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Artículo de investigación

The peace tree in ELT: A problematizing exploration¹

El árbol de la paz en EI: una exploración problematizadora

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Colombia

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ABSTRACT

The English language teaching (ELT) field has undergone transformations regarding its views on knowledge and language. Although instrumental perspectives situate English teachers in a passive, receptive and technical position, their research and pedagogical work displays an interest in extracurricular phenomena about Peace Construction (PC) in ELT. This qualitative exploratory study aimed at unveiling possible connections between PC and ELT in Colombia. Documental revision and semi-structured interviews were applied with 4 English teachers. Findings discuss an organic metaphor as facilitating “teachers’ situated knowledge construction” (Serna, 2018, p. 585). Thus, a critical reflection is developed on how ELT and PC may articulate one another towards an alternative reading on their possible relationality or the reduction of the canonical distance imagined between these two fields, in order to acknowledge their interconnection. Conclusions around the multifaceted transdisciplinary ELT field are presented.

Palabras clave: ELT, peace construction, teachers’ subjectivities, teachers’ knowledge(s).

RESUMEN

La Enseñanza del Inglés (EI) se ha transformado desde sus perspectivas sobre el conocimiento y el lenguaje. Aunque algunas posiciones instrumentales sitúan a los profesores de inglés en una posición pasiva, receptiva y técnica, su práctica demuestra sus intereses en fenómenos extracurriculares, tocantes a la Construcción de Paz (CP) en EI. Este estudio cualitativo-exploratorio devela posibles conexiones entre la CP y EI. Se realizó una revisión documental, y entrevistas semiestructuradas a cuatro profesores de inglés. Una metáfora orgánica emerge para discutir los hallazgos, hacia la construcción de conocimiento (Serna, 2018). Se reflexiona críticamente acerca de cómo la CP y EI se articularían desde una lectura sobre su racionalidad o la reducción de la distancia disciplinar canónica entre ambos campos para reconocer su interconexión. Discuto finalmente las dimensiones transdisciplinar y diversa de la EI.

Keywords: Enseñanza de inglés, construcción de paz, subjetividades de los profesores, conocimientos de los profesores.

Introduction

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Reina Valera, 1960, Philippians 4:7)

Through the present text, I discuss processes and results of a small-scale research study articulated to my PhD inquiry. Experiencing the construction of that proposal urged me to firstly wonder about the connections between Peace Construction (PC) and English Language Teaching (ELT). Even when some scholars have connected ELT to instrumental manners of relating to others (Richards & Rodgers, 2014), further ones articulate this field to broader and multiple possibilities of action (Quintero-Polo, 2019). As a language teacher educator and a mestiza bricoleur, I understand PC as a topic, a practice and a process inside everyday life. Similarly, ELT is not an abstract area, but rather it seems a located and changing field where multifaceted and relational possibilities of action appear.

To understand how these two “seemingly separated fields” intersect each other, qualitative exploratory research as a problematizing practice has been carried out. I particularly wondered about articulating points between ELT and PC from different contexts. This is especially relevant in academic settings where discussions around this liaison seems forbidden or not authorized due to modern perspectives around knowledge (e.g. positivist). Precisely, this text presents a critical look of ELT-PC amalgams as representing an alternative reading about their possible complementary relationship, instead of exclusionary. Thereby, I explore Colombian teachers’ contributions and contexts, together with some international ones towards a balanced discussion.

Once exploring multiple pedagogical proposals by English Language (EL) teachers and others from some social institutions in Colombia, I realized there were diverse ways to combine, respond, and present or explain the PC-ELT link. Nevertheless, these multiple phenomena related to those connections between both fields seem still tackled from a descriptive viewpoint only. EL teachers, though involved in this PC-ELT link, appear constrained to create, discuss, and propose personal local theories to re-signify their experiences. This research attempts to challenge the possible technical and passive role assigned to EL teachers regarding the construction of knowledge (Kumaravadivelu, 2003), when they are especially concerned about non-instrumental issues.

Consequently, this manuscript explores PC-ELT connections, while discussing them from a problematizing critical position towards knowledge construction, beyond only reporting what is observed. Thus, a metaphor has been elaborated from an organic and ecological viewpoint, because both PC and languages (Spanish, English, French...) constitute learning resources attached

to life (Johnson, García & Seltzer, 2019). More precisely, this metaphor supports knowledge construction around PC-ELT connections to present them as epistemologically and methodologically dialoguing and congruent areas of action, which become everlasting transformed fields.

In the rest of the article, the theoretical framework and the methodological sections develop by bringing diverse authors’ voices into discussion. In the former, I reflect upon PC, Applied Linguistics (AL) to ELT plus the trans-disciplinary changes for knowledge resignification. In the latter, I approach qualitative research as a problematizing practice, and other methodological decisions such as data collection techniques and sampling strategies.

Lastly, findings and conclusions close this article. These results unpack the tree parts’ metaphor to create an alternative reading on the PC-ELT link. Inside it, hegemonic institutions governing ELT from an inner position do not seem to be the only ones participating in the PC project, but also real EL teachers in different locations. Further implications for educational settings and conclusions are shared at the end.

Theoretical perspectives

As a language teacher educator and a mestiza bricoleur (Vasilachis, 2009; Foucault, 1996), I discuss two chief constructs. For it, I position myself, epistemologically speaking, within critical and decolonial perspectives. This is because both of them may contribute to each other in their emergence and transformation. Besides, I found it unattainable to remain in only one side of the coin as a purist scholar who reads the reality from there. In this work, drawing on toolboxes (Foucault, Morris & Patton, 1979) allowed me to be in-between (Bhabha, 1994, 2004) or place myself within border thinking (Mignolo, 2011) to read realities from the power and the absences concerns.

Peace construction (PC)

This concept seems connected to a human interest about how to live differently towards coexistence, as an alternative to the violence option in its multiple versions and mechanisms to manifest (Galtung, 2016). As one of the first promoters of peace in diverse life areas and scenarios, including education, Galtung (1969) poses an influential definition of peace as “the absence of violence” (p.167), and particularly the direct one (Roa, 2012). Galtung’s conceptualization around peace was more organic and related to a complex view of humans’ lives. It refers to the integration of five aspects to avoid human degradation: ecological balance, survival, welfare, freedom and acknowledgement in contexts where conflicts remain (Galtung, 2016). Subsequently, we can find negative peace and positive peace. In the former, conflict presence is denied in PC, and the latter assumes conflict as part of everyday life with direct, cultural, and structural PC as a possibility

to solve it (Galtung, 1969; Mejía 2017).

Even when the concept of PC can be better understood throughout the findings section, as Freeman (1998) asserts when referring to place holders, or those concepts actually comprehended in the research process, there are certain dimensions to remark about PC. In firsthand, Harris (2007) argues there is an outer peace which involves “processes that apply to the natural environment, the culture, international relations, civic communities, families and individuals” (p. 7). Contrastively, Mehari (2017) asserts there is also an inner peace that comprises “peace with oneself, good health” along with “joy, sense of freedom, insight, spiritual peace, feelings of kindness, compassion, contentment and appreciation of art” (p. 58). What is interesting is that PC seems to go beyond political accords and other external phenomena; it is across humans’ bodies.

English Language Teaching (ELT): a transformed field

In relation to this second construct, which is more related to discipline transformation, I would express Applied Linguistics (AL) to ELT has not been a monolithic or linear area of knowledge, but a situated dynamic one. Indeed, Pennycook (2001), Davies (1999, 2007) and Quintero-Polo (2019) constitute important critical voices discussing alternative comprehensions which go beyond an instrumental interest. Thus, multiple domains seem to be inserted in AL to ELT, from structural and communicative ones (Zúñiga, 2003) to more socio-critical regarding English language policies (Guerrero, 2008), intercultural awareness (Henaó, Gómez and Murcia, 2019), identities (Moná and Gómez-Rodríguez, 2019), or even multimodality and linguistic imperialism (Aldana, 2014).

English teaching becomes something more than transmitting reified knowledge about the linguistic system. It becomes a field where EL teachers develop actions towards a less instrumental goal, and rather they contribute to what some call: the construction of a critical school (Gauta, 2018). The concept of field embraces first a set of lasting dispositions (*habitus*) for a certain production of the social world (Bourdieu, 1982). According to Bourdieu (1982) as a sociologist, a field is related to a social space where there is a system of social positions that depend on each other, but remain distant for a legitimized hierarchical social relationships system. Besides, these social positions seem perpetuated due to the circulation of different types of capital, including the symbolic one. For instance, English language could represent part of the symbolic and cultural capital circulating in the AL to ELT field. As there seem to exist top-down social positions (e.g. experts-practitioners) inside this constituted and constituting field, social dispositions around power-knowledge may be enacted, but also challenged through alternative

relationships agents (e.g. language teachers or students) construct.

To this respect, Foucault (1996) also refers to field when discussing the relations between space, language, power and subject. In contrast to previously presented structural analysis of the field by Bourdieu’s (1982), as a point of departure, Foucault (1982) proposes that the subject is the constructor of power who can experience struggles, tactics and strategies. For him, subjectivities of free subjects constitute the ultimate goal of power inside deviates from particular fields (*les champs*). To exemplify, the educational institution appears as a field where deviates of power may discipline the subject in a subtle way, such as the “method” in languages teaching. Nevertheless, subjects (English teachers) can also resist and contest forces of power present in the fields. It is in those “attempts made to dissociate” power relations (Foucault, 1982, p. 780) where we could understand not only what these ones consist of, but how subjects in their multiple spaces constitute themselves.

Methodology

The research methodology here represents a political decision towards research reflexivity (Vasilachis, 2009). I discuss some alternatives to taken-for-granted principles for doing research. By in large, I explain data gathering strategies, some characteristics of participants here, and I refer to ethical issues at the end.

Type of study

The qualitative approach is applied as problematizing exploratory research in this study. On the one hand, the interpretive view of reality in contrast to a normative one (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007) seems coherent to English teachers’ dynamic realities from which comprehensions on PC-ELT emerge. These ones in turn may spring from the place where English teachers live and what they experience there. All these phenomena could not be measured or overgeneralized, but they seem the product of unpredictable, unmeasurable and complex intersubjective experiences. On the other hand, exploratory research characterizes by its focus on underexplored, denied or ignored phenomena to suggest research action possibilities. This problematizing and exploratory methodology engages with the pursuit of further questions as part of research results.

Data gathering strategies

In regards to data gathering strategies, documental revision and semi-structured interviews understood as conversations were employed. For the former, I selected 3 Mass media and thirteen political documents which included peace and language policies, along with Strategic Development Plans (SDP). The latter corresponded to 4 conversations with English teachers who had proposals

on PC in ELT. Within interviews, English teachers referred to their experiences when creating their proposals towards the connection between PC and ELT.

Participants and the relational ethics of care

In the present study, 4 English teachers participated. Purposeful sampling (Cohen et al., 2007) was applied to involve teachers who met certain tenets. These criteria emerged from conversations with informants at the beginning of this study. Characteristics of teachers included: sharing the ELT discipline; having a PC proposal from ELT; being in-service teachers, and expressing their interest in partaking voluntarily in this study. Ethics became a life attitude beyond an instrumental process of consent forms application. I realized ethical issues in research needed to care for the other as a human being since the beginning of the process, and especially when problematizing my methodological tensions within a text weaved between the end of 2019, and the very start of 2020. Rather than objectifying teachers and their proposals, the possibility of prompting a relational ethics of care was promoted in this project. This means interactions with teachers were highly concerned with the welfare of each other and the interpersonal relationships construction during interviews.

Findings: Responding to a challenged relationship between PC and ELT

Results are discussed throughout three sets of problematizing phenomena emerging from the articulation between experiential and theoretical referents. To explain them towards knowledge construction, I propose a metaphor as situated knowledge (Serna, 2018). This constituted an opportunity to explain connections inside PC-ELT, in terms of problematic situations to generate knowledge in an alternative reading around this topic. Figure 1 displays findings in an organic metaphor through a multimodal (Aldana, 2019) representation.

Albeit I initially thought English teachers submitted to the colonial discursive production around PC by some institutions (i.e. British Council, MEN, UNESCO...), I realized English teachers as submitted subjects may challenge that position through an autonomous attitude (Foucault, 1982) as EL educators with PC proposals. This suggests that formal and totalizing discourses on PC pretending to become universal are not the only options, since English teachers contest them through their multicolor initiatives (Aldana, in press). This situation displays pluriversal (de Sousa, 2018) PC where there is room for multiple and an-other thinking (Mignolo, 2000; de Sousa, 2009). We can explore some knowledge produced from it in the tree metaphor on PC-ELT next.

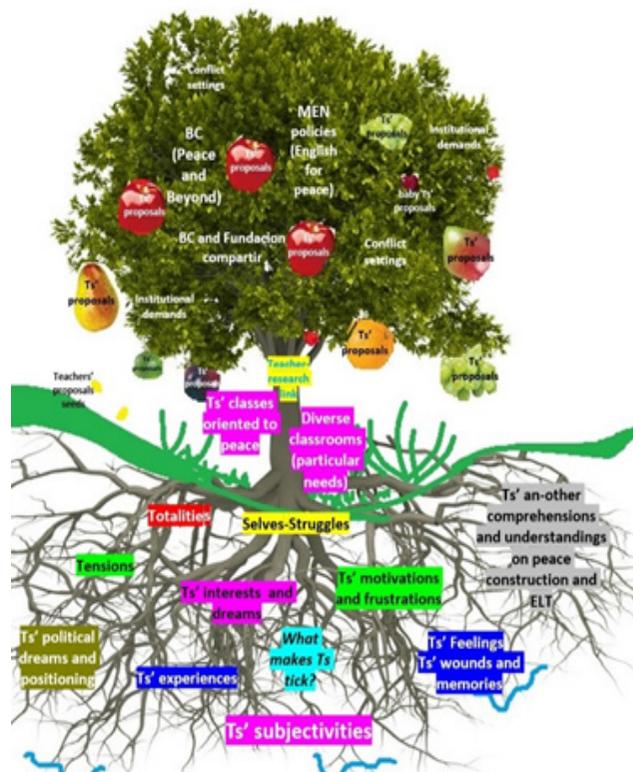


Figure 1: The peace tree
Taken from Aldana (2018)³

Tree top phenomena: The visible Peace Construction (PC)

The British Council (BC) has planned some actions for PC in Colombia. One of them has to do with the agreements between the BC and the Fundación Compartir. Within this one, the BC can determine criteria to select the approved innovative proposal by English teachers, including those related to PC. Within those agreements, English is deemed as a tool to construct peace. When checking the Palabra Maestra web site (Martínez, 21st, February, 2016), one of the discourses this institution seemed to hold around PC was related to citizenship (Convivencia y paz), overlapping the MEN's too. What I can also identify here is that the expert discourse remains, and it seems legitimized, in contrast to English teachers' knowledge(s) around peace in their local and actual milieu. Furthermore, the United Nations through the BC agenda as an institution with prestige and power in many countries, such as Colombia, has conducted another project (Active citizens), and its conference: Peace and beyond. This one in turn was thought to bring academics, practitioners, young leaders and policy makers together towards sharing their

3 It was created as part of the first problematization of this research submitted at the end of the second semester of 2019 in November.

proposals related to peacebuilding.

A problematizing situation emerges: why is peacebuilding mentioned now, rather than PC? This is because peacebuilding reflects how the BC is verbalizing or stating an authorized link between PC and ELT, as a dominant voice. This seems visible in the tree top through its branches and leaves, and accessible to any individual, simply by visiting inner institutions' digital communication spaces. Peacebuilding understood as a legitimated approach to PC by the BC constitutes another good practice to incorporate in Colombian ELT. This instrumental link may aim at making PC in ELT another reified content to be taught in a pre-established and effective sequence. In this case, neoliberal ends come out to make individuals (English teachers) shaped subjects through the exercise of hierarchical power relationships promoted by possible hidden marketing targets in the BC and the MEN.

Interestingly, I found the Colombian Ex-president's text in the Peace and Beyond document overlapped its Editor's written introduction, in terms of wording (language use and discourses behind) they employed when expressing ideas about PC in ELT (Figures 2 and 3). Word clouds let me identify those recurrent words to contrast the BC editor's and Juan Manuel's texts in the same document.



Figure 2: Editor's text
Taken from Aldana (2018)



Figure 3: Ex-President's text
Taken from Aldana (2018)

Different professionals, including only 1 international professor, were invited to the Peace and Beyond Conference, as part of the BC's project to celebrate the international day of peace (September 21st, according to the modern narrative). Nonetheless, only one Colombian guest, –and not necessarily a Colombian English teacher–, was the Ex-president Juan Manuel Santos. His intervention displayed reliance on the BC's discourses inside a dominant voice visualized in the word clouds. These samples display the most recurrent words in both texts: peacebuilding, one, culture, experience and violence. They may suggest a modern model (de Sousa, 2009) of understanding PC that goes towards universalities; in fact, the word -one is recurrent in both cases, shadowing plurality.

Previous situations may entail one imagined way of approaching PC which seems to exclude ELT. Albeit that event gathered experiences around peace, even related to Colombian contexts, Colombian English teachers did not appear there. Workshop and presentation speakers came from other countries, excepting one Colombian Social sciences teacher. A modern separating mechanism may objectify knowledge and deny English teachers' existence. This exemplifies the zone of nonbeing for English teachers (Fanon, 2009) towards a sort of neoliberal connection between PC and ELT (Hurie, 2018).

Similarly, other proposals by the BC in Colombia which address PC in ELT perpetuate that hegemonic absence. There is a project around storytelling to foster both communicative and narrative capacities in children, and the youth affected by the armed conflict (British Council, 2018). Notwithstanding the resilience objectives this project suggests and may allow, it reproduces an instrumental connection in PC-ELT. Precisely, English communicative competence as the ultimate goal, rather than a means to achieve something else remains (British Council, n.d.). Also, Colombian English are invisibilized in this project. Indeed, the expert discourse seems enacted again. A British performer was presented as having the expertise to support these workshops in Colombia

Do English teachers need a model to imitate, as Fanon (2001) would wonder? Is the Native Speaker fallacy colonizing PC in Colombia? I am not claiming English teachers cannot learn from others, and thus should they build a wall, since this would replicate the inner logic of the modern separation (de Sousa, 2009, 2018). What I am referring to is the possibility to diversify the White model of PC in ELT by acknowledging what English teachers do towards that connection from multiple options.

The version of PC by the BC gets more visible through the Active citizens project, since 2009. That is why it appears as another branch in the tree. This initiative is defined as a training program in social leadership that promotes the intercultural dialogue, and social development led by the community. This program aims at connecting people around the world to develop abilities and

construct knowledge towards a social change in more just communities. People from diverse geographical areas meet and share their knowledge to apply their ideas as active citizens. This understanding and option for PC has been promoted through the maximization discourse that has showed exact high figures of trained citizens (243.129) which may persuade audiences to participate.

Another problematic connection between PC and ELT comes out: PC as sanitization towards a modern peaceful teacher and student. Axiological principles to describe an ideal citizen for an ideal conflict and violence off society seems recurrent in diverse documents proposing PC. Concerning it, the problematic situation emerges when negative peace is mainly promoted, since peace is thought as the absence of war and conflict (Sun, 2017). A modern dichotomy (de Sousa, 2009) appears behind this PC-ELT connection. Within it, teachers are positioned within an overgeneralizing, universal and linear role as modelling peaceful subjects (Kruger, 2012). This implies a must-be discourse which supports the idea of being in a determined manner (coloniality of being): tolerant, cooperative, fair, respectful or applying what some call: humanistic values (Finch, 2004; Polat, Arslan and Günçavd, 2016). Prescribed good practices become compulsory, and they may infantilize teachers who have to apply them plus justifying their pedagogical practice though those toolboxes (UNESCO, 2013).

Additionally, the State's power in PC through its discursive enunciations: English for peace, peaceful future or sustainable peace, or even citizenship (MEN and BC) possibly represent another homogenizing source, and marketing neoliberal aims (Hurie, 2018). Inside them, an ideal learner and a teacher are imagined in a continuity. A series of goals assigned to both teachers and students encompass pacific well living founded on national values teachers have to transmit towards a homogeneous citizenship (UNESCO, 2005, 2013), i.e. disciplining their ways of being and doing (Foucault, 1982, 1975). This PC-ELT connection may suggest another English teachers' practice to control their bodies and their teaching actions towards continuity and progress-driven ontologies (Esobar, 2007; Aldana, in press).

Further branches with visible phenomena in this problematizing tree embrace still remaining conflict environments and institutional demands for English teachers in the transition from conflict to post-conflict and post-agreement settings. On the one hand, peace agreements do not entail permanent peace for Colombians. Indeed, everyday problems take place in people's regular life. PC seems so integral to existence that institutions and individuals, including English teachers, have explored chances to respond to it, and in some cases, they might be asked to do so in their work settings.

When peace agreements were signed, the principal asked us to create a project in each subject related to peace, as it had become a key component of the curriculum. He gave us the toolbox of the Centro de memoria histórica and the UNESCO. We had to follow them. (Teacher AQ, May 2018)

Interestingly, different professional development seminars, and even Masters offer courses about conflict-driven settings to different discipline teachers. These scenarios involve situations ranging from spontaneous and forced interventions for PC, diverse types of violence as physical or structural (Vasilopoulos et al., 2018) and even the high number of leader teachers who have suffered from threatening or murdering in Colombia. When I interviewed participant English teachers, they reacted to this everyday reality which seemed familiar and close to them in their educational and personal life settings. I could understand how they perceived these conflict-driven settings and situations there which are transmitted -though superficially- by Mass media, discussed by some people, supported by others and denied by many, according to teachers' reactions. When PC and ELT are integrated, extracurricular life phenomena seem to get out of the taken-for-granted set of normal situations such as violence (Padilla & Bermúdez, 2016) to be problematized from the multifaceted possibilities of complex local settings. Instrumental PC-ELT connections get blurred when contextually situated life is at stake.

While exploring more into the branches in this metaphor, I realized about English teachers' counterconduct (Foucault, 2006) in their transformed subjectivities as educators more than only instructors or managers of peace (Aldana, in press). Their pedagogical and research proposals' visibility through presentations and papers dealing with PC in ELT tensions instrumentalizing ELT. Here, what I heard years ago from some partners who suggested two colleagues and I to better visit the lab and take the tape recorder to sing a, b, c, d, e, f... vanished. English teachers also get outside the class walls and explore their contexts from their subjectivities' creative and generating capacities (Calderón, 2012) to go beyond instrumental requirements around ELT. For instance, both English teachers' presentations in academic events such as ASOCOPI (2017) and those in the interviews unpacked what was called: PC from their local and personal contexts as sources of knowledge resignification.

I would really like to promote peace in my class as a setting for calmness with ourselves. I really think that those conflicts inside and outside this school could be solved through personal healing first.

Since English teachers' ideas and proposals contained seeds of contextual innovation, relevance, creativity and

other political decisions, I relate their proposals to the fruits in the tree metaphor. Even when some teachers may enact instrumental and neoliberal discourses in PC-ELT (e.g. English for peace, as critically discussed by Hurie, 2018), various works have diversified and challenged them. When English teachers talk about and share their contributions in events such as ASOCOPI or the one at the Surcolombiana University, further teachers could also consider an-other (Mignolo & Escobar, 2013) alternatives to do something and think within and about their teaching settings. The distinction between another and an-other is key here, insofar as the latter aims at acknowledging and coexisting with others (de Sousa, 2018), rather than denying them. This shows that not all what attempts to subject individuals in PC-ELT connections achieves so.

In the presenters list from the ASOCOPI 52nd Annual Conference, I found proposals that illustrated how ELT may function as a means, rather than the end to achieve PC as that something else. In some proposals, it was facilitated by ELT didactic alternatives such as the flipped learning (Castrillón, presenter in ASOCOPI, 2017) which indicates a PC-ELT connection mediated by technology in the class. In the same vein, post-conflict-driven resources supported PC in ELT environments (Gómez, presenter in ASOCOPI, 2017). Research practices seem another scenario where PC and ELT could relate. Action research leading teachers to resignify PC as social PC and justice was proposed (López y Ramírez, presenter in ASOCOPI, 2017). In fact, combining peace with social justice was proposed (Guarnizo and Ortega, presenter in ASOCOPI, 2017). In these presentations, peace was explicitly mentioned and pursued through an-other methodological alternatives in ELT as linked to research.

Previous phenomena may display English teachers' pedagogical discourses as linked to research and their political subjectivities (Calderón, 2012) towards locally informed positions. Peacebuilding as an approach, according to the MEN's formal discourse seems revisited by English teachers from their diverse below spaces (Walsh, 2017). English teachers seem to transform their class – and life- goals when English language and its teaching do not constitute the ultimate goal of their pedagogical practice, but humans involved in complex surrounding phenomena. Both English language and methodological innovations become the means or path to achieve something else, rather than the most important end.

Furthermore, other English teachers proposed PC and ELT connection through social justice (Mora, presenter in ASOCOPI, 2017), inclusive classrooms (Martínez y Romero, presenter in ASOCOPI, 2017), differentiated education in ESL settings (Villamizar, presenter in ASOCOPI, 2017) and equality from the analysis of didactic materials (Castañeda, presenter in ASOCOPI, 2017). Indeed, this last one reminded me of the Native speaker fallacy in didactic materials as an expression of structural violence

towards language teachers (Aldana, 2014). It may reveal that English teachers have concerned about PC, even before Colombian peace agreements.

In tree fruits of this discussion metaphor, I grouped ASOCOPI presentations in another set with projects that involved teachers as participants. One study explored how the use of textbooks hindered or allowed teachers' pedagogical identities to flourish (Caro, presenter in ASOCOPI, 2017). I will employ Posada's concept about imagined identities (presenter in ASOCOPI, 2017) to refer to the instrumental and modern perception of English teachers as cognitive subjects. It means some PC-ELT connections may only concede English teachers a cognitive possibility to exist. Indeed, an interviewed teacher expressed he felt as a machine asked to memorize an array of recipes when reading the guidelines for introducing peace in the language class.

Another study by Méndez and Pérez (presenters in ASOCOPI, 2017) explored teachers' self struggles when becoming mentors within practicum guided through inquiry processes. Similarly, Aguirre and Ubaque (presenters in ASOCOPI, 2017) studied language teacher practicum for making emergent knowledge and experiences visible through different language teacher education towards social reconstruction. Other English teachers such as Castañeda (presenter in ASOCOPI, 2017) takes cognitive social justice as a stance to acknowledge English teachers' knowledge(s). These English teachers' particular works represented through the tree's fruits let me identify both enactment and resistance (Walsh, 2015) within PC-ELT connections.

Tree's trunk and bark phenomena: The articulating latent inside PC in ELT

Previous initiatives imply what I call: the articulating latent understood, in the present reflection, as what exists without exteriorizing completely as it is, but constituting important trigger fissures or cracks to provoke multiple connections between PC and ELT. In the case of this metaphor, the trunk represents them. Although it plays an important role in the tree for connecting -articulating-branches, fruits and roots, the trunk has not been completely explored or understood, because each tree trunk is unique. I place 3 physical and epistemological scenarios there: teacher-research link, PC English classes and diverse classrooms with particular needs. Tree trunks are not completely manifest to us, even when they are perceptible at first glance, because the bark covers trees' woody resource. The three scenarios mentioned seem covered by homogenizing discourses such as the good-practices and must-be ones which make them sources of both wounds and cracks (Walsh, 2015, 2017).

Firstly, the teacher-research link encompasses two connected roles which are underpinning or behind English teachers' proposals about PC in ELT. Therefore, they

are not completely comprehended as soon as English teachers talk about their proposals. Indeed, the tree bark covering the English teacher-researcher link represents situations where some people may distrust in research processes behind PC proposals by English teachers. One interviewed teacher told me that when talking to other people, they expressed doubt and uncertainty regarding the research dimension in this type of projects, since they considered them as “fuzzy” (Excerpt 3). This may occur due to forces from the scientific method inherited of a canonical positivist trend that has influenced the way some understand research processes not only in other fields different from ELT, but also inside it.

When I talk about the work about PC to some friends, their responses even nonverbal convey skeptical reactions to what I do in class. With this project about social justice that I did at the school with the students, I consider research was there. But one English teacher too and my sister who is an engineer expressed it was fuzzy and they hardly perceived it as actual research. (Teacher ES, May 2018)

As trees' bark also performs the function of protecting the wood, this relates, in this metaphor, to some English teachers' interest in protecting their pedagogical practice and themselves from instrumental forces when connecting PC and ELT. In fact, above physical and epistemological scenarios may generate other ontological spaces where teachers seem sensitive and committed to real educational scenarios in the tree trunk through PC in ELT. Diverse classroom and institutional phenomena occur behind English teachers' proposals, but we cannot access them directly. All in all, latent articulating connections between PC and ELT shed light on assumed and given phenomena which seem key in the distinctions among proposals by English teachers, even when we aim at a common –not the same– goal: PC in ELT.

Tree roots: the invisible PC-ELT connections

Visible fruits, branches and leaves linked through the articulating latents (trunk, its bark and woody parts) in this tree metaphor lead us to the invisible components now, as symbolized by the tree roots. These phenomena are invisible as an imagined impossibility, according to some who may consider English teachers' contributions to PC unlikely (Excerpt 3). The word impossibility does not refer to the difficulty to happen, but to the fact that some of these invisible phenomena are not even thought to exist, e.g. English teachers' efforts and factors when creating, developing and sharing PC proposals. Paradoxically, these tree roots' phenomena mediate nutrition to the rest of parts; however, they remain unaddressed or underexplored. These invisible phenomena may explain why some teachers are not absolutely subjected to the tree branches

which involve a normal discourse on PC in ELT. Subjectivities emerge here as problematic political spaces for re-signifying phenomena.

I wish to reiterate the exploration of inner institutions' documents, ASOCOPI 2017 presentations, interviews and my own experiences shed light on some invisible phenomena within PC-ELT connections. Studying English teachers' proposals towards PC beyond the practical decisions showed how English teachers' beings, in an attempt to affirm themselves as educators (Méndez, 2018), or even from other sites of (re)existence (Walsh, 2017) articulated PC and ELT. These ones may integrate struggles, tensions, fears, feelings... in transitions English teachers experience.

Initially, the discipline struggle not only between ELT and other knowledge areas, but also among English teachers may produce dehumanizing language, such as the instructor label. This resembles modern discourses in ELT towards reductionist instrumental tackling of language teaching and language users (Guerrero, 2008; de Sousa, 2009). Modes of objectification support it when transforming life phenomena and subjects into “desired” objects to be studied within specific separated areas (Foucault, 1982). English teachers may struggle with a monolithic modern must: a normalized being representing a pacific model instructor (Kruger, 2012). English teachers' selves-struggles appear here and challenge the prescriptive being and the artificial or fictional identity embedded in ideological discourses (e.g. good practices) with overgeneralizing attributes to English teachers as models of harmonious behavior who “need to be global citizens themselves prepared to integrate global citizenship knowledge, skills, and attitudes in their lessons” while promoting “national citizenship” (Calle, 2017, p. 155) within a sanitizing project.

That can be why English teachers may face discipline boundaries and sometimes rejection when creating an-other initiatives. The modern paradigm is visible here when setting discipline divisions (Foucault, 1982) that play the role of hindrances for interactions among academics and non-academics about an interest which concerns everyone. For instance, one of the teachers interviewed expressed she experienced rejection towards her proposal to the extent that she felt even guilty about her PC project. The major criticism she heard came from the priority provided to the linguistic and communicative competence in a country where neither students nor teachers speak English, according to some (Pérez, 2016). Here, I identify dehumanizing language in a normalized canonical discourse where both the structure and communicative competences for neoliberal purposes come first in the ELT field.

The consequent cracks or fissures (Walsh, 2017) produced on English teachers' affectivities may emerge as spaces for resistance (Excerpt 4) which represent another

connection between PC and ELT. Interestingly, it may de-normalize taken-for-granted instrumental objectifying discourses where neither English teachers nor PC in ELT appear as part of life. Within the roots of this tree that represents another set of possible articulations between PC and ELT, English teachers' wounds, tensions, struggles, motivations, frustrations, dreams... from their deepest beings show how language can also code dehumanizing practices. Gomes de Matos (2014) proposes peacelinguistics to reassert the role of language in provoking either PC or violence and conflict situations which are not always or necessarily physical or direct.

When my coordinator and some colleagues in the school English field said my English learning guide towards peace incorporated was nonsense, I just felt frustrated at first, but then I reread it and suddenly I felt more powerful to do it.

English teachers' subjectivities as sites of contestation come into view through their pedagogical practices and political affirming positions, such as those underlying ASOCOPI (2017) presentations. As a matter of fact, these English teachers' responses to PC in ELT entail particular subjectivities (Foucault, 1982; Aldana, in press) which are similar only for their diversity in terms of their political, epistemological, affective and strategic constitution... The transforming and creative potential (Excerpt 5) of subjectivities in PC-ELT connections may suggest the constitution of subjects who differently resist dehumanizing nonbeing zones (Fanon, 2009).

I thought it would be different, but when they hired me, they remarked I had to follow a prescribed set of didactic guides which were grammar-based and content-based. Even when I got angry, I remembered I was able to make my class a peace scenario through multiple strategies. Although students' and my class is seen as a small place, it is enough for starting to construct peace.

Another PC in ELT connection comes from the sanitizing project in both action areas. English teachers may face some pressure to tackle students as contaminated beings to be cleaned towards a modern national citizenship through competences as the MEN has ruled. One interviewed teacher expressed her surprise when hearing teachers must educate for peace to change children's "bad" manners and make them acceptable citizens (Interview 3). English teachers seem to participate in an asepsis or sanitization project where they "must" learn how to educate –or "clean" dirty bodies– for corrective identities, according to some formal good-practices discourses.

As a result, AL to ELT seems colonized in terms of knowing, being and power (Castro-Gómez & Grosfoguel, 2007). When enacting the linguistic imperialism discourse

(Philipson, 2000), the native speaker as the cultural, linguistic, and then teacher model in the English class appeared. Language policies, teaching methodologies, language curricula, teacher education and even teachers' beings have been subjected –to a certain extent, due to some teachers' resistance– to inner modern societies' world-views. Both English teachers and students have been part of cleansing projects to white their subjectivities in AL to ELT, and this constitutes epistemic violence (Sousa, 2009). Colonizing labels to refer to English teachers and the authorized topic or human problems to address in the language class exemplify it.

Nonetheless, diverse English teachers' subjectivities seem emerging and they may represent an-other (Mignolo, 2000) connections in PC-ELT. The dominant paradigm inserted in a modern understanding on PC in ELT may also experience crisis and deconstruction (Sousa, 2009; Grosfoguel, 2016), because of English teachers' alternative subjectivities to political forms of subject submission. Thus, I read these diverse proposals by English teachers as underlying political projects which can be described as pluriversal rather than universal (Grosfoguel, 2016). This means pedagogical interventions and understandings about them from a PC viewpoint in ELT illustrate how the national and rational connection on PC in ELT gets challenged by an-other conceptualizations and practices of it.

In fact, I noticed interviewed English teachers may not have a trendy-driven interest in PC. For instance, excerpt 6 displays an English teacher who connects PC and ELT because of family experiences in his neighborhood, as a point of departure. This is reveling to the instrumental and colonizing epistemologies around ELT. English teachers seem also concerned about the others and themselves when connecting PC and ELT from multiple physical and epistemological sites to the extent that they have social and personal reasons why they decide on their projects. PC in ELT connections may involve these constantly changing invisible phenomena which deserve attention from teachers' experiences tackled and heard beyond the instrumental side.

Interviewer: how did this proposal emerge?

Interviewed: Well, that's a good question. I can answer it based on my background, how I arrived there. I have been always an English teacher and I think that idea about PC and social justice has been connected in my interests throughout all my life. Helping the other, advocating for a more just society have been personal and professional interests in my whole life. Then it was not something that appeared just because, and puff! but it was throughout time. Besides, I think some experiences in my neighborhood, Santa Librada, were key in my proposal. I experien-

ced marginalization there. So I perceive my proposal as coming back but from a different position. I have other eyes to look at my country. (Teacher PL, June 2019)

Conclusion remarks: The organic PC in ELT amalgams

This small scale research project attempted to understand PC-ELT possibilities of connection as a response to English teachers' challenged existence or involvement in PC projects from that area. Documents exploration and interviews with English teachers were developed. Since the underpinning goal was related to social justice based on the cognitive one (de Sousa, 2018), I embarked in the commitment of reflecting upon these connections towards knowledge construction. The tree metaphor represents an alternative reading of PC-ELT links from the visible, latent articulating and invisible problematic phenomena. I noticed that more than an instructional objective, connections between PC and ELT encompass possibly neglected situations that could let us understand how these two areas of action are related. English teachers' suffering, struggles, tensions, feelings and other embodiment phenomena seem key to understand this possible complementary amalgams, as I usually call those cooperative or complementary relationships among fields or referents, and their outcomes.

Abovementioned reflection may also suggest that challenging connections between PC and ELT seems to reflect another colonizing and instrumental attitude towards knowledge. Besides, it may constitute another manifestation of structural or epistemic violence towards English teachers who would be denied their existence out of modern disciplines separated by their specific objects of study. Proposals in and outside the AL to ELT field have enacted that discourse through de-humanizing language use (Gomes de Matos, 2014). However, English teachers seem to re-humanize their beings when concerned about other phenomena beyond the linguistic system and explore it with the possibility of being differently there.

In this qualitative exploratory study, PC may comprise diverse connections with ELT in terms of colonization and resistance along from their underpinning invisible roots, when considering English teachers' contexts and experiences there. In this manner, I have noticed how PC gets diverse, according to ELT settings' particularities and English teachers' inner phenomena.

Lastly, considering the tree as a whole, PC seems to constitute those boundaries that link and separate us at the same time in a transforming AL to ELT. What occurs within and between those boundaries of PC-ELT could contribute to the understanding of local possibilities of PC in face of homogenizing proposals by institutions and subjects holding power and ruling a way of being and doing. Teachers' subjectivities as part of those boundaries

inside PC-ELT emerge from teachers' pedagogical practices and their experiences before, during and after creating these proposals as illustrated through ASOCOPI 2017 presentations. Those subjectivities suggest the existence of humans with feelings, wounds, political positionings, dreams, interests, motivations, comprehensions and struggles placed in invisible roots.

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