps that determine the research path for the group's collaborative construction of the research objectives in a way that is both reflective and interactive, in line with the PAR's ideological framework and the group's systemic legitimacy.

Stage 1: Observation, Preliminary Diagnosis, and Reflection

In this first phase, which includes community immersion and research problem description, I aimed to involve actors, characterize the context, and set process objectives. The co-researchers helped set the objectives and got involved in the deconstruction process through reflection and action. This phase started with observation, which resulted in an outline for the initial pedagogical proposal. Upon completion of this exploration, it became necessary to return all the systematized and related information to the agents. This systematic return represented a way to identify some considerations for deconstructing and constructing English teaching approaches.

Stage 2: Deconstruction and Collective Critical Self-Diagnosis

This phase outlined the moment of collective reflection and action. Considering the distilled information from the observation of the research problem, the main objective of this stage was to confront reality and gather essential data for designing an intervention. The student participants engaged in group presentations and discussions, recognizing the subjects, classroom practices, the ideological affiliation of knowledge, and critical recovery. The aim was to identify the key elements that enabled the construction of a situated didactic framework that integrates critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices in the English language in northern Colombian tourist areas.

Stage 3: Reconstruction and Collective Dialogical Consensus

The deconstruction we carried out in the previous stage led us to reconstruct the problem (Correa et al., 2020). Then, we explored some constructs, which helped us understand how knowledge is socially constructed through collective programming and executing an action plan that promoted the transformation of states of consciousness. This stage was self-managed because it aimed to articulate and make each participant cooperate in a set of actions as democratically as possible, facilitating individual reflection and community dialogic consensus. The ultimate goal was the establishment of stable, community-empowering platforms and the outline of the third theoretical design of the pedagogical practice framework.

Research Material: Defining the Resources and Tools for a Collaborative Inquiry

In this research proposal, research material refers to the participants, resources, tools, and methodologies I employed to gather, analyze, and interpret data within the framework of participatory action research (PAR). As Vang et al. (2023) highlight, it was crucial to uphold the moral commitment of PAR to ensure that power relationships were not hidden behind the façade of participation. To honor this commitment, I fully integrated participants' (the teacher's and the

coordinator's) contributions throughout all phases of the research. Together, we collaboratively shaped research questions, plans, and actions. By incorporating the lived experiences of co-researchers, we aimed to confront power imbalances and foster meaningful change.

The following tools reflect the democratic position in this research: I carried out observational fieldwork, analyzed documents, facilitated a discussion and reflection group, and implemented a systematic return. I used them in dialectical spaces and conversations with systematic return as a component of information transfer due to their legitimacy among the participants.

Co-Researchers, Techniques, and Instruments

The socio-critical paradigm requires a methodology that supports the research process and aligns with the researcher's onto-epistemic vision (Guba, 1990). In PAR, scientific and popular knowledge merge to transform social reality, requiring a complex dialogical unity between theory and practice (Correa et al., 2020). Thus, I adjusted the following instruments to this position; they reflect a democratic and inclusive stance: These instruments include descriptive records, discussion group records, self-reflection records, and observation guides. These tools were employed in dialectical spaces like discussion tables, where systematic feedback served as a means of information validation by the participating community (Correa et al., 2020, p. 44).

It is important to say that in the first stage of this research, I, along with the co-researchers, met and reached a consensus on the methods for engaging, gathering data, and displaying results concerning the traits of our diverse views on the critical paradigm and experiences with distinct students. We had a discussion about our perceptions of using democratic tools that foster engagement in critical reflective praxis (Freire, 2011) and that address power asymmetries within research (Vang et al., 2023). We considered both the process and the product and agreed on the selected techniques and instruments. Later, we again made adjustments based on the

recommendations from the dissertation evaluators. The following are the techniques and instruments presented in the systemic articulation matrix of the investigative process.

Document Analysis of The Research Categories

I looked at how to rebuild documentary information from sources like national policy and different viewpoints from our research, course materials, and official documents to understand the current policies that impact the situation and how the co-researchers engaged with them. I documented this information in a summary registration matrix.

In-Depth Interview About the Teacher's Teaching Conceptions

Following Correa et al.'s (2020) lead, I conducted an in-depth interview to gather insights from Álvaro, the co-researcher who teaches in a northern Colombian tourist area. This technique encouraged open and spontaneous conversations about the research topic and blended factual information with reflective dialogue grounded in repeated observations (Fals, 1986). I followed up with a semi-structured format.

Discussion and Reflection Groups

The database was a core tool; in the group with the co-researchers, we gradually created a systematic network for gathering viewpoints on the research topics and experiences (Correa et al., 2020). It facilitated collective inquiry and reflection, which were essential for developing critical consciousness among us. It enabled the group to discuss findings, reflect on actions, and plan subsequent steps. All voices were heard equally, and I considered multiple iterations of these sessions to align with the cyclical nature of PAR (plan, act, observe, and reflect). I also took into account the student participants' opinions in a dialogue analysis. To collect the data, I used a

document analysis matrix, a semi-structured diagnostic instrument, student discussion group guides, and pedagogical minutes of collective construction, which I validated with three experts.

The reflection group was a key aspect of the data collection and served as a dialogical space for making meaning, analyzing, and co-constructing. The co-researcher group ran weekly over a period of two months and presented opportunities for the teacher-researcher at selected times to listen and share. As for the small groups of students, there was a unique session framed by a guiding question or prompt derived from classroom activity, student work, or a critical incident in pedagogical practice. It followed open-ended reflection; thus, we returned to the original session each time we considered the necessity.

During the co-researcher conversation, we analyzed previously identified and framed themes, including language hierarchies, cultural identity, classroom agency, and tensions between local and global. We returned to transcripts from the students' meeting and to the notes in the meeting minutes, and we reread and analyzed the thematic and dialogic coding. The reflection group sessions stimulated rich insights into participants' evolving beliefs, tensions, and transformations, but also provided recursive spaces to return to data, provide new interpretations of data, and continually define what, at its core, remains key to the didactic framework. By prioritizing dialogue over evaluation, these spaces performed a praxis of collective inquiry and pedagogical dignity. Thus, the discussion group functions both as a space of co-analysis and as a site of pedagogical transformation. Discussions centered on identifying how critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices were or were not manifesting in classroom practices.

Systematic Return

Systematic return involved ongoing feedback loops, where co-researchers continuously engaged with and contributed to the evolving research process, rather than being a one-time

devolution of findings. They validated and further reflected on maintaining transparency as well as ensuring that the research remains aligned with real-life needs and perspectives. In this process, I returned to them the data collected in a more refined, systematized, and mature way to study the impact of this return and to continue advancing according to the agreed schedule. This process was recurrent throughout the information flow, which created validity and reliability (Correa et al., 2020). I used a matrix to track progress, reports, and pedagogical minutes.

Research Material Analysis Process

I analyzed the data based on Braun and Clarke's Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013, 2019, 2021, 2022, 2023) approach, which emphasizes the importance of the researcher's critical reflexivity of their prior experience, knowledge, and social positioning. This approach allowed the qualitative reading of the data, recognizing the co-construction of knowledge among the researcher, the co-researchers, and the data. This process took us to repeatedly access the material, making it easier to find and understand patterns that fit the qualitative method through a flexible but rigorous process for analyzing complex and nuanced materials. As a researcher, I engaged in critical reflection on my experiences, understandings, and social positions (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2019). I was able to critically reflect and interpret data qualitatively, acknowledging that knowledge is situated and co-constructed between the researcher and the data.

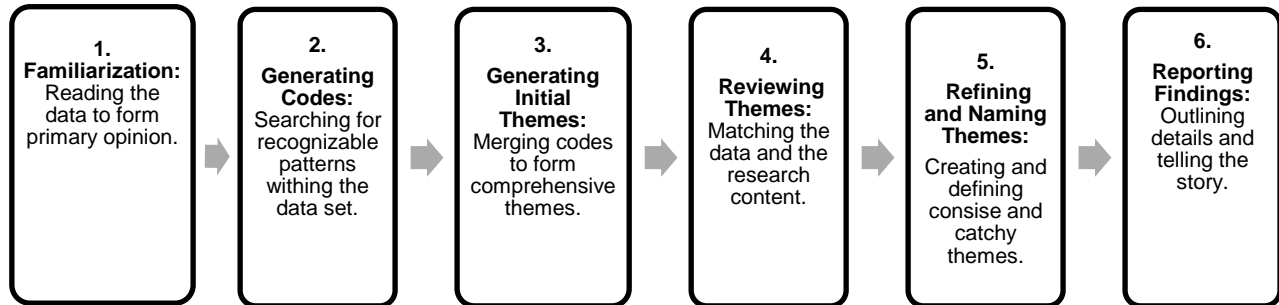
I considered the four areas of reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2019): how to look at the data, what the main ideas are, the qualitative framework, and the theoretical frameworks, keeping in mind that these areas often connect and are not separated. I also used inductive coding to capture participants' voices and pattern definitions and took into account deductive coding, informed by the theoretical lenses of critical literacy, intercultural dialogues and multimodal practices to interpret data. For semantic analysis, I focused on explicit meanings,

whereas for latent analysis, I looked for underlying meanings. This experiential framework highlighted the participants' lived experiences, whereas the critical frameworks focused on broader issues. This realist approach led me to uncover objective realities, while the constructed approach of sensitivity helped me explore the social construction of meaning in this dissertation (Braun & Clarke, 2019). In addition, for the analytic sensibility of interpreting data within a broader context, I needed to support all the information with a systematic framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

I followed Braun and Clarke's (2023) ten recommendations. They highlight the need to understand that there are different TA approaches, make sure our analysis matches our research values, explain any differences in methods, and remind us as researchers to connect our reflections to our analysis and clearly explain how we used our chosen approach. I also followed the recommendation that the distinctions between topic summaries and interpretative stories should be recognized, and the language around theme development should be consistent. It was also important to provide clear overviews of themes and ensure that quality standards aligned with the TA approach. These guidelines served to make us reflect and provoke thoughtful and rigorous TA practice. The process comprised six stages, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2.

RTA's six phases (adapted from Braun and Clarke, 2013).



(Source: Own elaboration)

Familiarization. Rigorously engaging with the data, reading, and re-reading it. Next, establishing a certain distance from the data, reflexively asking questions of oneself, and taking notes.

Generating codes. Methodically reviewing the data and searching for segments that appear interesting, relevant, and provoking in relation to the research question, and then writing brief descriptions (codes) next to them. It is a careful and exploratory process that requires paying close attention to the data, looking for meanings and patterns, and considering four areas of thematic analysis (less-more reductive, semantic-latent, experiential-critical, realist, essentialist-relativist, and constructionist).

Generating initial themes, especially pertaining to the research question. We deliberately and thoughtfully drew upon and integrated the researchers' positions, knowledge, and intellectual interests to aid this process.

Developing and reviewing themes. Adjusting pre-existing concepts that consider re-examination of the data after having already undertaken the former three phases requires letting go of some or all themes altogether.

Refining, defining, and naming themes. The process involves creating themes that capture the essence and identifying themes that are concise and catchy.

Reporting findings. Writing up a story while refining and reconsidering some aspects of the analysis, including the themes. Data extracts provide an evidential basis for analytical claims and allow the reader to evaluate the claims' validity based on the source data.

Research Process for Critical English Language Education: A Collaborative Pedagogical Proposal for a Northern Colombia Tourist Area

I organized key elements of PAR's cycles into three stages, adjusting them to Nieto-Miranda's (2021) adaptation: Initial Insertion, Middle Insertion, and High Insertion. Before those stages, I carried out some preliminary activities, which involved recognizing the problem and context, identifying and initiating meetings with participants, establishing the theoretical and epistemological foundation, and delineating the methodological approach. These activities also included presenting a progress report to the tutorial and evaluation committees, defending the candidacy, and formally applying to the university's superior committee for research development. To encourage voluntary and free participation, I extended an open, formal invitation to the co-researchers. This invitation aimed to foster environments of reflection and authentic dialogue, facilitated through a motivational awareness workshop. The workshop was supported by a digital poster, an invitation protocol, and a consent form.

Table 1.*Preliminary activities*

ACTIVITIES	DATES
Recognition of the problem and context; identification of actors	August–October 2023
Theoretical Epistemological Foundation and Delimitation of the Methodological Route	Sept 2023–March 2024
Progress Report to the Tutorial Committee	May 10, 2024
Defense of the candidacy	September 10, 2024
Formal Application to the University Superior Committee for Research	September 10, 2024
Research Development Process	September 2024–April 2025

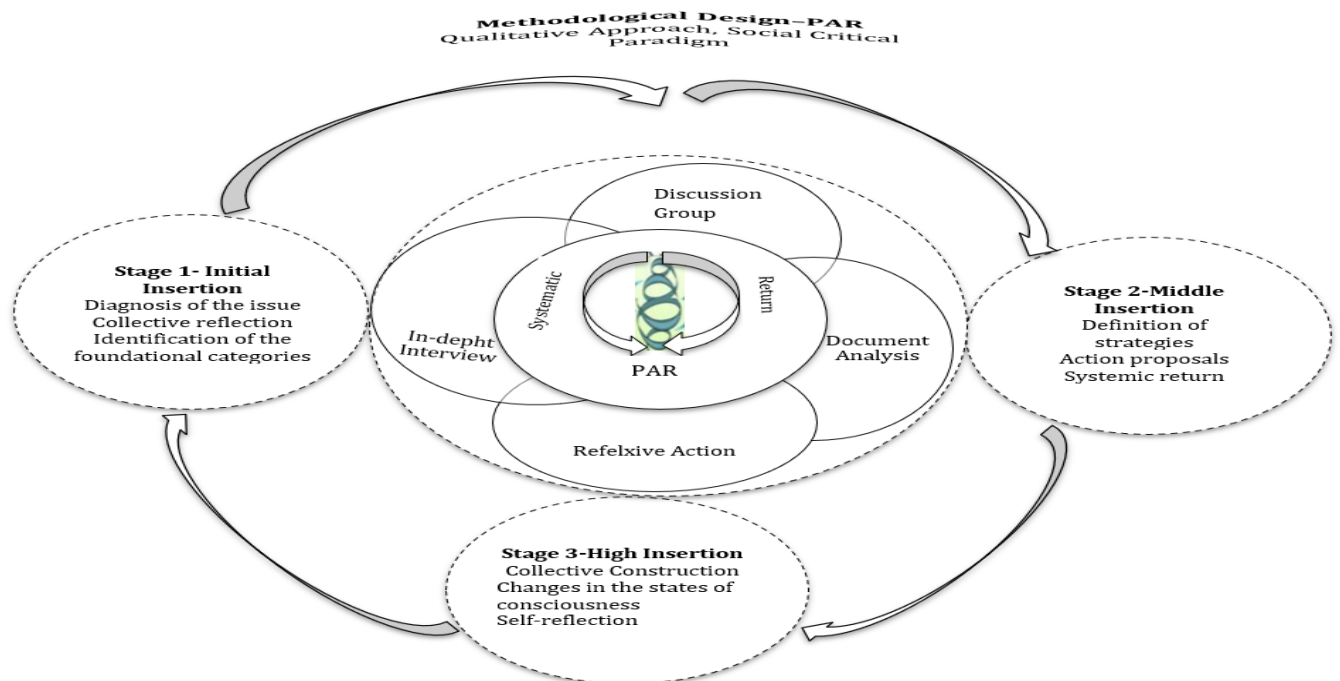
(Source: Own elaboration)

Figure 3., shows the stages followed within PAR, considering that this cycle includes systematic feedback. In this research, the first stage involves immersion and recognition of the co-researchers to gain contextual knowledge, explore the problem under analysis, and generate as much data as possible to identify the particularities of the setting and the subjects for negotiation. This is a pre-investigation phase (Martí, 2012) that encompasses the detection of some symptoms, the convening of stakeholders, negotiation, and project development. The second stage corresponds to reality confrontation and involves collecting essential data for designing interventions. It integrates information gathering, introduction of analytical elements, and the beginning of fieldwork (interview with co-researchers). The third stage is the development of pathways that take into account the students' critical literacy, intercultural, and multimodal practices as a process of opening up to all existing knowledge and viewpoints, using qualitative and participatory methods. It also incorporates fieldwork, the analysis of work and discourse. The final stage corresponds to the process of re-linking and configuring the didactic framework,

providing concrete conclusions and proposals in a systematic manner that provokes transformations. The evaluation and assessment is a process according to elements of the PAR process, and therefore the cycle repeats itself according to the results found and the needs that give life to the investigative and participatory work.

Figure 3.

Methodological Design



(Source: Adapted from Nieto-Miranda, 2021)

Stage 1. Initial Insertion.

To align with the epistemic intention of the first research objective, I initiated preliminary collective reflection and action on critical literacy and intercultural practices within the focus educational community. I extended an invitation to co-researchers, aiming to meet them, motivate their involvement in structuring the research, and foster environments for reflection and authentic dialogue. We analyzed and reflected on elements of the systematic return technique by reading

the record of the registration matrix and emerging themes about the pedagogical processes that have shaped education compared to decolonial lenses in the Language Center at the Universidad de Córdoba for students in a tourist area, and reached an agreement in the foundational categories. We also analyzed the themes that resulted from the diagnostic dialogue we had during the interview process. We met three times to validate the data analysis. Through group discussions, we engaged in deconstruction, self-diagnosis, self-awareness, and reflection to understand the way they apply critical literacy, intercultural, and multimodal approaches in English language instruction within a northern Colombian tourist area.

Table 2.

Stage 1. Initial insertion: Document diagnosis and teacher's voice in English language education within a Northern Colombian area.

Question	Research Stage: 1	Objective	Scientific areas	Techniques	Instruments
How does a teacher in a northern Colombian tourist area incorporate critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices into English language education?	Initial insertion - Presentation and diagnosis of the issue - Collective reflection on the processes of critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices in the education community.	To characterize the praxis of a teacher in relation to the critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices that support English language education in a northern Colombian tourist area.	Analysis and interpretation of the categories under study and the relevant documents pertaining to the nature of the research, such as reports, educational policy, and references related to critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and	Document analysis	Information Recording Matrix

- Identification of the
foundational
categories.

multimodal practices
in Colombia and
globally

Interview with the
teacher about the
didactic foundations
he has implemented
in literacy and
intercultural practices

Semi-structured
interview

Pedagogical
Report

Photographic
Record

Systematic return on
the findings and the
corresponding
triangulation between
the references of
critical literacy and

Discussion group

Guiding
Framework
Pedagogical
Report
Photographic
Record

intercultural didactics
related to the practice
of the teacher within
the research reality.

(Source: Adapted from Nieto-Miranda, 2021)

Stage 2. Middle Insertion

To confront reality and gather essential data for designing the didactic framework, I began by identifying the subjects, classroom practices, and ideological affiliations of knowledge and engaging in critical reflection. It included recognizing students' critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices as well as their voices in relation to the elements that make a transformative instructional proposal possible. Álvaro, the students, and I all took part in systematic feedback, and there was a discussion circle about the new multimodal processes that the students expressed. The goal was to identify the key elements that enable the construction of a situated didactic framework that integrates critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices in English language education in a northern Colombian tourist area.

Table 3.

Stage 2. Middle insertion: Students' voices toward constructing a situated framework for critical literacy and intercultural and multimodal practices.

Question	Research Stage 2	Objective	Scientific areas	Techniques	Instruments
What are the key elements necessary for constructing a situated didactic framework of a pedagogical practice that integrates critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal	Middle Insertion: Collective reflection on the factors that enable the construction of a didactic framework of critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices based on the recognition of subjects, classroom	To identify the key elements that enable the construction of a situated didactic framework that integrates critical literacy. intercultural dialogues and multimodal practices in English language education	Recognition of the critical literacy and intercultural practices of students.	Document analysis of archive collections of literacy practices (posters, acrostics, drawings, storytelling, etc.)	Document analysis matrix
			Recognition of students' voices in relation to the elements that enable a	Discussion group	-Guiding Document - Recording

practices in	practices, the	in a northern	transformative didactic	Meeting
English language	ideological affiliation	Colombian tourist	framework.	Minutes
education in a	of knowledge, and	area.		
northern	critical recovery.			
Colombian tourist			Systematic Return:	Discussion circle
area?			Participation by	
			Teachers and	
			Students.	
			Discussion circle on the	
			merging findings with	
			the co-researchers.	

(Source: Adapted from Nieto-Miranda, 2021)

Stage 3: High Insertion

The recognition of a transformative didactic framework in the previous stage led to the reconstruction of the problem at hand. This stage reflected elements of the complex thinking approach (Correa, Molina, & González, 2020). It involved the social construction of knowledge, which emerged from the collective planning and execution of an action plan aimed at transforming states of consciousness. This phase was self-managed, as it involved a collaborative action process as democratically as possible to facilitate participant-based dialogic consensus. The goal was to create stable platforms that energized the community and supported the pedagogical proposal's third theoretical model of the didactic framework.

Table 4.

Stage 3. High insertion: From the Cimarrona's voice-collectively re-existing, pedagogical transformation, and the decolonial weaving of knowledge

Question	Research Stage	Objective	Scientific areas	Techniques	Instuments
	3				
	High Stage	To collectively	Structuring and connecting	In-depth	Questionnaires
How can a	Insertion	configure a situated	knowledge with the specialized	interview to	Matrix of
situated didactic		didactic framework	scientific community.	experts	Pedagogical
framework	Collective	that transforms			Reflection
designed	reflection on:	English education	Structuring and concretizing the	Discussion group	Minutes
collaboratively	- Transformation	by integrating	elements of the didactic		Planning protocol
integrate critical	of pedagogical	critical literacy,	framework.		for the discussion
literacy,	practices	intercultural			group
intercultural	through the	dialogues, and	- Systematic Return:	Discussion group	Guiding
dialogues, and	collective	multimodal	An interdisciplinary dialogue		documents
multimodal	construction of a	practices to meet	that addresses scenarios of		Minutes
practices into		the needs of	transformation around critical		

English education to meet the needs of students in a northern Colombian tourist area?	didactic approach - Changes in states of consciousness - Scientific foundation and theorization	students in a northern Colombian tourist area.	literacy and intercultural and multimodal practices through collective construction. - Analysis of the didactic framework based on the relationship between the language center and the community.
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(Source: Adapted from Nieto-Miranda, 2021)

Chapter 4 - Weaving Resistance and Re-existence Through Critical Literacy, Intercultural Dialogues, and Multimodal Practices in an English Language Classroom

With the Cimarrona's voice in my mind, I understood that resistance is not only opposing oppression; it is imagining a different life, a struggle, and hope for transformation. In this vein, I made chapter four a space to unfold the co-researchers' and students' voices. I explain step by step the findings of our collaborative inquiry, highlighting the way co-researchers and students engaged, resisted, and reconfigured colonial narratives in English language education. Our reflections became powerful choices to represent local knowledge and students' identities. Each theme we posited reflects different tensions, hopes, and transformative strategies that support our commitment to a critical and emancipatory English education.

Through the findings, I connect lived stories in a framework that seeks to enable learners from a tourist area of northern Colombia to critically interact with their sociocultural realities. I highlight how these findings align with the objectives, questions, and methodology of this research. Multimodal practices underpin a shared framework of critical literacy and intercultural didactics, which forms the foundation of the exploration that follows using RTA as shown in Table 5.

Table 5.

Data Analysis Flowchart

Stage	Description	Tools/Strategies	Outcome
1. Familiarization	Reading & re-reading transcripts	Annotated transcript Microsoft comments	Initial ideas
2. Generating Codes	Labelling meaningful segments	Memo writing	Initial codes
3. Generating Initial Themes	Grouping related codes	Constant comparison	Code families

4. Reviewing Themes	Matching the data into themes	Thematic mapping	Thematic Patterns
5. Refining and Naming Themes	Linking to framework	CELE alignment	Final analytical model
6. Reporting Findings	Telling the story	Thematic mapping	Finding Report

I followed the six RTA stages and went through a rigorous process of reading, re-reading, annotations, labeling, creating initial codes, grouping, creating thematic patterns, refining, renaming, linking to framework, and reporting finding.

Documented Diagnosis and Álvaro's Voice of the English Language Education Practice in a Northern Colombian Tourist Area

This section corresponds to the first stage outlined in Chapter 3. I began characterizing the theoretical, epistemological, and didactic foundations that support Álvaro's (teacher) praxis in critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices in English language education within a northern Colombia tourist area. I gathered information through a reflective document analysis and then conducted a 45-minute in-depth interview, leading to a detailed understanding of the educational realities discussed in this dissertation. I invited Álvaro and Luis (the coordinator) to participate in a two-hour pedagogical reflection session, the systematic return process of PAR, to refine the findings and ensure relevance and accuracy. In the next cycle, I conducted another document analysis with students' products and facilitated a follow-up group discussion. In the final cycle, we identified the key elements that enabled the construction of a situated didactic framework integrating critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices in English language education in a northern Colombian tourist area.

Critical Review of Policy and Pedagogical Documents: Processing and Report

For the document review process, I gathered, chose, and recorded useful information from documents (D) that helped build the theory and understanding of the research object. I reviewed a total of six documents. This process consisted of conceptual, theoretical, legal, methodological, organizational, contextual, and background frameworks, enabling a comprehensive exploration of important documents. These included official documents from the Ministry of National Education of Colombia (Colombian Basic Standards), institutional materials (course content and descriptive letters), and literature on critical literacy and intercultural practices (as detailed in Table 6).

Table 6.

Documents and their descriptions

Documents	Description
1 Colombian EFL curriculum	National policy document outlining English education standards in Colombia.
2 Decolonial Perspectives	Literature review on critical intercultural dialogues and the decolonial turn in English education.
3 Critical Literacy	Literature review focusing on critical pedagogy in English education.
4 Multimodal Practices	Literature review emphasizing multimodal approaches to equity and justice in English education.
5 Course Content	Analysis of textbook content (<i>Interchange</i>) for colonial language patterns and relevance to students' contexts.
6 Descriptive Letter	Institutional document describing the language program at Universidad de Córdoba.

(Source: Own elaboration)

I followed Braun and Clarke's six phases of the RTA framework, using the four domains: orientation to data, focus of meaning, qualitative framework, and theoretical frameworks. I used the ideas of decolonization, critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, multimodal practices, and latent analysis to support this deductive method, which shows the underlying power dynamics and cultural hegemony. The study looked at systemic barriers and educator agency from a relativist and constructionist perspective, using a qualitative and critical lens to study how meaning is made in society.

Familiarization and Key Observations. A close examination of the data revealed systematic issues in English language education in northern Colombia. These included a lack of focus on critical literacy and diverse teaching methods in national policies and curricula, teachers' struggles to incorporate local culture while encouraging critical thinking, and opportunities for using varied methods to enhance student engagement and critical praxis.

Coding Process. I coded key segments of data to align with the research objectives and questions. In terms of critical literacy, I wrote the following: (1) Power Dynamics (PD): Lack of content critiquing inequalities (D1); (2) Student Empowerment (SE): Opportunities for critical thinking and action (D3); (3) Local-Global Connection (LGC): Bridging local traditions with global narratives (Ds 2, 3). In critical intercultural practices, I wrote (1) Cultural Representation (CR): minimal acknowledgement of local cultural identities (Docs. 1, 5). (2) Decolonial Practices (DP): Integrating diverse voices and addressing systemic inequalities (D2). Multimodal practices include creative engagement (CE), which uses visual and digital tools to connect local and global themes. (2) Technological Constraints (TC): Barriers to multimodal practices (D4).

Themes From the Coding Process. (1) Systemic gaps in critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices: Curricular and institutional constraints hinder integration of critical perspectives. (2) Teacher-led cultural integration: The teacher creatively incorporates local

culture despite systemic rigidity. (3) Multimodality as a Bridge to Critical Praxis: Potential for multimodal tools to enhance critical literacy and intercultural understanding.

Reviewing and Refining Themes. To ensure coherence and relevance, I ensured alignment with the data. The themes were:

- **Navigating institutional constraints:** Challenges in implementing critical pedagogy as curricula prioritize linguistic proficiency over critical engagement (Docs. 1, 6).
- **Cultural mediators: teacher as agent of change:** The teacher connects English learning with students' cultural realities, fostering engagement and identity pride (Docs 2, 3).
- **Unlocking potential: Multimodality in critical education:** Multimodal tools offer transformative learning opportunities despite technological barriers (Doc 4).

Defining and Naming Themes. The final themes succinctly captured their essence.

- **Lost opportunities:** Navigating systemic barriers. Institutional policies emphasize linguistic proficiency, sidelining critical and intercultural perspectives. The Colombian basic standards (D1) highlight functional skills while neglecting critical literacy or intercultural reflection. Textbooks like *Interchange* (D5) perpetuate global cultural stereotypes, further widening the disconnect between policy and practice.
- **Bridging cultures:** The Teacher as a change agent. Despite systemic constraints, Álvaro integrates local culture into lessons, enriching learning experiences and fostering cultural pride. For example, activities like connecting the coconut festival with textbook themes (Docs 2, 3).
- **Pathways forward:** Multimodality as a catalyst for change. Multimodal tools, though underutilized due to technological barriers, empower students to connect local realities with global challenges. Multimodal practices (D4) advocate using visual and

digital media to enhance critical literacy and intercultural practices.

Álvaro's Interview: Processing and Report

Familiarization. Following the RTA phases, I began familiarizing myself with the data by actively listening to the interview recording without taking any notes. This approach helped me comprehend the principal topics discussed before transcription. After I transcribed the interview, I read the data many times. I kept informal notes about initial patterns in the data and noteworthy segments in the transcripts. I recorded initial observations and early patterns about both the data and my way through the analysis process. I highlighted the themes from Álvaro's experience as follows:

- **A disconnect between curriculum and local context:** I noted challenges in adapting the English textbook to Puerto Escondido's regional context.
- **Struggles with critical literacy practices:** Álvaro displayed limited opportunities to incorporate critical literacy due to institutional limitations.
- **Barriers to intercultural understanding:** Álvaro demonstrated an overemphasis on foreign cultures in the curriculum and a lack of representation of local traditions.
- **Teacher agency and adaptation:** Álvaro discussed creative ways to integrate local culture within limited curricular freedom.

Generating Initial Codes. I used Microsoft Word's (2016) comments function for systematic coding and highlighted semantic and latent patterns in the data. I methodically analyzed the full dataset, giving equal attention to each data item and identifying intriguing and instructive elements to generate themes. The comments feature in Microsoft Word enables the annotation of codes in the side margin while simultaneously highlighting the corresponding text space for each code. I ensured that the code I highlighted offered enough information to inform common items in the research issue (Braun & Clarke, 2012; Braun et al., 2016) and that it

addressed the research question. After numerous iterations of coding and confirmation of the suitability of the codes for the themes or to be discarded, I repeated the iteration process and tracked the evolution of the codes. I coded five data items semantically and latently (Braun & Clarke, 2012) with key excerpts to identify recurring patterns.

- **Rigid curriculum (RC):** "We have to follow the book completely; no changes allowed."
- **Local cultural integration (LCI):** "I encourage students to relate festivals in the book to our coconut festival."
- **Student motivation (SM):** "Some students are motivated by tourism opportunities; others lack interest."
- **Critical reflection (CR):** "Students question why foreign cultures dominate the English content."
- **Technological challenges (TC):** "Limited access to technology hinders multimodal literacy practices."

Generating Initial Themes Pertaining to the Research Question. I developed broader themes from the codes and established relationships among codes to inform narrative coherence. I reviewed the coded data and analyzed it to see if different codes combined according to meanings to form themes or sub-themes, and whether a similar underlying concept could be represented by a single code (Braun & Clarke, 2012). I established relationships among the different codes to inform the narrative of a given theme and made sure that the pattern of codes and data items communicated something meaningful that helps answer the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

I constructed a miscellaneous theme or category to contain all the codes that do not appear to fit in among any prospective themes (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

-
- **Systemic constraints in English education:** It indicates that institutional policies limit the adaptation of English teaching to local realities.
 - **Teacher-led cultural integration:** There were efforts to connect curriculum content with regional traditions and student experiences.
 - **Barriers to critical literacy and intercultural practices:** Limited curricular flexibility and student readiness challenge more profound engagement.
 - **Opportunities for emancipatory education:** There were emerging possibilities to promote cultural pride and local representation through creative teaching strategies.

Developing and Reviewing Themes. I refined concepts to ensure alignment with the research question, coherence, and relevance of data to each theme. I analyzed the candidate themes and compared them to the coded data items and the entire dataset (Braun & Clarke 2012, 2020). To be sure if the themes addressed the research question, I followed Braun and Clarke's (2012) series of key questions:

Is this a theme or code? If it is a theme, what is its quality (does it tell me something useful about the dataset and my research question)? What are the boundaries of this theme (what does it include and exclude)? Is the theme sufficiently supported by meaningful data, or is it too thin or thick? Is the data too diverse and wide-ranging (does the theme lack coherence)? (p. 65)

As part of the analysis, I looked at the relationships between the data points and the codes that describe each theme and sub-theme to see if they formed a logical pattern that added to the overall story of the data set as follows:

- **Systemic constraints:** Systemic constraints that reflect the structural challenges, such as rigid curricula and textbooks, that hinder localization.
- **Cultural integration:** Cultural integration efforts that capture the teacher's attempts

to align global English content with local traditions.

- **Intercultural and literacy barriers:** Intercultural and literacy barriers that emphasize institutional and technological barriers to promoting critical literacy and interculturality.
- **Pathways to emancipation:** Pathways to emancipation that highlight the teacher's aspirations for a curriculum that values local identities.

Refining, Defining, and Naming Themes. I constructed detailed thematic frameworks and selected vivid extracts to illustrate themes. I defined the themes to encapsulate their essence, making a detailed analysis of the thematic framework, theme, and sub-themes in relation to both the dataset and the research question. I got all the themes together to create a consistent narrative. I analyzed them, identifying underlying data items to be used as extracts when writing up the results of the analysis. This approach provided a vivid and compelling account of the arguments by the respective refined themes as follows:

- **Caught between policies and practice:** Structural challenges limit the localization of curriculum materials. There is evidence of institutional rigidity affecting classroom teaching, which limits Álvaro's ability to adapt curriculum materials to local contexts. He expressed frustration with the rigid adherence to English textbooks, which prioritize international cultural content and disregard local realities. Key evidence includes statements like "We have to follow the book completely; no changes allowed" and "The book doesn't include anything about Colombian culture or our region." The impact is that these policies prevent Álvaro from tailoring lessons to students' lived experiences. He feels constrained, hindering adaptation to local contexts.
- **Bridging worlds with local culture:** Álvaro creatively contextualized global content with regional traditions. This theme captures the teacher's efforts to integrate local cultural practices into lessons, despite institutional barriers. He mentioned activities like

connecting the coconut festival with textbook themes to make lessons more relatable. Key evidence is "I encourage students to relate festivals in the book to our coconut festival," and "I try to help them see their identity in the language they are learning." The impact is that these efforts foster cultural pride and meaningful learning experiences.

- **Breaking barriers to critical thinking:** There are challenges in fostering critical literacy and intercultural dialogue in a place where resources, student readiness, and institutional policies create obstacles. Key evidence is "Students question why foreign cultures dominate the English content," and "The lack of technology and resources makes it difficult to use multimodal tools." This limits transformative learning opportunities. Students and teachers struggle to engage critically with global and local cultural narratives, as there are limited transformative learning opportunities.
- **Seeds of change:** There are opportunities for promoting cultural pride and transformative education. This theme explores the opportunities for transformative education through decolonial approaches. The teacher expressed a desire for curriculum reforms that prioritize local culture and student empowerment. Key evidence is "I would like to create my own materials related to the region's issues" and "We are working on changing the English curriculum to attract more tourists and empower students." The impact of this finding is that these aspirations indicate potential pathways for addressing systemic inequalities in English language education.

Reporting Findings. I crafted a thematic map to highlight interconnections. I met with Álvaro and Luis to see if the themes matched what Álvaro wanted to convey in the interview, and then we looked at important texts from the theoretical framework to connect the themes to the larger picture of English language education in this area of northern Colombia. We included the

following: “the systemic barriers that constrain critical literacy and intercultural practices,” “the teacher’s innovative but limited effort to bridge curriculum content with local realities,” and “the potential for a decolonial shift in pedagogy that empowers students to engage critically with both their culture and global influences.”

Finally, my observation was that “there are complexities involved in integrating critical literacy and intercultural dialogues in English language education.” The process of RTA highlights *systemic constraints, teacher agency, and pathways for transformative education*. These findings contribute to a more profound understanding of the interplay between policy, practice, and pedagogy in fostering an inclusive and context-sensitive English curriculum.

Dialogues Between Texts and Testimony: Triangulating Document Analysis and the Interview for Objective 1

I developed a systematized matrix to capture the most relevant data for objective 1. When analyzing the data in the analytical descriptive phase obtained from the semi-structured interview with Álvaro, I observed tensions between the conceptions declared and planned by Álvaro. Therefore, to create a triangulation by contrast of information, I looked at how well the emerging categories from the interview fit with the data and information from the document analysis.

Table 7.

Information collection matrix for objective 1

Sub-Phase	Approach	Techniques and Instruments	Reliability and Validity
Analytical, descriptive, reflective	RTA	Semi-structured interviews (Interview guides and RTA)	Triangulation by contrast, review, and methodological reflection.

Comparative, interpretive, and critical reflection.	RTA	Document review (Analysis Matrix and RTA)	Triangulation by contrast, review and methodological reflection.
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(Source: Own elaboration)

I cross-related the categories, emerging codes, and themes in the two phases of the research concerning the first objective (as shown in Table 8).

Table 8.

Cross-relating Categories

Semi-structured Interviews with Álvaro		Document Analysis		
Central Categories	Codes	Themes	Codes	Themes
	Rigid	Caught	Power Dynamics (PD)	Lost Opportunities:
Critical Literacy Practices	Curriculum (RC)	Between Policies and Practice	Student Empowerment (SE): Local-Global Connection (LGC)	Navigating Systemic Barriers
Intercultural Practices	Local Cultural Integration (LCI)	Bridging Worlds with Local Culture	Cultural Representation (CR): Decolonial Practices (DP):	Bridging Cultures: Teachers as Change Agents

(Source: Own elaboration)

I cross-referenced the results of Álvaro's interview/diagnostic summary and the document analysis to finalize the codes and themes. I compiled the pre-existing codes and themes from both the document analysis and Álvaro's interview. I identified overlapping codes, highlighted divergences or unique insights from each source, and grouped similar codes under broader categories to streamline analysis.

Álvaro's Interview: Diagnosis Summary

Identified Codes. These were the previously identified codes in Álvaro's interview: Local cultural integration (LCI) (teacher-led adaptations); Challenges with rigid curricula and textbooks (ChRCT); Student empowerment through critical questioning (SECQ); Limited access to multimodal tools (LAMT); Aspirations for decolonial and contextualized teaching (ADCT).

Identified Themes. These were the identified themes: Bridging Worlds: Teacher as Cultural Mediator; Breaking Through: Multimodality as a Transformative Tool; Lost in Policy: Navigating Structural Constraints.

Critical Review of Policy and Pedagogical Document: Diagnosis

Identified Codes. These were the identified codes from the theoretical framework and institutional documents: Emphasis on decolonial approaches (EDA); Potential of multimodality to foster equity and creativity (PMFEC); Critique of globalized curricula that marginalize local cultures (CGCMLC); Need for systemic reforms to support critical practices (NSRSCP).

Identified Themes and Cross-Analyzed Codes. These were the previously identified themes: Decolonial pedagogies for global-local engagement; Critical literacy: A tool for social justice; Multimodality: expanding the horizons of learning. I cross-analyzed the insights from both data sets and cross-coded them as follows: Teacher agency and decolonial frameworks (TADF), Systemic barriers to critical literacy (SBCL); Multimodal opportunities in critical practices (MOCP); Empowering through localized learning.

Reviewed Themes. I matched the data and the research content as follows:

- **Teacher agency and decolonial frameworks (TADF):** aligning teacher-led cultural integration with decolonial approaches. Example: connecting local festivals with textbook themes.
- **Systemic barriers to critical literacy (SBCL):** highlighting institutional rigidity as a key barrier. Example: Standardized curricula limit critical engagement.
- **Multimodal opportunities in critical practices (MOCP):** bridging teacher efforts with the potential of multimodality. For example, using visual storytelling can foster critical and cultural engagement.
- **Empowering through localized learning:** alignment between teacher aspirations and literature on contextualized, student-centered education. For example, building activities around local sociocultural realities.

Refined and Renamed Themes. I refined and defined the final themes.

- **Navigating institutional constraints:** Toward emancipatory practices. Rigid curricula and standardized textbooks limit critical and intercultural engagement. This scenario reflects systemic barriers in implementing critical literacy and intercultural practices while also highlighting the need for reforms. The evidence is: In the interview, Álvaro said, "We have to follow the book completely; no changes allowed." Literature: "Curricula prioritize functional communication over critical engagement."
- **Cultural Resonance:** Bridging local and global perspectives. The integration of local cultural practices into English learning fosters engagement and identity pride. The evidence is: Álvaro stated, "I encourage students to relate the festivals in the book to our own coconut festival." In the literature, "critical intercultural practices aim to transform teachers and students and build communities of learning."

-
- **Empowering through multimodality:** Creativity in critical literacy. Multimodal tools enhance critical literacy and intercultural practices, despite technological constraints. This evidence is in Álvaro's interview: "Students create drawings related to festivals." Literature: "MCC acknowledges the potential of semiotic forms of meaning-making as the foundation of critical praxis."

I validated each theme and reviewed it to ensure alignment with both data sources, relevance to the research objectives, and coherence and distinctiveness in capturing the essence of Stage One in this research. I shared the findings with the co-researchers, and I wrote insights for the documentation of the final themes and their descriptions to be incorporated into Stage One of my dissertation, as I describe in the next paragraph. These themes provided a foundation for designing a localized and decolonial pedagogical framework. These insights guided the subsequent PAR cycle, emphasizing teacher autonomy, multimodal resources, and decolonial perspectives to foster critical awareness and empower students.

Finding Report for Stage One: Bridging Perspectives. After I met with Álvaro to agree upon the information codes and themes and to reflect on them, I produced the final analysis report for Stage 1 of my PAR. The analysis integrated practical insights from the classroom as well as theoretical insights and addressed the research objectives of fostering critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices in English education in northern Colombia. The literature review informed possible theoretical information about critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices with a focus on decolonial perspectives. Álvaro's diagnostic interview, on the other hand, provided a lot of information about his real-life experience, challenges, and ways to include local cultural components in his lessons.

Using a critical lens, the analysis highlighted *systemic barriers and potential reforms*, drawing on a relativist, constructionist perspective to explore the social construction of meaning.

The second theme, *navigating institutional constraints: Toward emancipatory practices*, highlights systemic barriers such as rigid curricula and a standardized textbook that limit critical and intercultural perspectives. *Systemic barriers, such as rigid curricula and limited technological resources*, pose significant challenges. *Multimodal practices* emerge as a critical tool for bridging local and global perspectives and fostering critical engagement.

I cross-coded to combine insights from document review and Álvaro's practices, capturing both the co-researcher's voice and theoretical perspectives. *Teacher agency and decolonial frameworks* combined *teacher-led cultural integration* with literature insights on decolonial practices. *Systemic barriers to critical literacy* highlighted *institutional rigidity* as a key obstacle, illustrated by standardized curricula that limited critical engagement. *Multimodal potential* in contextualized learning connected *teacher efforts in multimodal practices* with theoretical frameworks on *equity* and *creativity* to foster critical and cultural engagement. I refined these cross-codes into final themes that represented patterns across data sources, addressing the objectives of promoting critical literacy and intercultural and multimodal practices.

I validated the final themes by going back to data sources to verify compatibility with research objectives and the questions, and confirmed coherence and distinctiveness. They informed the design of a situated and decolonial pedagogical framework for the next PAR cycle, which is the design of the framework. I wanted to particularly empower Álvaro's agency by creatively adapting curriculum to local contexts, using multimodal tools and resources in the classroom to address the barriers of technology and embedded decolonial frameworks, and fostering critical awareness and cultural pride in students. The themes provided a foundation to develop a situated approach that incorporates students' voices and builds collaborative practices in the subsequent PAR cycle.

Systematic Return

Within the framework of PAR, I engaged in a dialogic process with the co-researchers. I shared with them the research outcomes, with the aim of promoting both collective and personal transformation. This systematic return facilitated the transition, the awakening of reflection, and the construction of knowledge. This process served both pedagogical and political functions, contributing to the self-transformation of both the co-researchers and the researcher. The reflections centered on perspectives regarding the transformative capabilities and systemic constraints that Álvaro highlighted in his pedagogical practice. I also included Luis's opinion about Álvaro's reflection and document analysis findings. I incorporated these emerging reflections into stages 2 and 3 to transform the material under construction. Álvaro described how cultural resonance supported his value of bringing in local culture, as he indicated in his comments about using traditional festivals in his lessons to help students feel pride in their culture, and also his feelings about tensions and aspirations.

He also explained that with multimodal empowerment, students could develop critical thinking and creativity, even with restrictions due to structural limitations like strict curricula and standardized resources. In his words, the categories created a balanced view that helped demonstrate constraints and possibilities in his pedagogical practice. For the institutional academic coordinator, the category navigated institutional constraints, which illustrated the ongoing barriers to adapting to local contexts. He recognized that cultural resonance supported the development of community-informed materials and found the element of multimodal empowerment relevant, despite the inequities in technology resources. Luis recognized Álvaro's frustration and the tension that institutional policies produced. He understood that cultural resonance was a call to transform English language education in this region.

Stage 2. Middle Insertion: Students' Voices Toward Constructing a Situated Didactic that Includes Critical Literacy, Intercultural, and Multimodal Practices in English Language Education

We finished the initial insertion stage in coherence with Specific Objective and Question 1 of the research, aimed at characterizing the praxis of teachers in relation to the didactic, theoretical, and epistemological foundations that support critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices; we advanced in this chapter towards a stage of middle insertion. For the development of the second stage, I used qualitative techniques of documentary analysis and discussion groups, following the process underlying the Participatory Action Research (PAR) method that leads to systematic feedback. Firstly, I analyzed and interpreted the results based on data obtained from a document analysis of the students' work. Then, I recorded the findings of the discussion group with students, aimed at elucidating perceptions and meanings about what it is to read and write critically. In both cases, and in accordance with the proposed methodology, I used Reflective Thematic Analysis (RTA). Finally, I went through the systematic return stage. This scenario for collective learning enhanced the social value of research by considering the principles of participation, listening, dialogue, and group construction of knowledge.

Reading Students' Voices: Students' Productions Interpretation

I carefully analyzed the purposes expressed in the documents (D) produced by the students, 5 in total— (D1...D5), written in different modalities, formats, and genres. Prior to that, the teacher and I had chosen two sparkling themes (environmental issues and the power of tourism in some North Colombian tourist areas) and guiding questions for students to analyze and discuss in the class. We invited them to work in groups and provided them with short videos and a written story. We asked them to prepare a presentation to share in class in their preferred format (posters, short videos, photo collages, infographics, murals, graffiti, podcasts, poems, songs, etc.).

We also allowed them to use their first language in both cases, in the oral presentation and the group dialogue. The following figure illustrates how students' outputs were organized in the document analysis.

Table 9.

Document Analysis Matrix 2: Analyzing students' multimodal productions.

Doc/Title	Mode	Critical Literacy Indicators	Intercultural Practices	Social/Cultural Context	Key Elements
1. What does a fair world look like?	Acrostic	Equity		Local conditions of Puerto Escondido	Analysis of lack of opportunities, technological resources, water treatment and a hope for a better world
2. Maria's Green Mission	Poster Collage Picture, Role play	Equality		Environment	Analysis of local issues, sustainability practices, and cultural representation.
3. Understanding the Power of Tourism	Poster		Culture, Identity	tourism, Puerto Escondido	Analysis of local issues, sustainability practices, and cultural

					representation.
4.	Drawings		Traditions	tourism,	Analysis of local
Implementing	Pictures,			environment,	issues,
Sustainable	Colorful			biodiversity	sustainability
Tourism.	posters				practices, and
					cultural
					representation.
5. Positive	Poster,	Equality	Identity	Tourism in	Analysis of local
and negative	Pictures		Community	Puerto	issues,
aspects of				Escondido	sustainability
Tourism					practices, and
					cultural
					representation.

(Source: Own elaboration)

Familiarization. I began with the familiarization stage, examining the data listed in the document analysis matrix to extract key patterns, trends, and contexts. This process included repeated readings to become acquainted with the information and its connection to this PAR objective of this dissertation. The document initially concentrated on recognizing students' critical literacy and intercultural and multimodal practices in the context of a Northern Colombia tourist area. The research question was, what are the key elements to construct a situated didactic framework for English language education, integrating critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and

multimodal practices? The students produced the outputs in response to prompts around specific, local issues connected to the impacts of tourism (economic, social, environmental, and cultural) or narratives of environmentally responsible action.

Generating Codes. Using RTA, I analyzed patterns and themes, considering: Critical literacy indicators: equity, equality, sustainability, etc.; Intercultural dialogue indicators: identity, culture, and community references; Important elements for the didactic framework: students' engagement with local issues and the reflections they made.

Generating Initial Themes. I examined patterns and themes emphasizing critical awareness and actions, intercultural reflections and expressions, innovative multimodal practices, and global and local connections. The matrix shows different types of students' multimodal productions related to the topics of tourism, sustainability, and cultural identity. Students used creative communication modes such as posters, collages, drawings, role plays, storytelling, and pictures to explore critical literacy indicators such as equity and equality as well as intercultural practices such as traditions and identity. All the productions involved direct reference to the local contexts, such as Puerto Escondido, and the connections with real-world issues.

Reviewing Themes. I matched the data with the research content and the following themes emerged:

- **Equity and equality:** Students engaged in understanding fairness and social justice.
- **Cultural identity:** They portrayed thoughts about traditions and community codes.
- **Tourism impact:** They analyzed economic, environmental, and social implications.
- **Creative modes of expression:** They used multimodal formats like acrostics, posters, and drawings.
- **Local context connection:** Evidence of grounding issues in Puerto Escondido's realities.

- **Sustainability practices:** Advocacy for environmental care and sustainable tourism.

Refining and Naming the Themes. After I grouped the codes, these were the themes:

- **Critical engagement and social justice:** equity, equality, and sustainability bringing students' reflection to local/global challenges.
- **Cultural and community identity:** tradition/values/pride and intercultural roles in students' productions.
- **The role of multimodality:** multimodal modes of expression (poster, collage, or role-play) and the creativity of the students addressing the critical issues.
- **Interrelation of tourism and environment:** students' knowledge of the impact of tourism and sustainable practices.

Reporting Findings. I categorized the themes as follows:

- **Quality hegemony:** There are uniform sub-themes (critical engagement with social issues focused on equity and sustainability).
- **External heterogeneity:** all themes are different but related (cultural identity is connected to tourism and environmental interrelation)

I then reduced the themes to ensure they were commensurate with the size of our dataset and research objectives:

Critical and Sustainable Practices. Students critically analyzed social issues and proposed actions to address them. They connected local and global concerns, calling for solutions to problems in social, cultural, and environmental issues. They created acrostics in response to the task, "What does a fair world look like?" They focused on technology opportunities and fairness for their communities. For the 'Maria Green Mission' activity, students connected local and global issues of the environment, analyzing their context critically and encouraging solutions consistent with the wider aim of educating citizens for more responsible global citizenship. Students

demonstrated global citizenship abilities as they analyzed their surroundings and advocated for local and global solutions.

Intercultural reflection and expression. Students' creations promoted cultural pride through the integration of cultural heritage, community values, and intercultural understanding. They analyzed their local customs advocated by tourism and recognized themselves as local cultural agents in a globalized framework. In the task called 'Understanding the Tourism Industry', they also talked about the effects of tourism. Through intercultural practices, students improved their ability to understand and balance different cultural points of view while encouraging critical intercultural interaction.

Innovative Multimodal Strategies. Students used various multimodal formats such as posters, drawings, acrostics, and role plays to express their ideas creatively. These modalities helped them produce critical thought and work collaboratively on innovative issues. For instance, the task 'Implementing Sustainable Tourism' had students propose solutions for biodiversity conservation through colorful posters and drawings, while role plays in 'Maria's Green Mission' demonstrated the interactive and participatory pedagogical approaches. Multimodal formats fostered engagement and creativity; they made learning more accessible and effective and gave students tools to explain complicated concepts in different kinds of ways.

Local-Global Connection. This theme explored the interplay between local contexts (Puerto Escondido) and broader global issues, particularly tourism and environmental sustainability. A recurring pattern was students' ability to bridge local realities (environmental challenges in Puerto Escondido) with global issues (sustainable tourism). This theme illustrated their capacity to contextualize their learning in meaningful ways. In '*Positive and Negative Aspects of Tourism*', students highlighted how tourism affects biodiversity and the economy, grounded in Puerto Escondido's specific context. This theme illustrates students' capacity to contextualize their

learning in meaningful ways. Students analyzed environmental issues through the lens of a global narrative, proposing sustainable practices relevant to their community. Grounding lessons in local contexts enhanced relevance and relatability for students. Connecting local challenges to global frameworks fostered critical and transformative thinking.

Reading Students' Voices: Discussion Group Interpretation

I formed a discussion group (DG hereinafter) with the students to clarify the factors that enable the construction of a situated didactic framework integrating critical literacy and intercultural and multimodal practices in English language education, aiming to generate a connection with academic culture. These DGs did not respond to statistical criteria but to structural ones, which we understood and interpreted as a way to learn from the research (Arias et al., 2015). The content of this section reflects a subjective reading of the researchers' opinions, enriched by the description and presentation of their voices, that is, the most relevant thing raised during the sequential thread of the discussion. I prompted students with questions in Spanish, their first language, as shown in Table 10.

Table 10.

Guiding questions for the student group

PREGUNTAS ORIENTADORAS	
1	<p>Experiencias locales y relevancia en la educación de inglés.</p> <p>¿Podrías contarme alguna anécdota de una clase de inglés donde te hayas sentido representado o incluido?</p> <p>¿Qué aspectos de tu cultura y comunidad se tienen en cuenta en las actividades de las clases de inglés?</p> <p>Ejemplo: festivales, tradiciones</p>

¿Cómo te sientes con los temas y materiales utilizados en las clases de inglés? ¿Están conectados con tus experiencias o cosas que te importan?

Ejemplo: ¿Usan temas locales? ¿Están alejados de la realidad? ¿Los formatos de lectura o escritura se ajustan a tus preferencias?

2 Literacidad crítica y comprensión intercultural

¿Crees que desde las clases de inglés se les puede animar a los estudiantes a pensar de manera crítica (análisis con diferentes puntos de vista) sobre aspectos sociales o culturales de otros países y del nuestro? ¿Por qué? ¿Cómo?

3 Aprendizaje multimodal (uso de diferentes formas de medios y expresión)

¿Qué tipos de medios (videos, imágenes, historias, publicidad, memes, música, etc.) disfrutas, te resultan útiles o te gustaría para aprender inglés? ¿Por qué? ¿Qué medios reflejarían mejor tus pensamientos para leer o escribir sobre temas sociales o culturales?

4 Desarrollando un marco para la futura educación del inglés.

Imaginen que pueden diseñar cómo se enseña el inglés en nuestra comunidad. ¿Qué temas, actividades o proyectos les gustaría ver en las clases? ¿Qué aspectos de nuestra cultura y realidad local creen que deberían estar presentes? ¿Cómo creen que el aprendizaje de inglés podría ayudar a nuestra comunidad en Puerto Escondido? ¿De qué forma podría conectar a nuestra gente con el mundo sin perder nuestra identidad? Entre todos, ¿cómo describirían una educación en inglés que realmente nos represente? Piensen en palabras o ideas clave que podamos incluir en un marco que refleje nuestras prácticas y saberes locales, necesidades y aspiraciones.

(Source: Own elaboration)

Each participating student's name corresponds to a pseudonym from the first three initial letters of their names without indicating their gender. The pseudonyms are Irm, San, Gui, and Wil. I transcribed the conversation, and then I organized the most relevant information for each of them (as shown in Table 10).

Table 11.

Findings in the students' discussion group

Name	Age	Students' Comment Patterns
Irm	17	Emphasis on maintaining cultural roots while integrating knowledge of global practices.
Gui	15	Appreciation for topics on local environmental issues, but found that the materials lacked consistency in relevance.
San	17	Need for topics focusing on local needs, like tourism, sustainability and cultural heritage.
Wil	14	Felt included when discussing local festivals like Bullerengue in class, although not all cultural aspects were integrated.

(Source: Own elaboration)

I applied Braun and Clarke's six-phase approach of Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA). The process included the following steps:

Familiarization. In the familiarization step, I delved deeply into the discussion group data, noting key elements such as students' experiences with local cultural representation in English classes and their perspectives on critical literacy and multimodality. I refined themes and analyzed them.

Generating Codes. I generated the initial codes, they included:

- **Cultural integration:** Highlighting when local festivals like Bullerengue are integrated into lessons.
- **Critical thinking potential:** Students' recommendations to analyze both global and local cultural topics.

Generating Themes. I grouped these initial codes into broader themes:

- **Cultural representation and local contexts:** Local traditions and festivals.

-
- **Critical and global engagement:** Students' interest in connecting local identity to global contexts through projects.

Reviewing Themes. I coded the following themes: *Cultural representation, tourism and cultural heritage, and local-global connections.*

Refining Themes. I grouped these codes into initial themes and reviewed them to ensure coherence and alignment with the research objectives and listed them in the finding report.

Findings Report for Stage Two: Bridging Perspectives

I initially focused on enhancing intercultural practices by addressing global perspectives while maintaining cultural roots and utilizing multimodal formats like videos and role plays for enriched engagement. I refined the results based on the initial coding; I grouped them into initial themes and reviewed them. Based on this manual analysis, I derived the initial themes:

- **Cultural representation and identity:** This theme reflects the students' desire for English lessons that integrate local cultural elements, such as traditions, festivals, and community heritage.
- **Critical and environmental engagement:** This theme underscores the students' recognition of the potential of English education to foster critical thinking, equality, and address pressing local issues, particularly environmental concerns.
- **Local-global synthesis:** This theme highlights the students' aspirations to maintain their cultural roots while connecting with global perspectives through English education. I created the following emerging patterns across themes:
- **Interconnectivity:** Themes reflect a cohesive framework where cultural identity, critical engagement, and intercultural practices work together to create meaningful English lessons.
- **Student agency:** Students expressed a clear desire to shape their learning

environment, suggesting culturally relevant, critical, and multimodal approaches.

- **Multimodal practices:** Students favored creative formats such as videos, campaigns, and role plays to explore cultural and environmental themes.

Systematic Return

I met the co-researchers and generated the following recommendations for the situated didactic framework:

- **Incorporate local culture:** Design lesson plans that celebrate local traditions, festivals, and heritage, ensuring cultural representation.
- **Address critical issues:** Integrate topics like environmental sustainability and social justice to encourage critical thinking and real-world connections.
- **Blend local and global contexts:** Develop projects that link local issues to global perspectives, fostering intercultural awareness.
- **Utilize multimodal formats:** Include creative media (videos, posters, role plays, etc.) to make learning engaging and inclusive.

These recommendations provided the basis for constructing a didactic framework that emphasizes integrating critical literacy with intercultural dialogues and multimodal practices in English language education. They offer students possibilities for critical engagement as they explore cultural representations and local-global connections, while also allowing them to engage more responsibly in their local and broader global worlds.

Stage 3. High Insertion: Decolonial Dialogues and Collective Reflections to Transformative Praxis on Pedagogical Change, Consciousness, and Situated Theorization in English Language Education

We are maroons of thought. We do not repeat discourse.

We sow memory in the word that teaches.

(Adapted from Manuel Zapata Olivella)

In this final cycle of the participatory action research, I addressed the third objective and the question of this study. I invited the co-researchers to collaboratively develop a didactic framework that incorporates critical literacy, intercultural dialogue, and multimodal practices to transform the teaching and learning of the English language. This stage necessitated structuring knowledge with the specialized community, integrating insights from the document analysis, interview findings, students' work, and group discussion reflection in dialogue with decolonial philosophy, critical pedagogy, and situated literacies. The intention was to structure and concretize the elements of the didactic framework, emphasizing the analytical depth and the teaching commitment to recognizing and addressing the actual needs of students who were English language learners in a northern Colombian tourist area. In coherence with the proposed PAR methodology, we took into account insights from the in-depth interview and student dialogue.

We had eight encounters of interdisciplinary dialogues that addressed scenarios of transformation and considerations for developing the didactic structures, based on critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices, which formed an interconnected system of four elements: We enriched the onto-epistemological and theoretical perspective through dialogical and dialectical engagement; our human sociocultural context interacted with and informed the foundational theoretical aspects; some pedagogical and methodological elements, along with aspects of relevance and inclusion, established the foundation for informed practices; we engaged in comprehensive training in literacy subjects as a fundamental tool to create critical and reflective learners. Finally, we reflected on the transformation of our pedagogical practices, which produced a shift in our states of consciousness that transcended to student participants as they interrogated

hegemonic practices. Then, we configured the situated didactic framework considering the following themes and patterns.

Cultural Representation: Reflection, Expressions, and Identity

Álvaro's emphasis was on local festivals (Bullerengue), and the students' project was culturally relevant and honored their heritage; these intersected with outside forces such as tourism, of which they did not always uphold. Their projects, such as "Understanding the Power of Tourism," showed reflective, critical intercultural practices and cultural self-awareness.

Multimodal Innovative Practices

Students utilized varied formats (multimodal) to promote new and different forms of creative expression (posters, acrostic poems, role plays, etc.) that engaged them. This participation was very valuable and meaningful for our sustainable tourism processes. For example, "Implementing sustainable tourism" was a collective, participatory, inclusive learning activity.

Local-global Connection

Students were able to connect local issues (the environmental challenges in Puerto Escondido) with some global stories (sustainable tourism). The lessons were contextualized, authentic, and relevant to the students and intended to provide students' critical engagements.

Cultural Traditions as Part of Learning English

There was evidence of cultural inclusion that affirmed students' identity and relevance to the learning process, as they had to consider who they were and what it meant to them in their life history and identity.

Critical and Environmental Engagement

Students engaged with critical contemporary issues such as coastal erosion, the environmental impacts of tourism, and ways forward for the future in terms of social justice,

equality, and sustainability through a focus on student-led action research.

Local-Global Synthesis

Students engaged in a delicate balance between their cultural knowledge and global awareness. Their projects integrated local practices worldwide to foster intercultural competence and global citizenship.

Multimodal practices

Students used creative modalities (videos, role plays, etc.) to promote more engagement and create transformative pedagogical experiences.

Systematic Return

I invited the co-researchers to analyze the themes for the didactic framework as a part of the PAR process. The collective consensus significantly legitimized the analysis and integrated principles that supported the didactic framework. Luis (coordinator) suggested adding an epigraph for a fourth PAR stage to reassess the problem and its transformative action in a new cycle, as in Noriega's (2022) work. He explained that this phase would provide insights into the topic at hand and other issues identified as significant throughout the process and would trigger another cycle of reflection, action, and reflection—or a closure-opening movement.

After a long discussion, we agreed that, since participatory action research is a never-ending process, we had to focus our immediate efforts on consolidating findings of the current cycle and articulating them into actionable insights that address the immediate needs of the educational context. This decision allowed us to maintain the coherence and depth of the current framework while acknowledging the potential for future iterations to explore other emerging issues. By doing so, we aimed to ensure that the transformative actions implemented during this cycle were grounded in critical reflection and practical application, laying a strong foundation for subsequent cycles of inquiry and transformation.

In this chapter, I described the praxis of Álvaro (teacher), Luis (coordinator), and students who engaged in critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices in English language education in a tourist territory in northern Colombia using interviews, group reflections, and document analysis. The co-researchers (Álvaro & Luis), operating from the borderlands and the students navigating the daily realities, containing colonial linguistic hierarchies, expressed the need for a pedagogy that is not only critically and contextually applicable but also affective, creative, and grounded in community knowledge. These understandings provided me with the basis for the creation of a situated didactic framework, which is elaborated on more in Chapter 5, where I incorporated these findings to delineate this process of framework creation founded on collective reflection, territorial consciousness, and transforming English education from a decolonial lens.

Chapter 5 - Weaving Words and Worlds: A Situated Deconstruction of Praxis for a Transformative English Language Education

“Con estas palabras deseamos aludir al amor por lo propio, la autenticidad y la fidelidad de los temas terrígenos.”

— Manuel Zapata Olivella, en *Por los Senderos de Sus Ancestros*.

In this chapter, I weave together those personal and collective experiences that I described in chapter four with theoretical and pedagogical orientations, bridging the personal and collective as well as the scholarly to inform the design of a situated pedagogical framework. I integrate insights from document analysis, interviews, and discussion groups. I also situate these findings by drawing on the works of Freire (1970), Janks (2010), Mignolo (2013), Mora (2017), and others to highlight pathways toward critical and decolonial pedagogical practices. I delve into the findings within Critical English Language Education (CELE) on critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices.

The Cimarrona encounter in Chapter One illuminated the tensions surrounding English language education in Colombia. In using the metaphor of weaving, I pay homage to the collective, ancestral, and creative work of those who teach and learn at the intersection of global languages and local knowledge systems. I use the practice of weaving to outline the aspects of pedagogy that I offer as critical and reflective, contextualized in the territory, memory, and re-existence of the people.

The conversation with the Cimarrona and the experience of a resistant student encapsulate the struggle between imposed linguistic hegemony and the preservation of local identities. Through this dissertation, I acknowledge the persistence of transmissive teaching methods and the dominance of Anglo-Saxon paradigms, which marginalize local linguistic and

cultural practices. Addressing these issues requires a counter-hegemonic, contextually grounded framework for ELE that transforms marginalized communities while fostering critical awareness.

I present this discussion by synthesizing important thematic categories that emerged from the data and uncovering how Álvaro's (teacher) and Luis's (coordinator) practices and reflections, informed by their experiences, demonstrated tenets of critical literacy and intercultural and multimodal practices. Then, I expand the situated transformative didactic framework co-constructed in dialogic reflection based on the lived experiences of participants in this tourist context. These sections illustrate how participatory work can provide opportunities for pedagogical shifts and pause hegemonic and dominant narratives that continue to encode the English language education field in contexts of the Global South.

Stage 1. Initial Insertion: Theory and Álvaro's Voice on Critical Literacy, Intercultural Dialogues, and Multimodal Practices in English Language Education Within a Northern Colombian Tourist Area

At this stage, I delve into a consequential, critical examination of existing teaching practices as the initial reflexive baseline that I used to anchor the transformative, decolonial, and participatory framework in terms of the actual experiences of English language education at an educational institution in Puerto Escondido, Córdoba, Colombia. I posited it with the epistemological intention of the first objective of this research, which aims to characterize the practices of Álvaro (teacher). In this way, the initial phase of the study responds to the following research question: How does a teacher in a northern Colombian tourist area incorporate critical literacy and intercultural and multimodal practices into English language education?

As part of the PAR initial insertion in the community, I began with the presentation and diagnosis of the problem, interpreting and analyzing the categories under study based on relevant documents about the nature of the research and the diagnosis of Álvaro's didactic foundations,

which he implemented in literacy as well as intercultural and multimodal practices. I examined official documents from the Ministry of National Education of Colombia (Colombian EFL Curriculum), institutional materials (course content and descriptive letters), and literature related to the process of critical literacy, along with intercultural dialogues and multimodal practices in English Language Education (ELE), both locally and globally. This document analysis offered valuable information on the status quo of English language education in the targeted community. Álvaro's diagnostic interview provided significant insights into his real-life experiences, challenges, and methods for incorporating local cultural elements into his lessons. I then identified foundational categories based on the document analysis and Álvaro's interview findings in Chapter 4. Using a critical lens, the prominent themes emerged, and I outline them in the following lines.

Tension Between Institutional Rigidity and the Situated Needs of Álvaro and the Students

I observed this rigidity since national policies (Colombian Basic Standards) privilege language competence over critical engagement. The findings demonstrate that rigid curricula and reliance on standardized materials such as textbooks limit critical literacy practices in the field of ELE. Álvaro highlighted this frustration by stating that he faced difficulties whenever he wanted to incorporate changes in the English curriculum that was outlined by an EFL book. He said, "We have to follow the book completely; no deviations permitted." These obstacles, framed by Janks' (2010) concept of domination associated with critical literacy, illustrate how institutions use dominant texts that perpetuate hegemonic ideologies and marginalize local knowledge and experiences. The tension arises because standardization and the expected proficiency level of students and teachers' experience are connected to linguistic colonialism (Granados-Beltrán, 2016; Walsh, 2005) and demonstrate how educational policies uphold Eurocentric ways of knowing over local knowledge within contexts. This concept highlights that educational policies often prefer European ideas, ignoring local knowledge. Mora et al. (2022) and Núñez-Pardo (2020)

also criticize standardized curricula for neglecting local cultures and discouraging critical thinking and suggest that EFL textbooks often support global cultural stereotypes and dominant stories about language and culture. Freire (2005) critiqued how education works as a mechanism for the reproduction of oppression, while Kumaravadivelu (2012) reminds us to consider how colonial ideas are present in education systems.

Standardized curricula, designed for neoliberal and Eurocentric purposes, limit educators' capacity to be creative or contextualize content, thus reinforcing existing power relationships. I find this report supports Janks' (2010) meaning of 'Domination', where dominant forms of literacy marginalize the voices and cultural realities that students and their context represent. The rigidity that they exhibit echoes the perpetuation of power relationships by educational policy as a challenge to critical pedagogy (Freire, 2005). They also constrain the capacity for teachers to innovate and contextualize content in ways that allow for creative or critical engagement, making it difficult to challenge prescriptive literacy practices and instead find space for students' lived experiences and sociocultural realities in teaching methods. Ultimately, systemic reform would be needed.

Weaving Local Culture Into English Education: Creative Agency and Decolonial Framework

Álvaro purposefully integrated local cultural elements into lessons, despite the constraints of the systemic barriers in which he taught. He demonstrated agency and creativity by intertwining the traditional content of the textbook with local traditions, such as the coconut festival. He focused on teaching English by using our local cultural activities to set the context. He acted as a link between global ideas and local traditions, helping students feel connected and proud of their identity. Álvaro says, "I help students connect the festivals in the book with our coconut festival." He encouraged students to establish a link and compare what they learned in the book with our local traditions. This approach follows Mignolo's (2013) idea of 'border thinking', using local

knowledge to challenge hegemonic methods. By bringing cultural narratives into lessons, teachers help students feel proud of who they are and think critically about different cultures (Freire & Macedo, 1987). This action shows how to situate pedagogies within conventional formal curricular practices. The cultural integration initiatives contrast the teacher's adaptation of local traditions and Janks' (2010) term of 'design' for critical literacy, as well as Mignolo's (2013) idea of 'pluriversalism'. The role of Álvaro as a mediator of global content and local realities allows learning to be more applicable and culturally resonant.

The evidence I presented above coincides with Freire's (2005) thoughts on praxis with an emphasis on transformation and Janks' (2010) idea of diversity in critical literacy. Álvaro's adaptations to the curriculum, such as associating themes from the textbooks with local celebrations, are also able to make learners feel proud and involved in their culture. This approach is a pivotal part of Granados-Beltrán's (2022) understanding of decolonial pedagogy and critical intercultural practices (Granados-Beltrán, 2015, 2016), where the learner experiences the transformation of their cultural narratives in their education by learning and engaging with local cultures. Such an approach has the potential to subvert hegemonic narratives. Risager's (2007) criticism of static representations of culture contrasts with this approach. Mignolo's (2013) notion of 'border thinking', as illustrated above, further demonstrates the significant importance of privileging local knowledge to dismantle hegemonic narratives. Although these adaptations are promoting pride and identity, institutional support is a necessary component to maximize the reach of pedagogical practices beyond the individual classroom.

Weaving Multimodal Paths Through Scarcity and Resistance

Lack of resources and rigid curriculum requirements hindered the inclusion of critical literacy and intercultural dialogue. As Álvaro commented, "It's difficult to use multimodal tools with a lack of technology and resources." Multimodal methods emerged as a catalyst for critical literacy

and intercultural awareness. His assertion aligns with Mora's (2017) Multimodal Critical Consciousness (MCC) concept. Mora stated that MCC contributes to students discovering more avenues for communication and understanding of others while acknowledging the need to resolve systemic barriers for equitable teaching. It resonates with Kumaravadivelu's (2003) suggestions for disrupting colonial practices in the ways we approach teaching and learning. However, there are still technological barriers that inhibit the efforts to integrate more widely. Despite limited resources, Álvaro recognized multimodal practices as useful for promoting critical literacies and intercultural practices.

The initial insertion of this participatory process allowed me the recuperation of pedagogical practices that were already in action—practices that were quietly resisting, adapting, and re-signifying English education in context. These initial voices uncovered not only creative and multimodal practices and cultural integrations but also the silences and tensions produced by institutional constraints. Further developing these initial learning encounters, the second stage invites deeper inquiry by attending to and interpreting the contradictions, desires, and critical reflections from Álvaro's lived experience. It was there—in the space where tensions and desires met—that the first shoots of a transformative framework began to take shape.

Stage 2. Middle Insertion: Students' Voices Toward Constructing a Situated Didactic that integrates Critical Literacy, Intercultural Dialogue, and Multimodal Practices in English Language Education (ELE)

In this stage of middle insertion in PAR, I continued building on the outcomes presented in Chapter 4. I analyzed students' productions and dialogues in discussion groups. I observed that the students' articulated lived experiences, cultural affiliations, and dimensions of critical consciousness contributed to their representation of a socially and contextually meaningful English language education. I focused on student agency and contributions as co-creators of

knowledge, affirming the political and pedagogical value of their voices to engage in productive activity for educational transformation. In this stage, I intended to answer the question: What are the key elements for constructing a situated didactic framework that integrates critical literacy and intercultural and multimodal practices in English language education in a northern Colombian tourist area? I identified the following themes that emerged from the discourse.

Cultural Identity and Representation: Connecting the Classroom to Local Knowledge

I noted that students continually articulated their desire to learn English; they valued their community's cultural roots and heritage, which they utilized in their learning. They evidenced this desire in their productions and reflective processes, manifesting an inclination for a pedagogy that built on their territorial and symbolic memory. Irm articulated, "We want to learn about the world, but we should not forget where we come from." Wil said they felt like part of the discussions on local festivities, such as Bullerengue, even though not all cultural aspects made their way into the course content regularly. San reclaimed cultural pride in response to the erasure of local identities in the English curriculum, she used a bilingual poster with the colloquial jargon "menear" and Spanish name "fiestas patronales" and the music instrument "tambora". In the reflection group comment, San explained, "I didn't use just English because I did not know how to name some aspects in English with the same meaning in our daily language." This multimodal artifact exemplifies how students resisted dominant language norms and embraced their linguistic heritage as valid content for English expression. Rather than following a neutral script, San's work embodied a form of decolonial translanguaging (Mora et al., 2024), where language learning became an act of cultural affirmation.

Such engagement reflects what Walsh (2010) calls critical interculturality: a dialogic space where learners are not simply entrenching themselves in other cultures but are critically reframing their cultures as an evolving site of knowledge and resistance. In the projects 'Understanding the

power of tourism' and 'Positive and negative aspects of tourism', students inquired into the social and economic impacts of tourism in Puerto Escondido while reclaiming their narratives as community members. This approach is related to Canagarajah's (2005) call for English instruction to be contextualized, as learners' own cultural and semiotic resources are not discarded as an insignificant or less powerful possibility in a predetermined curricular program.

In the discussion session, San referred to the following: 'The girls in the town have to help moms serve meals, clean, sell souvenirs to tourists...' This reflection served as a critique and as a form of consciousness-raising, supporting Freire's (1970) idea of literacy as reading the world. It demonstrated how English education could unveil intersectional oppressions and prompt emancipatory reflection about structural inequality. Through critical literacy and multimodal stories, these students challenged the expectations of gendered norms in local tourism labour and framed English as a language of critique, rather than a language of compliance.

Critical Ecological Awareness and Social Justice Orientation

Environmental issues emerged as a relevant theme within students' multimodal projects and conversations. Gui shared that she appreciated the incorporation of environmental themes within the course but questioned the relevance of pedagogy consistency and progression. Student tasks such as 'Maria's Green Mission' and 'Implementing Sustainable Tourism' responded to biodiversity, access to water, and environmental degradation. A theme represented in San's multimodal work was a critical engagement of the environmental and social effects of tourism in Puerto Escondido. He used a poster called Implementing a Sustainable Tourism with images of plastic pollution on the beach, a fish inside a bottle, and the phrase 'The beach is not your trash can,' in English and Spanish. In his reflection, he said, 'People come here for fun, but they leave their basura.' This poster demonstrated how students used English and visual symbolism to denounce environmental degradation, disrupt the tourism narrative, and illustrate a deep critical

literacy. Gui linked personal lived experience with global discourses of environmental justice. By linking her critique bilingually and visually, he engaged in a form of intercultural resistance and positioned himself as steward of her territory and narrator of a counter-tourism narrative

Using multimodal formats like collages, posters, and role plays, students questioned the status quo of sustainable practices. This approach aligns with critical literacy principles that involve a disruption of taken-for-granted discourses and imagining alternatives (Janks, 2010). These projects demonstrated not only the acknowledgment of various environmental issues but also suggested an actionable disposition inspired by Freire's (1970) notion of praxis, or critically engaged reflection and transformation. For instance, San suggested workshops and campaigns to connect the social forms of English learners to purposeful actions addressing environmental issues. This form of critical ecological engagement, rooted in place, serves as a model of territorial literacies, where the land, its issues, and futures become content and method.

Interconnectivity and the Local-Global Continuum

Students demonstrated a strong disposition to understand global realities through glocal learning while remaining connected to their present contexts. Their work illuminated a dialectical movement between the local and global, where English serves not only as a connector to contexts beyond their immediate environment but also to re-signify and express their local knowledge. The result is evident in Irm's statement: "It's not about the reality of others; it's about using English to represent who we are and learn what we need." This reflects Moll's (2007) idea of Funds of Knowledge, which embraces the value of local knowledge and students' identities, as well as Mignolo's (2013) vision for border thinking, hybrid identities, and systems of knowledge coming together to resist a monocultural narrative.

Students' Agency, Multimodality, and the Re-signification of Language Learning

Students enjoyed multimodal forms, including posters, drawings, collages, and performances, to express critical reflection and cultural identity. The multimodal forms of representation acted as mediators of voice and creativity, which are significant in a context where students from marginalized communities often lack language authority due to linguicism and linguistic imperialism. Irm created an acrostic entitled 'What does a fair world look like?' presented a distinctively poetic and acutely focused exploration of equity, access to technology, and visions of a better world. The use of artistic representations for political reflection illustrates what Janks (2010) identifies as the design dimension of literacy, where learners represent their worldviews through recomposing and transforming texts and representations.

Will used a counter-narrative to homogenize English curricula. He designed a hand-painted poster with the slogan '*I am from the land of drums*' written in English, accompanied by illustrations of *tamboras*, traditional fishing boats, and his grandmother braiding hair. In his reflection, he stated, 'I want to show tourists that we have culture.' Will also referred to transactional issues. In the dialogue, he pointed out that girls have to help their moms with housework, which represents evidence of gender inequality, as he did not mention that boys have to do that, too. In this multimodal format, he used English not as an external imposition but as a way of expressing cultural identity and agency. When he paired English with visual aspects of Afro-Caribbean cultural traditions, he exemplified what Walsh (2010) explains as critical interculturality, and he provided means to express cultural pride as an act of resistance to the invisibility of Caribbean people. This example illustrates how local stories in English learning have the power to foster a sense of critical literacy, giving students a chance to view language learning as a means of their own self-definition, free from assimilation.

Students' projects, like posters, drawings, and role-plays about environmental issues in their local area, show the potential of multimodality as a way to connect local realities to global issues. Mora (2017) identifies students' explorations as part of the MCC framework and mentions the potential of these acts, for example, to critique inequalities and generate agency in individuals by offering actionable solutions.

Students' voices, manifested through words, drawings, and gestures, echoed beyond their performance of the language itself; they expressed imaginations of justice, memory, and territory. Letting these students generate meaning, English became less a borrowed code and more a way to re-signify how they lived their realities. We, educators, must center local culture and its living memories; the pressure of being implicated in pressing questions through situated inquiry; the entanglement of including local and global issues as interdependent horizons; and the use of multimodal expression as a neighborhood for belonging and creativity. These existing threads now invite us into the third phase, where we generate a woven fabric of theoretical and pedagogical meaning based on context, dignity, and collective imagination.

Stage 3. High Insertion: Decolonial Dialogues and Collective Reflections to Transformative Praxis on Pedagogical Change, Consciousness, and Situated Theorization in English Language Education

In this third and final stage of the Participatory Action Research (PAR) process, dialogic encounters and collective theorizing converge to fundamentally transform English language education. Through this stage, I addressed the third research question: How can a situated didactic framework designed collaboratively integrate critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices into English education to meet the needs of students in a northern Colombian tourist area? To this end, I took into account the insights generated from the collaborative reflection process of Álvaro, the teacher, Luis, the coordinator, the participant students, and me to develop

the transformative framework by revisiting and analyzing previous important RTA themes through a decolonial lens.

Between Aspiration and Constraints

The pedagogical categories from the RTA process in Phases 1 and 2—cultural relevance, transformation through multimodality, and navigating institutional constraints—are starting points for richer dialogue in this final stage. These themes indicated possibilities for transformation but also institutional limitations that inhibit meaningful changes.

Álvaro's responses in the first systematic return encounter showed a strong commitment to culturally relevant pedagogy. He incorporated the Coconut Festival into his English lessons, and as a result, he created opportunities for his students to connect their learning of a global language to their social and cultural identity. In thinking about Álvaro's practice in this way, he reflects Freire's (1970, 2000) notion of 'reading the word and the world' by developing a critical consciousness from local content within the lesson. In the same vein, Álvaro's work with multimodal strategies demonstrated a level of creativity in making learning meaningful among limited resources, resonating with Janks' (2010) commitment to access, diversity, and redesign with critical literacy education. However, systemic constraints to Álvaro's efforts remained. His disappointment with institutional curriculum constraints illustrates Foucault's (1977) notion of what he referred to as regimes of truth, systems that limit the sayable and doable in institutions. As Álvaro stated in the collective dialogue:

The tension, I feel, comes from the difference between what I want to do in my teaching practice and the rules of the institution that do not allow me to do what I consider important. I want to integrate local ideas and creativity into my practice, but the curriculum is very strict and does not let me make changes... or the pressure of test results makes me go back to lecture mode (Álvaro, Systematic Return Meeting)

Luis also recognized this tension when discussing the dual expectations of Álvaro to demonstrate compliance with functional English standards while at the same time trying to innovate. He explained:

From my perspective, the tension arises from the institutional mandates of adhering to institutional standards while engaging with an innovative form of teaching. Institutional documents prioritize functional communication over critical literacy and intercultural practices. The institutional documents specify that functional communication is a priority over critical literacy and interculturality when Álvaro's expectations aim for transformative practices. The resulting tensions signal a need for institutional reform that embraces flexibility and recognition of localized and multimodal approaches.

(Luis, Systematic Return Meeting)

Luis's perspective highlights the coloniality inherent to English language teaching, whereby global communicative standards are privileged over teaching practices that are anchored in locally rooted, critical, multimodal pedagogies (Pennycook, 2001). This coloniality suppresses teacher autonomy and further reinforces a universal practice that fails to meet students' needs in a tourist area in northern Colombia.

Theorizing for Transformation: Toward a Situated Framework

In response to the limitations collectively described previously, I developed some guidelines in the hopes of achieving systemic transformation, and, drawing on those practical experiences and collective reflection, I proposed four intersecting needs:

Educating teachers to adapt curricula. Teachers need to be institutionally empowered to contextualize the curriculum to the real social and cultural contexts of their students. This aligns with Street's (1984) ideological model of literacy, in which, when someone is working with literacy, it is never a neutral position since literacy and its use are always shaped contextually.

Recontextualizing institutional documents through a decolonial lens. Policies and curricula need to be reimagined with localized knowledge, critical lenses, and intercultural goals in mind. According to Walsh (2010), decolonial education not only demands inclusion but also changes the way (what and how we teach) we educate.

Supplying classrooms to support multimodal practice. Teachers require access to materials and devices that enable creative opportunities for multimodal engagement (posters, mobile tech, and visual and audio texts) to make learning critical and expressive (Kress, 2010).

Creating dialogue between teachers and administrators. Institutional change is dependent on reformation as well as relational change. All of this reflects the scientific dimension of PAR at the high insertion stage: the development of theory, which is grounded in lived experience and collective reflection.

The central ideas in this chapter depict not only the pedagogical tensions and aspirations of an educator in a northern Colombian tourist area but also the collective desire to transform English education with an emphasis on the territory. These findings—derived from a dialogical, critical, and participatory process—open a space for developing a situated didactic framework based on reformation as well as relational change. A fit for supporting the co-construction of policies takes the form of sustained dialogues between teachers and administrators informed by shared pedagogical visioning experiences.

In the previous guidelines, I indicated a shift in consciousness from critique to action and a collective agency on the part of co-researchers, who moved from expressing tensions toward designing potential features—they opened a space for developing a situated didactic framework based on critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices. What follows is not a prescriptive method but a living proposal co-constructed with educators and students who are planting seeds of change from their teaching practices and contexts. Chapter 6 articulates the

framework as a pedagogical response as well as a pathway for hope in developing a more dignified, inclusive, and contextualized English education.

Chapter 6 - Roots and Routes: A Situated Transformative Didactic Framework for English Language Education in a Northern Colombian Tourist Area

Decoloniality requires learning to think and feel from the cracks of modernity/coloniality, from those places that dominant discourses have pushed to the margin and made invisible.

(Inspired by Maria Lugones)

This framework came through the voices from a classroom in a northern Colombian area and the silences that reflect the standardized curricula in an educational institution. It came through Álvaro's lived pedagogies, Luis's voiced institutional tensions, and the everyday knowledge embedded in the student participants' experiences gathered from the territory of Puerto Escondido, Colombia. The foundations of my work were what co-researchers and students shared, what they did, and what they resisted. I identified them and transformed them into a didactic framework, in a way that I aimed to accompany, rather than dominate, and to listen and engage, rather than impose.

I unfold this chapter in four sections: the introduction and explanation of the foundation of the framework that is based on lived pedagogical dispositions and real-life contexts and its components and organizational principles; knowledge dissemination; some conclusions towards a pedagogy of re-existence; some limitations in navigating these uncharted waters; a discussion on the implications of this research, including how it contributes to a broader methodological, theoretical, and epistemological landscape; and the importance of this work within the methodologies of decolonial education and critical language studies.

In this framework, I do not mean to present a universal model but an adaptable, contextualized proposal rooted in decolonial conversations, critical interrogations, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal representations that stem from pedagogical resistance, cultural dignity,

and critical hope. In closing, I write of my future role as a researcher and an activist-educator, devoted to producing collective educational processes grounded in community knowledge, pedagogical justice, and the re-existence of historically silenced voices in English language education.

The pedagogical map of this framework responds to local knowledge, sociocultural tensions, and the economic imperatives of tourism. It aims to build agency, critical consciousness, and linguistic justice among educators and learners. The framework consciously resists the reproduction of colonial pedagogical and linguistic narratives that both mainstream and alternative traditional English language education perpetuate. In the framework, I aim to tell the stories of those who have been silenced, including the Cimarrona, and to open spaces for the re-existence (Walsh, 2009, 2012, 2017) of pedagogies rooted in dignity, context, and transformation. This re-existence begins with a fundamental shift in perspective towards contextual listening. The following are the main pedagogic principles:

Incorporating Local Culture

Implementing contextual listening and situated issues within the local tourist context that includes social, cultural, and environmental territorial awareness as responses to the historical erasure of local voices in English language education. It promotes an ethical and attentive engagement with students' lived realities and communities. Their stories, landscapes, and identities need to be recognized as epistemic resources. Just as the mangrove relies on the muddy instability of its resting place, teachers are encouraged to ground their practice in the sociohistorical soil of Northern Colombia's tourist territories. Furthermore, design lesson plans that celebrate local traditions, festivities, and heritage practices to represent the local culture and highlight students' identities (Granados-Beltrán, 2016). Also design activities that explore how local cultural practices intersect with global cultural trends so students can reflect and develop

pride in their identity as local actors, but without the risk of exoticizing cultural practices. Those spaces require the critical resignification of cultural expressions as acts of resistance, memory, and re-existence. Therefore, performances as aesthetic formalities should have a historical and political connection in order not to repeat folklorization or reduce culture to spectacle that may reproduce colonial legacies by seeing the “other” as colourful but non-historical. A decolonial pedagogy must be attentive to disrupting this and help create spaces for critical resignification of cultural expressions as acts of resistance, memory, and re-existence.

Addressing Critical Issues

Situating social issues within the local tourist context asks learners and educators to engage with social and historical situated problems that impact their community and are intensified by the hierarchies in the tourism industry. The framework calls for English to problematize how structural inequality, environmental destruction, cultural commodification, and colonialist narratives play out in their local contexts. Thinking about these kinds of critical issues means embracing the notion that education can never be made neutral (Freire, 1970); it is always implicated with power representation, and the silencing or voicing of particular perspectives and positionalities. When working in tourist territories, such as the north coast of Colombia, educators may want to start with a reflection on how identities as Afro-Colombians or Indigenous peoples become commodified for exotic purposes, especially women; how informal work is considered unworthy of compensation; and, once again, how ecological destruction goes under the radar in the name of development. By mobilizing a range of critical readings, collective inquiry, multimodal projects, and translanguaging strategies alongside English pedagogies, learners are invited to be aware of these realities, represent their perspectives, and interrogate alternative narratives. Such engagement leads to critical consciousness development and sets the stage for learners to harness English to advocate for social, cultural, and environmental justice from within and toward

their territories (Becerra-Posada, 2024; Mora et al., 2015, 2021).

Blending Local and Global Contexts

Combining the local and global, regularly understood as separate for English language education purposes, reimagines local and global contexts (Janks, 2010) as interconnected, co-constructed spheres of knowledge and action. More specifically, it aims to go beyond considering global content as somehow separate or greater than our current reality in the local context by asking participants to think about how their local contexts are already embedded in the global flows of tourism, language, economics, equity, and culture, and how they can act to engage with and critique the flows from a position of agency.

Utilizing Multimodal Formats

This part of the framework speaks to the consideration of multimodal formats as key to a critical and transformative English education. Multimodal means that meaning goes beyond just the written and spoken word. This approach acknowledges the safe use of diverse semiotic resources available to students, such as pictures, drawings, gestures, speech, sounds, movement, and new digital modalities. This approach reflects students' valuable and powerful ways of expressing themselves and learning. By expanding to include various formats (posters, videos, performances, role-plays, podcasts, comics, photo essays, artistic representations, etc.), English language instruction becomes more inclusive and responsive to learners' diverse strengths, interests, and ways of knowing. This multimodal framing accountability model encourages practitioners away from the traditionally narrow privileging of linguistic capital while also considering embodied, visual, oral, and digital literacies that more fully encapsulate the language practices of real-world communication (particularly in tourism or intercultural human experiences).

Additionally, it should not only pass on conventional resources (such as podcasts, blogs,

videos, or graphic editing apps) as a way for students to experiment with unfamiliar digital tools but also focus specifically on critical media awareness as much as building technical competencies. Multimodal practices can be not only a way to help students engage but also a pedagogical stance that opens up participation, endorses creative agency and critical engagement with dominant discourses, and, in regions influenced by tourism, allows learners to represent their identities, their communities, and their place-based knowledge (Becerra-Posada & Ehret, 2024). in rich, layered, and culturally salient ways, often in counter-narratives to the simplified or exoticized representations present in tourism publications. When using multimodal formats in the classroom, English becomes a site for aesthetic, critical, and participatory learning, as students can engage and use their voices in ways that are most resonant with their experiential and aspirational lives.

Supporting Teacher Development

Establishing critical literacy and intercultural perspectives cannot be reduced to teacher directives or responses to isolated workshops; rather, teachers need access to resources, theoretical grounding, and sustained accompaniment that acknowledge teachers as the holders of their voices, contexts, and knowledge. Offering participatory training options that promote a change from using knowledge transmission models in their instruction and instead using other forms of participation, such as problem-posing pedagogy, analyzing case studies, co-creating resources, and reflecting on their real-life classroom practice. These spaces must allow teachers to see themselves as more than just implementers of curricula but rather as intellectuals, researchers, and cultural mediators who can participate in generating pedagogy that is responsive and contingent on the realities they face in their contexts.

In addition, developing a community of practice among educators is essential for sustainability and as a way to share collective ownership of the framework. It is in a community of

practice, or pedagogical circle, that educators have the best chance to share their experiences, wrestle with challenges, provide feedback, and build solidarity not only across institutions but also across geographic locations. Ongoing conversations allow teachers to develop, share, and adopt context-specific actions; collaboratively construct lesson plans; and collaboratively develop a shared repertoire of practice about critical, intercultural, and multimodal practices. In tourist regions of northern Colombia, where educators encounter neoliberal pressures, cultural tensions, and linguistic hegemonies, these communities of praxis are spaces of epistemic resistance and pedagogical re-existence. Thus, educator development is a need from the beginning—and keep that way—as a key and important part of a new, transformative education approach, rather than just a side piece of an educational plan. This vision insists that educators, when supported, connected, and critically engaged, have the potential to establish a new language education paradigm based on elements of equity, territory, and collective hope (Freire, 1998; Walsh, 2017).

Spaces of Interlocution and the Dissemination of Knowledge in Academic and Social Contexts

I began to disseminate the knowledge constructed through this dissertation across local and international spaces in a dialogic way. The reflective, dialectical, and interactive exercise undertaken with the actors of the educational process enabled me to generate collective and transforming actions related to critical literacy processes: I actively participated in an international scientific event using pre-liminary findings; I am currently working on two co-authored book chapters with national and international scholars, one includes reflections on our decolonial practices in the city, and the other one is a co-referencing study between my experience in the rural coast area with school learners and an a professor in an Andean urban area with pre-service teachers. I am also part of a university research group, and we are replicating some of my dissertation results into the literature courses of pre-service teachers in both the Spanish

licenciatura program and the English language licenciatura program. I began creating community to design materials with three school teachers, including one of my co-researchers; I am leading a decolonial critical English language education (CELE) movement from and for the Global South to provide a teacher-created digital repository, a regional teachers' dialogic “encuentro” to share experiences, build networks of solidarity, and co-create context-based curricula and pedagogy. Our network, at the moment, includes English school teachers and university professors; however, the group is open to more areas. I am also invited to be a presenter at the first international convention of education and human science at the Universidad de Córdoba. And so, we walk—con paso firme y palabra viva—toward a pedagogy that remembers its roots and imagines its wings.

Table 12.

Research dissemination, locally and internationally

Title	Product	Venue	Year
Critical Literacy: Bridging Cultural Divides or Upholding Cultural Identity?	Paper presentation	Literacy Research Association's 74th Annual Conference	2024
Decolonial Approach to English Language Education in the Global South: Teachers' Voices for Critical Radical Love and Social Transformation.	Co-authored Book Chapter	Book: Love, Healing, and Hope: Transformative Practices in Decolonial ELT	Forthcoming (2025)

Transformaciones en las prácticas de lectura y escritura: Literacidad crítica y multimodalidad en los cursos de Literatura de las Licenciaturas Lenguas Extranjeras y Literatura y Lengua Castellana de la Universidad de Córdoba.	Co-authored Research Article		In progress (2025)
Read and Re[ex]-exist	Co-authored Research School Project		In progress
A Critical Multimodal Framework from Northern Colombia	Co-Authored Book Chapter	Book: Reimagining Critical Multimodality in Education: From Soil to Seedlings	Forthcoming (2026)
Critical English Language Education (CELE)	Paper presentation	I Convención Internacional de Ciencias de La Educación y Humana (CIE)	September 16-19, 2025

(Source: Own elaboration)

Conclusions: Towards a Pedagogy of Re-existence

I began this dissertation with a story—a conversation in the shade of a coconut tree with a Cimarrona, whose voice encompassed hundreds of years of resistance, memory, and wisdom. This conversation was the seed that ignited in me the desire to listen differently, that is, to stop reproducing coloniality. The idea of reimagining English language education as a decolonized space, a place of cultural dignity, critical reflection, and re-existence, started to form in my mind, and I started to picture a new way of teaching. Along with the teacher Álvaro, the coordinator Luis, and the student participants in a tourism area of Northern Colombia, I co-constructed this seed, which did not reflect a linear path of inspiration but rather a spiraled journey of conversation, tensions, and shared perspectives. I framed this research into the tenets of participatory action research with decolonial, critical, and intercultural frameworks to collaboratively design a situated didactic framework using critical literacy, intercultural dialogue, and multimodal practices, enabling real, diverse, and often invisible needs of students who are shaped by their territorial and sociocultural realities.

In this study, I argue the notion that English teaching is not neutral and entails power relations (Pennycook, 2021). The policies that encourage functional, standardized language models dismiss local culture, mother tongues, and lived experience (Mora, 2022). Thus, they disorient teachers and students. Institutions, as Foucault (1977) reminds us, enforce official notions of what real knowledge is. Some teachers, however, are including the local customs and listening to their students' voices, as Álvaro did with the coconut festival. Though small, these deeds are important. They reflect what Walsh's (2017) term "re-existence" represents, such as the capacity to transform education by eradicating colonized bodies, languages, and land and bringing them to the center of education. The voices of Álvaro and Luis throughout this dissertation unveiled the emerging pedagogical possibilities of claiming their agency, affirming local culture in

their practice, and engaging in critical reflection.

PAR was not only a methodological choice but also an ethical and political stance (Noffke, 1997, 2009). Through the cycles of inquiry, systemic return, and reflection, this research generated not simply findings, but a collectively generated consciousness. The systematic component of feedback acted as a mirror and a map. It permitted co-researchers and student participants to assume positions and reflect through a critical lens and engage in a collective act of generating a future-oriented pedagogical framework. With the introduction—initial insertion, the initial recovery of voices; the middle insertion, recognition of pedagogical tensions; and the high insertion, collective theorization—it produced our deep systemic categories, such as identifying institutional constraints, cultural resonance, and empowerment through multimodality. These were not simply theoretical constructs; they emerged from lived tension, joys, frustrations, and hope. We established a framework that did not live in the academy but in the territory.

The didactic framework I offer is not a model to be replicated but simply serves as a compass. This situated, flexible, multimodal, intercultural, and collaborative framework acknowledges that teachers need freedom from institutions to adapt and create some resources and, most importantly, colleagues who walk through the complex issues of critical pedagogy with those resources. It demands that the language we teach students should reflect their realities, cultures, and struggles. This framework does not have the privilege of providing simplistic responses to the standardized curricula and the colonial legacy. Instead, it offers opportunities for creativity, disruption, and new teaching methods that respect our identity and origins.

Re-examining the Landscape of Resistance

In the introductory chapter of this dissertation, I referred to three-layered tensions around English education in Colombia: resistance to learning English, resistance to student-centered pedagogy, and resistance to losing cultural knowledge. These tensions are in conjunction with

one another and cannot be treated as disconnected in the lived experience of teachers and students navigating a contradictory language education landscape in a postcolonial, touristic, and racialized context. These tensions shifted from simply being obstacles to a starting point through the lens of resistance. They indicate a need in educational practices that does not evade contradiction, but engages with contradiction in a critical and collective manner. The visual conceptual synthesis (see Figure 1) offered in the prior literature review provided one way of thinking about these tensions as intertwined, giving way to a specific rupture in English education, remaking it into a reimagining of critical English education as a re-existence.

Reimagining English Pedagogy from the Margins

Through the findings and discussion, I illustrated how English language teaching can be decolonised when it arises from the voices and practices of those historically marginalised from designing English language practices. The students' multimodal productions and the teachers' reflective dialogues demonstrated that critical literacy was not an abstract theory, but rather a real necessity for participating in social life. Students' resistance towards learning English, which had once been framed as apathy or failure, became critiques, dignity, and selective appropriation. When students were invited to tell their stories in English about their realities, beaches, and dreams, English became the background on which to foreground their cultural affirmation. Likewise, when teachers challenged the standardized scripts and opened a space for dialogue, the roles of teachers shifted from knowledge transmitters to facilitators of social reflection.

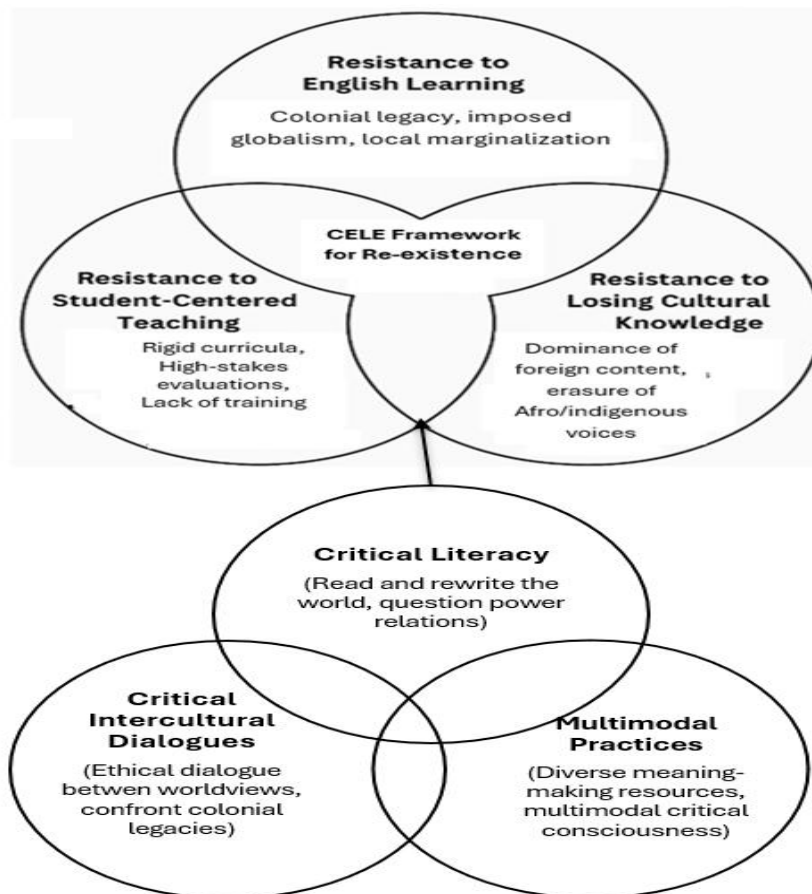
Toward a Situated Framework of Critical Re-Existence

The framework, the co-researchers, and I developed in this study is not a fixed structure, but rather a living pedagogy. We based this framework on three intertwined pillars: critical literacy (as the ability to read and re-write the world); critical intercultural dialogues (as the ethical dialogue between worldviews); and multimodal practices (as acknowledgement of various forms of

meaning-making). These principles together were used to create a counter-hegemonic approach to the dominant linguistic and curricular demands associated with English education in a tourist area. The framework centers students' lives, identifies teachers as intellectuals, and gives the classroom hope and dignity.

Figure 4.

Critical English Language Education (CELE) Framework



(Source: Own elaboration)

This figure illustrates the Critical English Language Education (CELE) Framework for Re-existence, emerging from three interwoven forms of resistance: (1) Resistance to English

Learning, (2) Resistance to Student-Centered Pedagogy, and (3) Resistance to Losing Cultural Knowledge. At the center, CELE integrates three pedagogical pillars—Critical Literacy, Critical Intercultural dialogues, and Multimodal practices, forming a counter-hegemonic, situated approach to English language education in northern Colombia.

I finish this dissertation, like all decolonial work, with an opening. I do not conclude the conversation, discussion, reflections, and proposals here; I invite the community to continue walking. Through conversation, institutional reflection, and pedagogical resistance, we need to water the seeds we intentionally sowed through PAR accounts. As we move on, there are some commitments that remain, such as centering teacher agency in curriculum and policy development; providing schools with tools for multimodal expression that go beyond the limitations of language; reclaiming the right to teach in and from the territory and valuing local knowledge as necessary rather than additional; and continuing to ask, what knowledge is being extinguished? Whose voices are still silent? And what stories still need to be told?

The constructs, theoretical frameworks, and collective reflections in this dissertation are not only intellectual contributions but also shared experiences of lived educational struggles and a desire for education to serve as a space for cultural affirmation, critical consciousness, and dignity. In this encounter, we not only learned about resistance, but we engaged in it. Freire (2000) observes that education is the creation of possibilities to create or construct knowledge, not the implicit transmission of knowledge. In this way, we are moving to a pedagogy that is not afraid of the ruptures and offers solid movement and living language. It is through ruptures that those tiny seedlings of a transformative education begin to spring to life.

Limitations of the Study: Navigating the Uncharted Waters

Even though this Participatory Action Research provided transformative educational insights, there were some limitations I want to acknowledge. Firstly, I conducted this research

with only two participants as co-researchers and a small group of students located in a specific region of northern Colombia. However, selecting a small group allowed for a more robust, triangulated account of the tensions, resistances, and transformative possibilities in the region.

This contextualized nature of the research design had some implications for any generalizability to alternative contexts, despite being purposeful and impactful for situated understanding. However, as PAR and decolonial research constructs indicated, my aim was never universal applicability; instead, I sought territorial resonance and epistemic relevance. Secondly, the institutional limitations of time, rigid curricular structures, and sporadic access to technology shaped the possibilities of the implementation. These structural limitations were a factor in the scope of the classroom experimentation and the ability for a complete incorporation of multimodal practices within the school system. Finally, as I operated in both roles, as a researcher and colleague in the same educational network, it brought tensions with proximity and critical distance. While the duality of these roles aided trust and the tendency toward depth of reflection, it also called for constant ethical and reflective engagement, particularly concerning power and co-construction. Despite these drawbacks, the research findings are transformative, and their situated nature affords a great deal of pedagogical authenticity and contextual legitimacy.

Implications for Practice, Policy, and Future Research

I embarked on a journey of inquiry and explored alternative pathways through contestant spaces, and I opened up possibilities—seeds of transformations—that transcend the study itself, inviting actions, policies, and further research anchored in dignity, criticality, and territoriality. In this spirit, I traced some implications for teaching practice, educational policy research, and teacher education, as well as some research lines of expansion derived from this dissertation, as follows.

Practice

Teachers need to be supported to adapt and modify curricula that celebrate students' cultural identities, lived experiences, and territorial knowledge, including stories that comprise Cimarrona communities and histories, which are often ignored and erased by current education systems. Multi-modal approaches can serve an essential role in claiming students' agency as students learn to navigate cultural pride and move into a more global critical literacy level.

Teachers also need ongoing support for a sustainable, transformative pedagogy. They are often caught between mandates and their desire. Thus, teacher's development can follow these suggestions: Create communities of teachers through dialogue where one can both reflect and unlearn over time; Infuse critical literacy, not only into pre-service or in-service teacher education, but as a transversal perspective not as an add-on; Create resources for teaching that are place-based and situated to bring teachers away from their dependency on textbooks; Consider the well-being and emotional labour of teachers as part of each tension that must be transgressed within the transformation; critical pedagogy cannot exist in conditions of fear or isolation; promote co-research where teachers can document, analyze and theorize practice with fellow teachers and their communities. These suggestions aim at transforming not only what teachers do, but how they see themselves and their students as they engage in educational and cultural transformation.

Policy

There is urgency around the need for institutions to have flexibility when developing curricula to engage with local contexts (for instance, tourist economies, territorial identity, historical resistances in Cimarrona communities, etc.). Educational policy must acknowledge community knowledge as a curricular resource and explicitly suggest the need for developing partnerships between schools, local leaders, and local cultural organizations towards co-creating curriculum and learning experiences. Investments must focus on community-based learning that identifies local cultural resources as much as technological resources and that creates productive

discussions on the socio-economic and cultural implications of tourism.

Future Research

Further pedagogical participatory research is necessary to examine how the integration of local culture experiences, such as the Cimarrona resistance histories and critical tourism education, could shift students' worldviews and build stronger intercultural competencies. Teacher education programs should prepare pre-service educators to work effectively with communities historically marginalized, with histories of working in place of pedagogies of memory, resistance, and critical territoriality.

Future educational research should give voice to the descendants of the Cimarrona as well as the leaders of their communities as they shape curricular content and ensure that English education is an affirmation of a cultural space rather than a place of assimilation. Future research efforts should aim to incorporate decolonial pedagogies in pre-service and in-service education, aiming to help teachers resist neutralized legitimization frameworks of literacies and advocate for epistemic diversity within their classrooms. Additionally, future research within schools should explore how teachers use critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices over periods and how institutionalized (especially neo-liberal) resistance can also be taken on and challenged from within.

My Projections and Future Research Horizons

My research journey started as a way to listen to silenced voices and reimagine English language education from the margins, from the fissures where re-existence blooms. My intellectual standpoint within the Participatory Action Research process was not as a passive observer but as a very committed co-learner. My consciousness transformed as I walked alongside co-researchers, who reminded me that knowledge is not just produced about communities but with and from them. I developed this study into a truly participatory process as our co-researchers

actively participated in stating the problem and posing research questions, in the analysis of the findings, in the proposals of possible solutions, and in the description of differing pedagogical paths.

Our systematic return was exercised not simply as a methodological step, but rather as a political and pedagogical act in the recognition that all research must be dialogical, collective, and transformative. In doing so, my intellectual project became inextricably linked to the living realities of those who were the co-researchers. The conceptual framework that frames this dissertation as a representation of decoloniality on critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices is moving and will continue through new research activities that centre students' voices, engage in intercultural conversations with community leaders, and connect with broader issues in critical tourism studies. I will also be involved in counter-hegemonic research activities that elaborate and extend the model. These activities illustrate the versatility of the model across fields and contexts. I will continue to move and navigate this work, not only as a participant but also as a leader, facilitator, and provocateur who seeks to nurture the development of these lines of research and practice. Decolonial education cannot simply be an isolated academic venture; it must also explicitly become an ongoing project of hope and enactment. I envision futures of developing collaborative-based research networks, pedagogical teacher collectives, and community engagement, which will enrich the pedagogies and political visions of decolonial English education.

As I close this cycle of research, I also begin another cycle of inquiry, reflection, and transformation, extending the spirals of research created by each of us as researcher and co-researchers in collective desire for transformations of practices to teach otherwise, to learn otherwise, and to envision education as a territory of dignity, criticality, and re-existence.

If research travels, let us make that journey together — not on paths laid out for us, but on

the path we create by posing each question, each hope, each collective dream.

In keeping with decolonial research, I conclude this dissertation with an opening. An opening to new conversations, alliances, and ways of knowing. With an invitation to reclaim English not as an instrument of erasure, but as a tool for telling stories, healing, and hope. May this work add to a pluriversal vision for education, where language is not a gatekeeper, but a bridge.

Declaration of Generative AI-Assisted Technologies in the Writing Process

The author wrote the different drafts of this dissertation without AI assistance. For the final version, she used Grammarly and Quillbot. The author takes full responsibility for this dissertation's content.

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Appendix 1:

Document Analysis Matrix 1

Objective: To collect information from key documents to characterize the praxis of the teacher about critical literacy and interculturality that support English language instruction in a northern Colombia tourist area.

Document	Description	Relevance to Critical Literacy	Relevance to Interculturality	Pedagogical Implications	Quotes/Excerpts	Interpretation
Doc1. Colombian Basic Standards	National policy document outlining English education standards in Colombia.	Highlights basic skills and competences but lacks critical perspectives on power relations or cultural hegemony. Opportunities for critique exist in sections encouraging social awareness.	Encourages recognizing and respecting cultural differences but needs to expand on questioning stereotypes or colonial influences in English teaching.	Suggests linking local culture and language use to global English learning goals but lacks decolonial frameworks.	<i>"Valoro la lectura como un hábito importante de enriquecimiento personal y académico."</i> (Page 22) (Doc1.Colombian basic st...)	A framework for English learning that values personal enrichment but can be expanded to include questioning power structures.
Doc2. Decolonial Perspectives	Literature review on critical interculturality and the	Emphasizes challenging colonial influences and fostering critical	Stresses critical reflection on diverse cultural identities,	Promotes decoloniality as central to designing English	<i>"Critical interculturality aims to transform teachers and students, build</i>	Provides a foundation for incorporating critical and decolonial

decolonial turn in English education. consciousness. Advocates for integrating local voices and addressing systemic inequalities. moving beyond essentialist views, and promoting equitable exchanges under decolonial frameworks. language curricula that empower students and address global-local tensions in tourism areas. *communities of learning, and acknowledge different voices.*" (Page 3)(2. Decoloniality-Critic...)

Doc3. Critical Literacy Literature review focusing on critical pedagogy in English education. Highlights empowering students to critique societal inequalities, engage in reflective dialogue, and envision alternative realities through critical text analysis. Encourages integrating students' cultural contexts and questioning dominant ideologies through critical engagement with texts. Supports designing activities that empower students to question narratives, produce reflective texts, and engage in transformative social actions. *"Critical literacy entails envisioning various ways to construct and reconstruct texts to promote social justice and equity."*(3. Critical literacy)

Doc4. Critical Multimodality Literature review emphasizing multimodal Expands the literacy focus to include visual, auditory, and Recognizes how cultural, social, and situational Advocates for a multimodal framework that connects *"MCC acknowledges the potential of semiotic forms of* Reinforces the need for multimodal literacy to

approaches to equity and justice in English education. digital media, fostering diverse communicative skills that address social inequities. factors shape text interpretation. Encourages blending local cultural elements with global issues in multimodal tasks. students' realities with critical skills to empower them as global citizens.

meaning-making as the foundation of critical praxis." (4. Multimodal Literacy ...)

address local-global interactions critically.

Doc5. Course Content Analysis of textbook content (Interchange) for colonial language patterns and relevance to students' contexts. Reflects limited integration of critical literacy principles, focusing on functional communication rather than critiquing power dynamics or cultural representations. Cultural themes in the textbook are not explored critically and often perpetuate superficial or stereotypical views of global cultures. Calls for supplemental materials or teacher-led discussions to critique colonial biases and integrate local cultural perspectives. "*Students learn to communicate confidently and effectively.*"(5. Course Content)

Highlights the need for integrating critical perspectives into functional language teaching approaches.

Doc6. Descriptive Letter Institutional document describing the language. Emphasizes linguistic proficiency but does not. Lacks integration of decolonial or intercultural. Suggests incorporating critical and interculturality principles into. "*Course prepares learners for effective real-world*"

Suggests reorienting the focus towards contextual

program at address critical practices program *communication.*" and critical
Universidad literacy or relevant to objectives and (6. Descriptive elements of
de Córdoba. intercultural students' local teacher training letter) language
reflection. realities and initiatives. learning.
cultural
experiences.

Appendix 2: Diagnostic Instrument



Reflexive Dialogue

PURPOSE:

To characterize the teacher's practice in relation to the didactic and epistemological foundations that support critical literacy and intercultural approaches in English Language Education for students in Puerto Escondido, a tourist destination in northern Colombia.

PRELIMINARY INSTRUCTIONS:

There are no right or wrong answers; rather, it is about expressing the option that is most appropriate based on the reality of your students.

The information provided will be confidential and will be used solely for academic purposes.

The findings from this doctoral dissertation will be shared through academic articles and conference presentations, allowing the insights and contributions of this research to reach a wider scholarly audience.

INTRODUCTION (5-10 minutes)

1. Greeting and Briefing:

Purpose of the interview: I am conducting this interview as part of my research to understand the didactic foundations and strategies that a teacher and a coordinator implement in teaching literacy and interculturality within the context of English language instruction in a northern Colombian tourist area. This interview will help characterize the pedagogical practices that contribute to critical literacy and intercultural engagement.

2. Consent:

- Do you authorize to record the interview? ___ Yes ___ No
- The researcher reassures confidentiality and anonymity of the responses.
- The interview will last about 70 minutes ¿Do you consider we can go through the whole interview in one sitting or two? ___One ___Two

Date _____ Time _____ Location of the interview _____

Definitions for Interview Context

1. **Critical Literacy**

Critical literacy is an approach to reading and writing that goes beyond understanding the literal content. It involves analyzing and questioning texts to understand the underlying power dynamics, biases, and social messages. This approach encourages students to think critically about issues of justice, equity, and representation and empowers them to use language as a tool for social change. In the context of English language instruction, critical literacy helps students develop the skills to not only understand texts but also critique and respond to the world around them.

2. **Critical Interculturality**

Critical interculturality is a perspective that seeks to understand and engage with cultural differences while also critically examining power relations and social hierarchies among cultures. Unlike traditional intercultural approaches that may only highlight cultural diversity, critical interculturality encourages students to reflect on issues such as cultural dominance, marginalization, and equity. In English language teaching, this approach helps students become aware of how languages and cultures intersect with issues of social justice, helping them respect and advocate for their own cultural identity while understanding others'.

3. **Multimodal Literacy**

Multimodal literacy refers to the ability to make meaning through various modes of communication beyond just text, such as images, audio, video, gestures, and spatial design. This literacy skill recognizes that meaning-making in the modern world often involves multiple forms of media and requires critical engagement with each mode. In English education, multimodal literacy enables students to express and interpret ideas through diverse formats, making learning more engaging and relevant to real-world contexts.

QUESTIONS GUIDE

Section 1: Background Information (5-10 minutes):

1. Could you tell me a little about your academic level and teaching experience? How long have you been teaching English, and in what settings?

Prompts:

- Academic Level (Doctorate/Master's/Bachelor's/Other/Area(s) of Undergraduate Training.

- Years of Academic Experience (teaching): 1 to 5 years () / 6 to 10 years () / 11 to 15 years () / 16 to 20 years () / 21 years and more ().

2. How did you become interested in incorporating literacy and intercultural practices in your teaching?

3. Could you describe the general profile of your students in Puerto Escondido?

Prompts: Diverse backgrounds: local communities/ with exposure to tourists and foreigners; indigenous languages alongside Spanish/influenced by the influx of foreign visitors.

4. What are the most common linguistic and cultural challenges your students face?

Prompts: Reasons for them to learn English

Section 2: Critical Literacy Practices (15-20 minutes)

1. Foundations and Definitions:

5. How would you describe students' performance (their progress/motivation/attendance) in their English class?

6. How do you define critical literacy in your teaching practice?

Prompt: principles about reading and writing/ topics/multimodality.

7 - What aspects of critical literacy are most important in your English language classroom that are not only functional but also socially and culturally relevant?

8. How do you analyse societal issues in your daily life and classes?

Prompt: Critically examine/bias/voices/power structures/skills/social justice/understanding the context/social dimensions- reflective practices:

8. Could you share specific examples of lessons or activities where you have incorporated critical literacy?

Prompt: Analyse advertisements aimed at tourists- Look at how these ads depict local culture and how they reinforce certain stereotypes.

9. How do you encourage students to interrogate power dynamics, social inequalities, or stereotypes through English learning?

Prompt: Create counter-advertisements with authentic view of their communities to critically reflect on how their culture is being commodified.

3. Challenges and Opportunities:

10. What challenges do you face in implementing critical literacy practices?

Prompt: English is valuable for interacting with foreigners or getting a job in tourism and not as a tool for personal and social empowerment.

11. What opportunities or successes have you experienced with critical literacy in your classroom?

Prompt: Tourism itself provides real-life examples of power dynamics and intercultural exchange to analyse in the classroom/ using their own experiences for critical discussion become students (more engaged).

Section 3: Interculturality in Practice (15-20 minutes):

12. How do you define interculturality in the context of your teaching?

Prompt: students' cultural identities are valued and respected-encouraging them to engage with cultures beyond their own- moving beyond tolerance and toward meaningful dialogue and understanding.

- How do you view the relationship between language and culture in your English lessons?

13. Could you describe how you integrate intercultural practices into your English teaching? Can you give specific examples?

Prompts: Discussions on local cultural practices (traditional festivals or food).

14. How do you foster intercultural dialogue and understanding between your students, especially considering their cultural diversity and the tourist area context?

Prompt: Comparing their cultural practices with similar practices in English-speaking countries/fostering a sense of pride in their own heritage.

15. How do you address local culture and the impact of tourism in your lessons?

Prompt: A discussion about how tourists often come with preconceived ideas about our culture (reductive): role-play as tour guides: explaining not only the popular tourist spots but also the deeper cultural significance that's often overlooked

16. What role do local cultural practices, beliefs, or histories play in your English classes, and how do they relate to global cultural influences?

Prompt: how to engage in intercultural dialogue and challenge superficial representations of their culture.

Section 4: Didactic Foundations (10-15 minutes):

17. What teaching strategies or methods have you found most effective for integrating critical literacy and interculturality?

Prompt: project-based learning- task-based-work on a multimedia project where students create a website that showcase local culture from their perspective.

18. How do you use multimodal tools (e.g., images, videos, digital media) to support these practices?

Prompt: text, images, videos—to reflect on how to present Students' culture to an international audience in a way that is both respectful and critical.

19. How important is a grammar focus when you are planning a literacy (reading and writing) project-based lesson?

19. Have you adapted any textbooks or resources to better align with critical literacy and intercultural goals? Can you provide examples?

Prompt: Adapting textbooks to include more local content (instead of focusing on dishes from the U.S. or U.K., include local dishes like arepas or sancocho

[Empty rectangular box for response]

20. How do you ensure that your teaching materials are relevant and meaningful to your students' real-life contexts of the tourist environment of Puerto Escondido?

Prompt: Encouraging students to bring in materials from their own lives-a flyer from a tourist event or a picture of street art-Analysing them to make the lessons more relevant to their real-world experiences.

[Empty rectangular box for response]

Interviewee's Signature: _____

Interviewer's Signature: _____

Consent to Participated in in the Doctoral Dissertation Process

I, _____, with identification number _____, give my consent for my contribution and audio-visual productions to be used as part of this educational project. I accept the intention to build together a multimodal didactic approach based on principles of critical literacy and interculturality.

This consent is signed and granted in the city of _____, on the _____ day of _____, **2024.Authorization**

Signature: _____

ID Number: _____

Institution Name: _____

**Appendix 3:
SYSTEMATIC RETURN**



Systematic Return 1

Integrating Critical Literacy and Interculturality in English Education: Lessons from Puerto Escondido

Date: December 23, 2024

Objective N°1: To discuss the findings and the corresponding triangulation between the references of critical literacy and interculturality didactics related to the practices of the teacher within the research reality.

Responsible: The principal researcher guides the presentation of the findings, and the co-researchers (the teacher and the coordinator) agree on the foundational categories.

Location: Zoom Platform

Collective reflection: Co-researchers' conception about the didactic methods that support students' critical literacy, intercultural dialogues, and multimodal practices process

TOPIC	PARTICIPANTS
Discussion Circle N.º1	Avaro (coordinator) and Luis (teacher)
Nº1	Guiding questions
	For the teacher: What is your opinion about the categories found in your pedagogical practice? For the coordinator: What is your opinion about the categories found in relation to institutional documents?
2	For the teacher and the coordinator: How do you analyze the existing tensions between the teacher interview and the documentary analysis?
Observations	

Section 1: Alvaro's Perspective on Pedagogical Practice Categories

Question: What is your opinion about the categories found in your pedagogical practice?

The categories identified important elements in my teaching because the theme of cultural resonance reflects how I connect my work to students' cultures by including festivals and traditions in English classes. For example, I related the textbook material to events like the coconut festival. It shows how we can use cultural aspects to make students prouder and more aligned with their culture.

The theme of empowerment through multimodality reflects my attempts to incorporate creativity, even when limited by resources, to promote critical thinking and remain engaged. However, I feel that this category is especially important because it acknowledges bigger challenges, such as a rigid curriculum and the use of standardized materials, and that it's difficult for me to try to include something additional.

These categories demonstrate both the positive aspects as well as the challenges of my teaching.

Section 2: Luis's Perspective on Institutional Documents

Question: What is your opinion about the categories found in institutional documents?

Luis's Response:

The categories capture the institutional realities of our program. The navigating institutional constraints category emphasizes the inflexible nature of the standardized curriculum and textbook, which consistently present barriers for teachers who want to infuse critical and intercultural perspectives into their lessons or for those who want to situate content. This category illustrates how our institution persists in offering a uniform model, seemingly stifling teachers' ability to innovate or tailor lessons to their local contexts. Cultural resonance provides an important perspective that challenges us to reconsider how institutional territories intervene in local cultural practices to develop learning materials that are informed by our communities. The emphasis on multimodal approaches inspires us to consider these practices; however, it also emphasizes the ongoing discrepancy between Alvaro's aspirations for technology and the material support that the institution can provide.

Section 3: Joint Analysis of Tensions Between Alvaro's Interviews and Documentary Analysis

Question: How do you analyze the tensions between the teacher interview and the documentary analysis?

Alvaro's Response:

The tension, I feel, comes from the difference between what I want to do in my teaching practice and the

rules of the institution that allow me to do what I consider important. I want to integrate local ideas and creativity into my practice, but the curriculum is very strict and does not let me make changes. In my interview, I reported that I wanted more freedom to engage with teaching in a way that was appropriate for our place and context, but the rules of the institution do not permit this.

Luis's Response:

From my perspective, the tension arises from institutional mandates of adhering to institutional standards while engaging with an innovative form of teaching. The institutional documents specify that functional communication is a priority over critical literacy and interculturality when Alvaro's expectations aim for transformative practices. The resulting tensions signal a need for institutional reform that embraces flexibility and recognition of localized and multimodal approaches.

Section 4: Joint Recommendations for Future Cycles

After a profound discussion, The researcher and the co-researchers concluded on the following considerations:

1. **Teacher Empowerment:** Provide teachers with greater autonomy to adapt curricula, fostering alignment with local cultural contexts and critical literacy objectives.
2. **Institutional Flexibility:** Revise institutional documents to support a balance between standardized requirements and the integration of local, decolonial perspectives.
3. **Resource Provision:** Equip classrooms with multimodal tools and resources to bridge the gap between creative aspirations and practical constraints.
4. **Collaborative Frameworks:** Facilitate dialogue between teachers and administrators to co-create policies that reflect both pedagogical aspirations and institutional realities.

This systematic return document aimed to bridge perspectives, enabling collaborative reflections to inform the next phase of our Participatory Action Research.

**Alvaro (Coresearcher1)****Luis (Co-researcher 2)**

Appendix 4:
Document Analysis 2



**GUIDING DOCUMENT FOR DISCUSSION CIRCLE ON THE EMERGING MULTIMODAL PROCESSES FOUND
THROUGH STUDENTS' DIALOGUE AND PRODUCT PRESENTATIONS. STAGE 2**

Date: November 14

Location: School Morindo Florida, Puerto Escondido

Start Time: 8:15

End Time: 9:30

Person Responsible: The teacher and the researcher

Moderator: The researcher

Scientific Area: Recognition of students' voices in relation to the elements that enable a transformative didactic proposal.

Description: Middle Stage of insertion

Collective reflection on the factors that enable the construction of a didactic framework of critical literacy and interculturality based on the recognition of subjects, classroom practices, the ideological affiliation of knowledge, and critical recovery.

Research Question

What are the key elements necessary for constructing a situated multimodal didactic framework of a pedagogical practice that integrates critical literacy and interculturality in English language education for a teacher in a Northern Colombia's Tourist Area?

Research Objective:

To identify the key elements that enable the construction of a situated multimodal didactic framework that integrates critical literacy and interculturality in English language education for a teacher in a northern tourist area.

Students' Dialogue Group Results

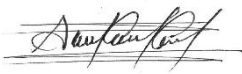
1. **Local Traditions and Festivals:** The students advocated for a focus on local traditions and festivals (such as Bullerengue), while simultaneously connecting with global contexts to foster intercultural understanding.

-
2. **Environmental Awareness:** Based on a student-led initiative and suggestions, there should be initiatives such as campaigns and workshops addressing local environmental issues, highlighting these as valuable learning projects.
 3. **Student Insights:** Individual contributions included Wilmer highlighting the integration of festivals like Bullerengue, Guillermina emphasizing environmental issues, Santiago calling for a focus on tourism and heritage, and Irma advocating for maintaining cultural roots while exploring global practices.

2. Conclusions of the Document Analysis Matrix with Students' Productions

Scientific Area: Recognition of the critical literacy and intercultural practices of students.

Multimodal formats: students used digital and physical posters, creative drawings, advertising, acrostics, oral presentations, and role plays (using Spanish and English), and colourful phrases.



Alvaro- Co-researcher



Luis- Co-researcher

**Appendix 5:
Systematic Return 2**



SYSTEMATIC RETURN

Configurations Around the Construction of a Situated Didactic that Integrates Critical Literacy and Intercultural Practices in English Language Education (ELE).

Objective: To discuss the findings and the corresponding triangulation between the documentary analysis and discussion group of archive collections of literacy practices.

- Recognition of the literacy practices of students.
- Recognition of students' voices in relation to the elements that enable a transformative didactic proposal

Responsible: The Principal Researcher, who will guide the presentation of the findings and the co-researchers (the teacher and the coordinator who will agree on the foundational categories).

Collective reflection: the coordinator and the teacher's conceptions about the emerging categories emerging multimodal process findings.

Part 1: Reflection as the Teacher

Role in Phase Two: As a teacher engaged in Phase Two, my primary focus was on actively contributing to the identification and implementation of critical literacy and interculturality and multimodal practices within my English language classroom. This involved collaborative dialogue with the researcher and iterative adaptation of strategies to align with the research objectives. I could notice the following achievements:

Student Engagement: Successfully implemented activities fostering critical literacy, such as analyzing social issues through multimodal texts. Students demonstrated increased ability to connect classroom content with their lived realities.

Innovative Approaches: Designed and executed lessons incorporating different modalities to explore cultural and social themes, bridging global and local perspectives.

Feedback Integration: Regularly sought and incorporated student feedback, ensuring their voices shaped lesson adjustments and resonated with the themes explored.

As challenges. I could notice the following:

Time Constraints: Balancing the demands of the research with the established curriculum posed a scheduling challenge.

Resource Limitations: Limited access to resources occasionally hindered the implementation of more extensive multimodal tasks.

Navigating Resistance: Some students initially struggled with the shift from traditional grammar-focused lessons to critical, participatory activities.

I learned the following:

- Emphasizing the relevance of critical themes to students' lives is key to fostering engagement.
- Flexibility and adaptability are essential in responding to classroom dynamics and feedback.
- Collaborative planning with colleagues enriches the teaching process and aligns individual efforts with collective goals.

Part 2: Reflection as the Coordinator

Role in Phase Two: As the academic coordinator, my role was to facilitate the alignment of the PAR process with institutional goals, ensure effective communication among participants, and provide support for teachers' initiatives within the research framework.

Achievements:

- **Facilitated Collaboration:** Organized regular meetings to discuss progress, share insights, and address challenges collectively.
- **Resource Allocation:** Advocated for and secured additional resources, such as access to digital tools and materials, to support teachers in implementing innovative practices.
- **Documentation and Dissemination:** Oversaw the systematic documentation of activities and reflections to maintain a coherent record of progress.

Challenges:

- **Maintaining Motivation:** Sustaining active participation and acknowledgment of contributions to the teacher.
- **Balancing Roles:** Managing administrative duties alongside active participation in the research process occasionally led to competing priorities.
- **Encouraging Risk-Taking:** Supporting the teacher in stepping out of their comfort zones to adopt critical and innovative methodologies was a gradual process.

Lessons Learned:

- Clear communication and shared goals are critical in fostering a sense of ownership among participants.
- Celebrating small successes helps maintain enthusiasm and commitment.
- Providing consistent support and addressing concerns proactively enhances collective resilience.

Conclusion:

Phase Two of the PAR process highlighted the transformative potential of integrating critical literacy and intercultural and multimodal practices in English language education.

Alvaro's comment: As a teacher, I witnessed the empowering impact of aligning lessons with students' realities.

Luis's comment: As a coordinator, I recognized the importance of fostering collaboration and creating an environment conducive to innovation.

Moving forward, these reflections will inform subsequent phases, ensuring the continued growth and relevance of our collective efforts to inform the next phase of our participatory action research.

**Alvaro's Signature:****Luis's Signature:**

Appendix 6: Systematic Return 3



SYSTEMATIC RETURN: Third Phase of Participatory Action Research

Decolonial Dialogues: Co-Creating a Transformative Didactic in Critical Literacy and Intercultural Practices

Context of the Research

This systematic return document reflects on the collaborative processes and outcomes from the third phase of the Participatory Action Research (PAR) study. The study is situated within a North Colombia tourist area, aiming to design a didactic framework that integrates critical literacy and intercultural and multimodal practices into English education. This phase corresponds to the High Stage of Insertion, addressing Objective 3: To collaboratively configure a critical literacy and intercultural and multimodal practice didactic that transforms English language pedagogy.

Purpose of the Systematic Return

The purpose of this document is to go through the scientific area, High Stage of Insertion, as follows:

- Transformation of pedagogical practices through the collective construction of a didactic approach
- Changes in states of consciousness
- Scientific foundation and theorization.

The main objectives are:

1. Provide a reflective overview of the progress and collective insights gained during Phase 3.
2. Highlight emerging themes, challenges, and achievements.
3. Offer recommendations for integrating findings into a practical and theoretical framework.
4. Reinforce the dialogic and dialectical relationship with the co-researchers.

Key Activities Undertaken in Phase 3

1. Collaborative Reflection on Pedagogical Transformation

- Conducted reflection group with co-researchers (the teacher and the coordinator) to identify shifts in consciousness and practice.
- Facilitated discussion where co-researchers co-constructed the foundational elements of the didactic framework.

2. Analysis of Multimodal Student Outputs

- Analyzed diverse student-created artifacts (e.g., videos, infographics, role plays) addressing themes such as cultural identity, sustainability, and equity.
- Mapped the integration of critical literacy and intercultural and multimodal principles within these outputs.

3. Analysis of Emerging Themes and Insights

1. Cultural Representation and Identity

Findings:

- Students and teachers emphasized the importance of embedding local traditions, such as Bullerengue, into English lessons.
- Students demonstrated pride in their cultural heritage while critically reflecting on how globalization influences local practices.

2. Critical and Environmental Engagement

Findings: Projects highlighted environmental issues such as coastal erosion and the ecological impact of tourism; students proposed actionable solutions through multimodal advocacy campaigns.

Implications: Curriculum design should integrate local environmental challenges, linking them to global sustainability efforts.

3. Local-Global Synthesis

Findings: Activities bridged local realities with global contexts, enabling students to develop intercultural competence; students expressed a desire for lessons that balance cultural preservation with modern global perspectives.

Implications: Develop pedagogical strategies that connect students' lived experiences with broader global narratives.

4. Multimodal Practices and Creativity

Findings: Students used diverse modes of expression (e.g., storytelling, posters, pictures) to convey critical messages; multimodal practices fostered collaboration, creativity, and inclusivity.

Implications: Teachers should be trained to implement and evaluate multimodal projects effectively.

5. Engaging Didactic Structure

Challenges

1. **Technological Barriers:** Limited access to devices and reliable internet hindered equitable participation in multimodal activities.
2. **Time Constraints:** Insufficient time within existing curricula to fully develop and execute multimodal projects.
3. **Navigating Cultural Sensitivities:** Ensuring cultural representation was authentic and avoided stereotypes required ongoing dialogue and reflexivity.

Recommendations for Implementation

1. **Enhancing Pedagogical Support:** Provide professional development workshops for teachers on integrating critical literacy and interculturality into lesson planning and using digital tools to support multimodal learning.
2. **Promoting Equity and Accessibility:** Ensure equitable access to digital tools through school or institution-provided resources and design analog alternatives for multimodal activities to accommodate students without digital access.
3. **Structuring the Didactic Framework:** Design a framework consisting of theoretical foundations grounded in decolonial and participatory principles and cultural contexts centered on local traditions and issues. As a pedagogical strategy, focus on multimodal, collaborative, and reflective practices.
4. **Embedding Reflexivity in Practice:** Incorporate reflective journaling for teachers and students to document their learning journeys, facilitating ongoing dialogue between co-researchers and community stakeholders.

5. Strengthening Community Partnerships: Collaborate with local cultural organizations to validate and enrich curricular content and engage parents in activities that bridge school or institution-based learning with community practices.

Observations:

Luis suggested going through a fourth stage in participatory action research to reassess the problem and the initial situation in a new cycle. However, after a long discussion, we agreed that, since Participatory Action Research is a never-ending process, this proposal sounds better for a post-doctoral instance. Instead, we decided to focus our immediate efforts on consolidating the current cycle's findings and articulating them into actionable insights that address the immediate needs of the educational context. This decision allows us to maintain the coherence and depth of the current framework while acknowledging the potential for future iterations to explore other emerging issues. By doing so, we aim to ensure that the transformative actions implemented during this cycle are grounded in critical reflection and practical application, laying a strong foundation for subsequent cycles of inquiry and transformation.

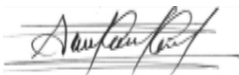
Conclusion

The third phase of this PAR study has reinforced the transformative potential of integrating critical literacy and intercultural and multimodal practices into English education. By co-constructing the didactic framework, this phase highlighted the value of collaboration, cultural relevance, and creativity. Moving forward, the implementation of these recommendations will require sustained engagement with teachers, students, and community members to ensure lasting impact.

Acknowledgments

Special thanks to the co-researchers, students, and community (stakeholders) who contributed their voices, insights, and creativity to this transformative process.

Firmas:



Alvaro



Luis

Appendix 7: Examples of Codification Moments

1. Familiarization with the Data

00:20:25 So, you don't focus your activities on tourism, right?

Alvaro

00:20:29 No, no, i mean well, we are trying to work on that because there is a project with the public schools and the municipality in Puerto Escondido.

00:20:46 So for the next year, we're trying to change all the English curriculum.

00:20:54 The way we teach English in our schools with the purpose of following the Colombian bilingualism program that is oriented by the British Council

00:21:03 That's what the government wants to do to have an impact on the students and then to attract more tourists

00:21:16 That's what now we we are trying to do for the next year.

Interviewer

00:21:22 Now question 16, what role do local cultural practices, believes or stories play in your English classes?

00:21:31 how are they related to global cultural influences?

Alvaro

00:21:39 Well, in fact, as i told you before, i don't, it's not related to the role in the role of the local culture practices.

00:22:06 We have to follow the book.

00:22:10 In my class, i usually focus on English as American culture.

00:22:19 In fact, i see, for example, let me give you an example.

00:22:26 Valentine's day is an example.

00:22:33 I always teach it in the American or British way.

00:22:39 Patrick's Day could be a reading or something for that day.

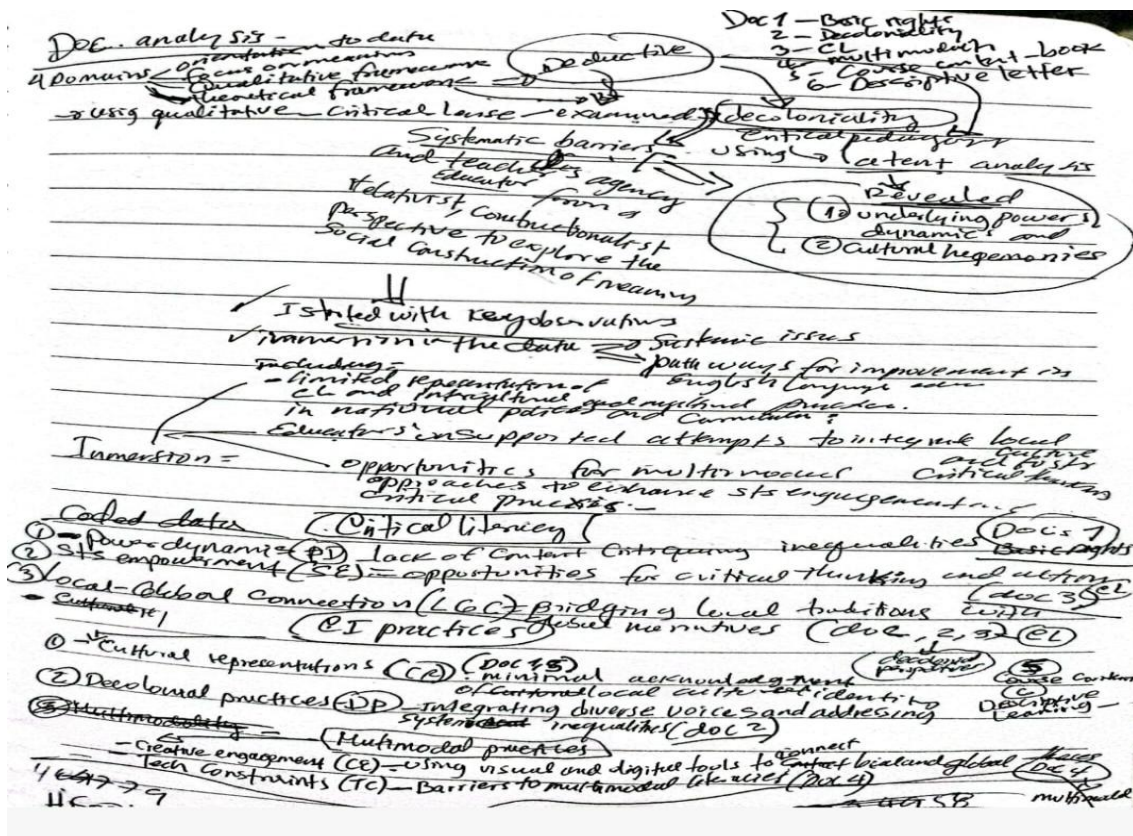
00:22:46 And i see that's not important for my students

Luz Ely Gonzalez Humanez
Eurocentric F

Luz Ely Gonzalez Humanez
Economic L.

Luz Ely Gonzalez Humanez
Bilingual curricula

2. Generating Codes



3. Generating Initial Themes

Cultural Resonance: *Bridging Local and Global Perspectives*, captures the integration of local cultural practices into English learning. **The teacher acts as a cultural mediator** connecting global content with local realities to foster student engagement and pride in the identities. An example from the teacher's insight is, *"I encourage students to relate festivals in the book to our coconut festival," supported by literature stating, "Critical intercultural practices aim to transform teachers and students, build communities of learning, and acknowledge different voices."*

The second theme, *Navigating Institutional Constraints: Toward Emancipatory Practices*, highlights systemic barriers such as rigid curricula **and standardized textbooks** that limit critical and intercultural perspectives. For example, the teacher noted, *"We have to follow the book completely; no changes allowed,"* echoing literature findings that *curricula prioritize functional communication over critical engagement.*

4. Reviewing Themes

1. **Lost Opportunities:** Navigating Systemic Barriers. Institutional policies emphasize linguistic proficiency, *sidelining* critical and intercultural perspectives. The Colombian Basic Standards (D1) *highlight* functional skills while *neglecting* critical literacy or intercultural reflection. Textbooks like *Interchange* (D5) perpetuate global cultural stereotypes, further widening the disconnect between policy and practice.
2. **Bridging Cultures:** The Teacher as a Change Agent. Despite systemic constraints, the teacher integrates local culture into lessons, enriching learning experiences and fostering cultural pride. For example, activities like connecting the coconut festival with textbook themes (Ds 2, 3).
3. **Pathways Forward:** Multimodality as a Catalyst for Change. Multimodal tools, though underutilized due to technological barriers, empower students to connect local realities with global challenges. Multimodal practices (D4) advocate using visual and digital media to enhance critical literacy and intercultural practices. See *figure 8* for *intersection* of themes and *figure 9* for *systematization* and organization of data.

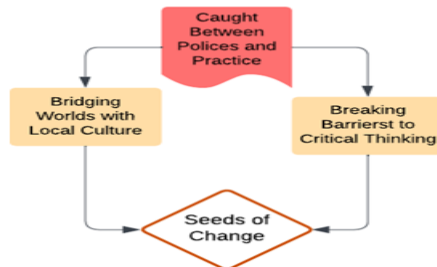
Interconnections between the themes in the documentary review.



5. Refining and Naming Themes

- to students' lived experiences. **He feels constrained, hindering adaptation to local contexts.**
- Bridging worlds with local culture:** The teacher creatively contextualizes global content with regional traditions. This theme captures the teacher's efforts to integrate local cultural practices into lessons, despite institutional barriers. He mentioned activities like connecting the coconut festival with textbook themes to make lessons more relatable. Key evidence is "I encourage students to relate festivals in the book to our coconut festival" and "I try to help them see their identity in the language they are learning." The impact is that these efforts foster cultural pride and meaningful learning experiences.
 - Breaking barriers to critical thinking:** There are challenges in fostering critical literacy and intercultural dialogue in a place where resources, student readiness, and institutional policies create obstacles. Key Evidence are "Students question why foreign cultures dominate the English content!" and "The lack of technology and resources makes it difficult to use multimodal tools." The impact is the limited transformative learning opportunities. Students and teachers struggle to engage critically with global and local cultural narratives as there are limited transformative learning opportunities.
 - Seeds of change:** There are opportunities for promoting cultural pride and transformative education. This theme explores the opportunities for transformative education through decolonial approaches. The teacher expressed a desire for curriculum reforms that prioritize local culture and student empowerment. Key evidence is: "I would like to create my own materials related to the region's issues," and "We are working on changing the English curriculum to attract more tourists and empower students." The impact is that these aspirations indicate potential pathways for addressing systemic inequalities in English language education. The following visual representation of the thematic map highlights the interconnections between the themes.

Interconnections between the themes in the teacher's conception and practices.



6. Reporting Findings

