

ENGLISH TEACHERS IN COLOMBIA:
IDEOLOGIES AND IDENTITIES IN ACADEMIC WRITING

by

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of Professor Albert Assa.

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ABSTRACT

English Language Teaching (ELT) can be considered an ideological enterprise especially at a time when the spread of English and the ELT profession are related to post-colonial and capitalist interests (Phillipson, 1992, 1997, 2000, 2006; Pennycook, 1994, 1997a; Canagarajah, 1999b). In this context, nonnative English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) face particular challenges related to the prevailing ideologies of English, which has consequences in terms of roles, status, power, and access.

This dissertation is a critical discourse analysis of the theses written by twenty in-service teachers of English as a Foreign Language in Colombia on completion of a one-year graduate program, during which they were acquainted with theories, approaches, and methodologies in the field of ELT. The objective is, through a close analysis of the language feature of the texts, 1) to identify ideologies of English, teaching and learning, and 2) to describe the identities the teachers construe for themselves in their writing. The analysis is text-driven and it uses categories from different functional approaches.

The analysis of the texts shows that the writers engage in ideological discourses regarding the English language, the social and economic consequences of knowing English, and the cultural aims of foreign language teaching. Their discourses convey conceptions of teaching, learning and research that are influenced by acritical interpretations of the literature available to them. This does not seem to contribute to solving their practical problems and is likely to contribute to the maintenance of the students' established roles in their communities. The teacher-authors are faced with the challenge of dealing with the contradicting interests of their own ideals of education, the

constraints of the conventions of the discourse community they are trying to enter, the institutional pressures to be updated with newer trends in applied linguistics and obtain visible results, and the needs of the country to find a place in the globalized economy.

The study points to the need to encourage more critical interpretations and applications of the theories and approaches emanating from the traditional academic centers which in turn should also take interest in examining the pattern of the unilateral flow of knowledge and its consequences.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Millions and millions of people around the world are learning English for a variety of reasons. Those who learn it after they have acquired another language are said to outnumber those who speak English as their native language in the traditional English-speaking centers (roughly Great Britain, North America and Australia). There is consequently an important number of individuals working in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT).

Within that large body of educators, non-native¹ English teachers (NNEST) in peripheral² countries face particular challenges. Native speakers of English are often believed to know how to teach English better than nonnative speakers (Widdowson, 1994; Canagarajah, 1999a, Amin & Kubota, 2004). As permanent learners of English, teachers who are native speakers of other languages may experience feelings of insecurity, inferiority and even discrimination in their own contexts and in the larger academic circles, which are usually Center-based. Placed at the receiving end, these educators are often dependent on theory, materials, and training from the English-speaking nations and their academic and publishing infrastructure.

English Language Teaching (ELT) can be considered a highly ideological

¹ The term non-native speaker is used here to convey the contrast with the 'idealised native speaker' (Leung, Harris & Rampton, 1997), a construct that has been challenged, precisely to point out the imagined or real shortcomings that these bilingual educators have been assigned by others and/or by themselves.

² Center is a term used by Canagarajah (1999a) to refer to the industrially/economically advanced communities (mainly North America, Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand). Periphery refers to the usually less- developed and historically more recent users of English. I include here communities in the developing world (e.g. South America) where English is the main language learnt as a foreign language.

enterprise especially in a time when phenomena like globalization, Americanization, McDonaldization, and homogenization are associated with English and the spread of English.

A number of publications have exposed the strings attached to the spread of English and the teaching of English, and how these are related to post-colonial and capitalist interests (Phillipson, 1992, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2004, 2006; Pennycook, 1994, 1997a; Swales, 1998; Canagarajah, 1999a; Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

Imbued as we are with “ideologically saturated” linguistic systems (Niño-Murcia, 2003, p.138 drawing on Bakhtin, 1981, p.271), most learners of English probably seldom stop to think about the social, economic, political and cultural implications of their choice of this language as the pragmatic aid needed for achieving their goals. As for teachers, though several scholars have pointed out theoretical and practical ways in which prevailing ideologies can and have been resisted (Kramsch and Sullivan, 1996; Seidlhofer, 1999; Canagarajah, 1999b, Benesch, 2001), in some contexts we do not know to what extent there is awareness or interest in this issue. Most studies that address the question of ideologies of non-native English-speaking teachers have been done in contexts where English is the generalized medium of communication in the community. Ideologies circulating in these contexts usually construct the identities of the non-native English-speaking teachers in contradictory ways.

There has not been such a preoccupation with ideology or identity issues in the setting of English as a Foreign Language. And there is even less attention in the context of South America, perhaps because learners and teachers are also seen as belonging to

western societies, and perhaps therefore sharing a number of values with the traditional English-speaking centers, or perhaps because the academic communities have tended to concentrate on research efforts associated with more immediate pragmatic outcomes.

With the postmodern acknowledgment that identities are not fixed or stable and that individuals can have a hybrid or more than one identity depending on specific (historical) moments, interlocutors, and contexts of language use (Duranti, 2003; Schiffrin, 1996; Pennycook, 2000, 2003; Blommaert, 2005) it is conceded that the study of language use can show how individuals position themselves toward macro social phenomena, whether they subscribe to prevailing ideologies, whether they engage in resistance and antihegemonic struggle, or find ‘third places’. The identities individuals adopt or construct in their use of language are embedded within larger ideological structures and discursive constructions. Thus, critical discourse analysis is needed to examine how social, political and economic processes in the society at large influence identity options and uses of discourse

This dissertation is a critical discourse analysis of the theses written by twenty in-service non-native teachers of English as a Foreign Language in Colombia on completion of a one-year graduate Diploma course, during which they were acquainted with theories, approaches, and methodologies in the field of ELT. The following questions will be addressed:

1. What are the ideologies of English and English language learning and teaching represented in the academic written production of in-service non-native teachers after they finish a one-year postgraduate Diploma Course in the teaching of

English ?

2. How do the writers position themselves towards a) the knowledge and knowledge production processes they represent in their writing and b) the academic community they strive to belong to?

Though the concept of ideology is discussed in the Review of Literature section, it is important to clarify that in this work “ideological discourses” will mean discourses that work in favor of a particular group in detriment to another. I will analyze the workings of these discourses from the perspective of those who, from my standpoint, have less power, or are in disadvantageous positions.

The section below will review the literature that serves to frame this study. It will discuss some of the issues frequently raised by scholars who have pointed out common challenges for non-native teachers. Closely connected with these are the ideological discourses about the English language, and the realization by a number of scholars of the ideological nature of the teaching of English. The literature reviewed includes a number of notions and practices that have served to understand and also to challenge the reproduction of these discourses and practices. This is particularly important because, although there has been wider challenge of the notion of English as one idealized language, and there is increasing recognition of the rights and value of different varieties of English that serve communicative purposes in intercultural encounters, the same awareness is not often perceived in terms of the practice of teaching English. Key concepts that will be discussed are ideology, language ideology, and identity.

Chapter 2 is devoted to the description of the written texts that are object of study

in this dissertation, their context of use and the methodology followed in their analysis.

The subsequent chapters will comprise the discourse analysis of the text. In general, it is organized starting with general issues and moving to more concrete ones. It first addresses discourses that convey ideologies of English, the culture of the English language speakers and the relation between the learners and the achievements of these cultures (Chapter 3). It moves then to analyze the discourses regarding the nature, features and benefits of the English for Specific Purposes approach embraced by the postgraduate program (Chapter 4). Chapter 5 connects the discourses and educational choices represented in the theses with aspects of social structure. Chapters 6 and 7 discuss the writers' ideological positioning toward theory and its role, toward concrete theories of learning, and also toward specific concepts which are of common use in the field of English teaching: learning styles, multiple intelligences, authenticity, autonomy and motivation. Chapter 8 deals with my interpretation regarding the ideologically constructed identities of the writers. The last chapter looks back at the whole text and outlines implications and avenues for further research.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Non-native English Teachers

The issue of non-native English-speaking teachers has received growing interest since the 1990s. Several volumes (Davies, 1991; Medgyes, 1994; Braine, 1999; Belcher & Connor, 2001; Kamhi-Stein, 2004; Llurda, 2005), a good number of articles in periodicals, papers read at conferences and also the establishment of the Nonnative English Speakers in TESOL (NNST) Caucus have discussed this construct, the native/nonnative speaker dichotomy and a number of its implications.

A great part of the discussion about nonnative English-speaking teachers refers to the efforts, struggles and experiences of these professionals in trying to find their place in an English-speaking environment or of those who after obtaining qualifications in an English-speaking country, are back to their contexts, especially in Asian countries like Japan, Korea and China (Braine, 2004), and still find themselves competing with native speakers with inferior pedagogical qualifications. Research has also focused on the self-perceptions of nonnative English-speaking teachers (Samimy and Brutt-Griffler 1999; Reves, T., & Medgyes, P., 1994; Liu, 1999; Llurda & Huguet, 2003, Rajagopalan, 2005; Inbar-Lourie, 2005) and on the students' feelings, perceptions and expectations of their nonnative English-speaking teachers (Moussu, 2002, Liang, 2002, Cheung, 2002 cited in Braine 2004, 2005; Amin, 2004; Mahboob, 2004; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2005; Benke & Medgyes (2005)

English teachers whose first language is not English and who teach in what is known as the Periphery (Canagarajah, 1999a) or in the Expanding Circles (Kachru, 1986) find themselves in a particularly challenging situation. Much has also been written about their unique circumstances:

- They may not consider themselves ‘true’ owners of the language they teach (Widdowson, 1994; Norton, 1997) and their proficiency is usually measured against ‘native-speaker’ proficiency (Dendrinos, 1999 in Phillipson, 2000).
- They are likely to consider themselves learners of English (Canessa, 2006) and to focus their efforts on acquiring aspects of the language (e.g. accent, fluency) rather than on understanding their learners, their needs and on developing their own local pedagogies (Canagarajah, 1999b).
- They are not usually active members of the academic circles that produce and distribute the knowledge about theories, pedagogies, methodologies, approaches, and materials for the teaching of English.
- They may experience feelings of inferiority and dependency since they are often put in a position of receivers of the knowledge generated by centers such as the USA or Great Britain.
- They may be subject to discrimination when it comes to publishing in academic journals (Ammon, 2000), find themselves in powerless positions in international organizations (Oda, 1999) or have limited access to international conferences, like the TESOL conference, partly because of their non-compliance with the prevailing writing practices. Certain styles are often not highly valued because of

their perceived lack of objectivity (Lin, Wang, Adamatsu and Riazi , 2002).

- They may inadvertently subscribe to ideologies of language and language teaching that may not work in the best interests of their students in their particular situation (Kumaradivelu,2003; Canagarajah, 2002).
- They teach a language that bears the political and economic power of those nations that proclaim it as L1 and which in many ways may oppress their own countries.

These phenomena have been described and documented at a time when globalization and the ‘spread’ of English seem closely connected. For some scholars this phenomenon is the “most *unintended* outcome of expectations held and decisions made accordingly by hundreds of millions of people across the globe... especially with a view to employment chances” (De Swaan, 2001, p. 142 in Phillipson, 2004, p. 77 emphasis mine). Others, however, see it as anything but a neutral or natural process and closely linked with the maintenance of political and economic power, especially in the Third World.

Phillipson (1992, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2004, 2006) has shown how the spread of English is related to capitalist interests. He relates it to North-South relations, global cultural flows, capitalism, enrichment and impoverishment, modernization, monolingualism, and processes such as internationalization, Americanization, and McDonaldization among others (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1996; Phillipson, 2000, 2004). For Phillipson (2004), when analyzing language phenomena, it is necessary to see how languages, and “English in particular serve to integrate particular communities

(states, or professions), and how particular interest groups (finance capital, corporations, media and educational products) are connected in the world system” (p. 74) and how the spread of English is connected with the competitive advantage for certain groups, with the obstruction of local initiatives and local cultures and also with the forces of cultural homogenization.

The Teaching of English is Ideological

Given the enormous pressure from educational institutions, the national educational policies in the countries in the ‘periphery’ and also from learners themselves wanting to become active participants in the production, distribution and consumption of knowledge, technology, goods and services available through English, teachers of this language find themselves engaged in teaching a language that is regarded as inevitable, desirable, and a necessity. Indeed, today English is associated with social mobility (Wiley and Lukes, 1996). It is advertised as a basic skill from which to construct success. No one questions the statement that “those without both English and computer skills are illiterate in today’s global world” (Velez-Rendon, 2003:187). Besides, graduates of international programs, mostly offering education in English, are portrayed as outstanding human beings, “a ‘superclass’ of individuals ready to take on their role on the world stage in the new millennium and prepared for success” (De Mejía, 2002, p.253).

English is sometimes presented as neutral because it is associated with technology and science. In English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and English for Academic Purposes

(EAP) the language is represented as if it is not related to local contexts or to culture.

Pennycook (1997a) also associates EAP with reinforcing messages about the inferiority of local education systems, and about the appropriate models of research and of use of language in the academy. EAP has likewise reinforced the consumption position from local universities, and has contributed to the phenomenon of brain drain.

Since fields like English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) are meant to address perceived objective needs, necessities and gaps in particular contexts and groups of students, they and also the whole field of English Language Teaching are often perceived as a pragmatic option. Pennycook (1997), however, points out that a number of discourses around English are in fact ideological. In these discourses “English is frequently then constructed as a global commodity to be bought and sold on the world market. Two interesting discourses intersect here: on the one hand a view of global markets as idealized places for equitable trading (a view strongly opposed by any critical analysis of international economic dependency), and on the other, a view of the English language and its teachers as something freely traded within this global free market economy” (p. 258).

As Ramanathan (1999) documents, English can be used to hinder lower income classes from moving into inner circles or the power circles in a country. The practices for achieving this were studied in India and they need to be investigated in other contexts. For example, in some countries English is used as a valid reason for not accepting children into certain ‘bilingual’ elite schools. Besides, grammar-translation methods in public schools seem to inhibit the development of communicative competence and keep

students in a disadvantaged position. Some schools track students into A and B groups depending on their performance in English, and the A group receives instruction in English, authentic materials, more input and contact hours, while the others are treated more or less as deficit students and are not assumed to need English later.

Questioning Teaching Practices

The need for the field of language teaching to undertake self-examination is highlighted by Tollefson (1995), who argues that many educators have uncritical views about English and their own teaching or scholarly practice. Indeed, Swales (1998), for example, much as he has contributed to the field of EAP, humbly recognizes his self-deception in his academic life. He had believed that with scholarly activity he was contributing to the development of the Third World and had never questioned the neutrality of his enterprise, and had not seen the economic interests in the manufacture and export of methodology, knowledge, books, etc. He criticized his own ‘accommodationist’ and ‘technocratic’ stance about English and its role in the world.

There has been growing awareness of the ideological perspectives that permeate the teaching of English and discourses around the teaching of English. Resistance to the ideologies of English that reign in the ELT profession has taken place mostly at the discourse level with publications that try to explain the ideologies of English, their origin and their effects. There are also a number of theoretical and practical proposals on how and in what direction teachers should think and act to counter the prevailing situation.

The concept of native speaker has been criticized as an idealized but non-existent

abstraction (Kamhi-Stein, 2004; Kramsch, 1998). The ownership of English, or the belief that it belongs to one particular group, has been challenged (Widdowson, 1994, Norton, 1997). English belongs to its users and native speakers should not interfere in how English develops in the world. Widdowson (1994) suggested that if emphasis is shifted from contexts of use towards the context of learning, then the non-native speaker has more knowledge of student reality and the sociocultural situations where teaching and learning take place. Lin, Wang, Adamatsu and Riazi (2002) propose re-imagining the field of TESOL in terms of Teaching English for Globalized Communication (TEGCOM). This new term underlines the need to talk about and rethink the teaching of English for both *global* and *local* communication. The erasure of the ‘speakers of other languages’ implies the recognition that today intercultural encounters happen between speakers for whom English is not their L1, the elimination of a number of dichotomies (Self/Other, first-world/third-world, mainstream/minority, etc.) The focus would be on communicative practice, where the effort to achieve cross-cultural communication is equally shared by all participants in the communicative event/situation.

Another way to see counter-prevailing attitudes is that teachers can and should think of non-instrumental goals for the teaching of English like educational, cognitive, attitudinal, and affective goals that are not related to the native-like proficiency (Cook, 1999).

A strong trend in the resistance is made up by those scholars who question the methodologies, approaches, and techniques that emanate from the Center. Kramsch and Sullivan (1996) have argued for the need to shift away from the prescriptions of the

communicative approach, for example, and consider the authenticity of interaction from the perspective of the context where English is taught. Similarly, Seidlhofer (1999) stresses the need to use the textbooks in ways that teachers consider to be meaningful and conducive to learning, and even resort to practices that are discarded in other contexts, like memorization, copying, and translating. The notion of method has been criticized not only regarding its value (e.g. Nunan, 1991), but also as a cultural and ideological construct and as a direct descendent of colonialism. (Canagarajah, 1999, 2002)

Kumaravadivelu (2003, 2006) demonstrates how English has been more or less successfully nativized, but not decolonialized. Continuing a stream of publications that puts the concept of method under scrutiny and calls for their critical examination, Kumaravadivelu (2003) reviews the principles and procedures of language-centered, learner-centered and learning-centered methods to conclude that they have always left issues unanswered, they considerably overlap in their theory and practice, and that teachers in their situations have always committed “transgressions” to go beyond the prescriptions of theorists and meet their concrete learning/teaching situation needs. Some of the common ideas that surround methods include: that there is one best method still to be developed; that practice has to be organized around a method; that methods are neutral and universally applicable and can therefore be consumed like any other marketable commodity. He, therefore, proposes three pedagogical parameters for a postmethod pedagogy: 1. Particularity, or “situational understanding” (p.171) of the singularity of each particular teacher with his or her learners, and goals, in their institution within a cultural context. 2. Practicality, which beyond the teacher’s ability to check for

effectiveness, requires that the practitioner theorizes his or her own practice and pedagogic knowledge through different forms of reflection, action, and even intuitions.

3. Possibility means awareness of how the classroom and the broader sociocultural reality shape the students' identities and roles, but there should always be the possibility to subvert the established contents, aims and expectations. This awareness should nurture a capacity to transform their lives.

In his book "The politics of TESOL education" Ramanathan's (2002) resorting to the notion of "thought collective" argues that it is necessary that teacher education programs can build a critical edge for teachers to become aware of how their cognitions, modes of thought, skills, expertise, and in general, social practice, are influenced by their environment for example, the programs where they are enrolled and also the ideas that circulate in the discipline they are teaching. This meta-awareness should encourage teachers to question their choice of practice. He analyzed two MA TESOL programs in two different departments –English and Linguistics- and he showed how local and broader issues in the institution and communities shape what gets emphasized in each program - how various theories of second language development, for instance, are formed, stabilized, or discarded- and how the student-teachers' involvement in their respective TESOL programs ultimately contributes to keeping particular cognitions in the larger discipline in place.

Coming from different perspectives, a number of scholars propose that teachers should raise awareness among students. Benesch (2001) problematizes EAP's ideology of pragmatic instrumentalism and the assumption that students have to accommodate

themselves to the demands of the academy. Instead of the target analysis that is usually done in an ESP or EAP approach to determine the content of a course, she proposes a critical needs analysis, re-worded as ‘rights analysis’, which means examining who proposes the goals, why they are formulated, whose interests they serve, and proposing areas where they might be supplemented. Her approach would allow students to have more participation in the academic community. She provides examples of how she encourages students to have a say in the conditions of their classes. Amin & Kubota (2004) propose scrutinizing colonial construction of Self and Other/ Native and Non-native speaker, and exposing issues of power, knowledge, and discourse in relation to social practices in education. The idea is to construct pedagogies from the teachers’ nonnative identities, and disrupt myths and stereotypes about who can learn to speak English well, what accent a teacher should have, (purposefully using tapes with speakers of different accents), and working hard to show that teaching is a craft to cultivate rather than a genetic endowment native speakers have (Amin & Kubota, 2004). A number of educators (Rajagopalan, 2004; Toh, 2003) propose raising awareness activities, discussing and problematizing with students issues about the role of English, how it relates to other languages, even allowing them to think about and decide why and what they want or need the language skills for, who benefits from this, etc.

As Canagarajah (2002) points out, although there seems to be recognition of the importance that so-called indigenous pedagogical traditions and hybrid traditions in English language teaching have developed, we cannot say that the world is truly democratic and free just because, following the discourse of postmodernism, there is

recognition of shifting, flowing or dynamic identities and ideologies. Still in every society we have certain values, practices, and linguistic codes that are more highly valued and are key to access and maintain services and power. There is still the belief in periphery countries, he argues, that the methods and materials propagated by the Center are better and more efficient partly because the applied linguistic centers in the inner circles hold a similar dominating control as they do with industrial products in the international market: more research infrastructure, a network of publishers and marketing institutions, journals, teaching programs, and professional organizations (Canagarajah, 2002). And still, in the beginning of the new millennium the circumstances of sharpened ideological sensitivities are likely to be influencing the way teachers of English perceive their identities, their profession, roles, achievements, aspirations and also how they relate to the language they are teaching and how they are teaching it. And these ideologies and identities cannot be described in absolute terms but are most likely to be dependent on specific contexts and circumstances.

Ideology

The notion of ideology is controversial since it has been approached from different perspectives and historically it has been surrounded by suspicion and distrust. When the term was first used at the beginning of the 19th century by Antonine Destutt De Tracy in his *Elements d'Idéologie*, the view was that people's ideas have their origin in their upbringing and environment (Gee, 1996), therefore everybody, given the right conditions, would be fit to participate in governing a state. Since this theory was contrary

to Napoleon's interest in retaining his position as emperor, it is not surprising that he undertook a campaign to dismiss the new science of ideology. Later, Marxism associated it with control and domination of the ruling class, because people's ideas find their origin in the material conditions of society, especially its economic structure. Since the ideas of elites would inevitably favor their own privileged positions, they become then "false consciousness". That is, working classes and presumably non-privileged layers would adhere to these ideologies even if these contradict their own objectives in the society. Thus, ideology has been seen as a way of obscuring the real conditions of society and of inhibiting its better doings. In more recent forms of Marxism, Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony emphasizes the idea that since the interests of the ruling class are presented as natural and legitimate, they often gain the consent of the members of the social group who then fail to perceive other alternatives. This domination is not only in economic terms, but also cultural and ideational. Burbules (1995) argues that using the term 'ideology' already implies an evaluation of the phenomenon or the discourse, and this evaluation would most likely point to political contentiousness, manipulative uses of language, inaccuracy, or falsehood. And yet a number of scholars have pointed out that whenever we label a particular idea as ideological, we ourselves are being ideological. That is, the analyst cannot expect to have the absolute truth and to claim to be free of the social and historical conditions that frame her own ideas.

Today a number of scholars are interested in the workings of ideology in terms of power and domination, but not necessarily in association with falsification. Discourse analysts have paid considerable attention to this concept and how it relates with language.

From Van Dijk's (1998) socio-cognitive perspective, ideologies are "a set of factual and evaluative beliefs - that is, the knowledge and opinions - of a group (p.48)." For him ideologies are located in the minds of the people, but at the same time they are shared by the members of a group and they serve as the foundation or axioms that organize the group's knowledge and attitudes. Though he recognizes that symbols and discourse or other cultural practices may be part of ideological systems, he considers these to be expressions of enactments of ideologies and should be studied separately (p.26).

Blommaert (2005) without denying the importance of the cognitive component of ideologies, argues that in order to understand them it is necessary to study the material conditions and the institutions where the ideologies circulate: "Ideas themselves do not define ideologies: they need to be inserted in material practices of modulation and reproduction" (p.164). In engaging themselves in practices of certain types, individuals may resent their positions and even hold contrary views, what Scott (1990) calls 'hidden transcripts', but it is the behavioral dimension that enacts the prevailing ideology, what gets it reproduced and possibly reinforced.

Hodge and Kress (1993) defined ideology as "a systematic body of ideas, organized from a particular point of view. Ideology is thus a subsuming category which includes sciences and metaphysics, as well as political ideologies of various kinds, without implying anything about their status and reliability as guides to reality" (p.6). Critical linguistics made a recognized contribution to the understanding of how ideology operates in language. The publications by Fowler et al., (1979), Kress and Hodge (1979) demonstrated a number of ways in which the different systems in a language can hide or

emphasize particular aspects of the reality, how it provides a classification which is at the basis of language and thought (c.f. Whorf's Linguistic Relativity Hypothesis), and how it is possible to get at the ideology embedded in language. Though their approach can be criticized for assuming that meaning resides in linguistic choices, it certainly became indicative of the potential of language for the representation of ideologies.

From a semiotic perspective it is possible to conceive of language as ideological but not per se as fixed or pre-established in the code, but rather in the process of interpretation of its use. Voloshinov (1930) saw the study of ideology as the study of signs. For him, since everything ideological has meaning, then it should be a sign and all signs are imbued with ideology. A sign "reflects and refracts another reality. Therefore it may distort that reality or be true to it, or may perceive it from a special point of view" (Voloshinov, 1930:10 in Nöth, 2004, p. 13). Still, texts are not ideologically uniform, they are polyphonous, because they have plurality of voices, and therefore, various meaning possibilities.

Some Discourse analysts use the concept of ideology in a neutral way. For example, within the systemic functional tradition, Eggins (2004) describes ideologies as values, positions or perspectives acquired within a culture. In her view, since no text is free from context, all texts encode ideological positions, only most people are not trained to identify them. This neutral view of ideology, though possible, and at times convenient, would be in most cases incomplete. Texts do not happen in isolation but they are produced and interpreted in specific historical circumstances, by certain groups who inevitably stand in certain relations with some others. A comprehensive analysis of

discourse should attempt at seeing the text as embedded in particular social practices. As Fairclough (1985) points out, the use of language is a type of social action and they presuppose a social structure. People “act out social structures, affirming own statuses and roles, and establishing and transmitting the shared systems of value and of knowledge” (Halliday, 1978, p.8 cited in Fairclough, 1985, p.746).

The critical use of the concept of ideology and discourse is defended by Fairclough (1995), who holds a Marxist perspective in that he analyzes the workings of ideological discourse as tied to class power and domination. In describing the critical enterprise of “critical linguistics”, Connerton (cited in Fowler, 1996, p.4) describes it as “changing or even removing the conditions of what is considered to be a false or distorted consciousness... render[ing] transparent what had previously been hidden, and in doing so it initiates a process of self-reflection, in individual or in groups, designed to achieve a liberation from the domination of past constraints” (1976, p.20). Critical discourse analysts in general attempt at studying language as it is used to “enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce, or challenge relations of power and dominance in society” (van Dijk, 2001, p. 353).

An important notion is that of reproduction. Van Dijk (1998) explains reproduction as “continuity of a system or structure” and it happens through social practices, and very often via discourse. Through different processes of socialization, learning, inculcation or adoption, ideologies are acquired or learned by other members. However, as Fairclough argues, there is nothing mechanical about the workings of ideology, and there are variations, personal histories, and interests that may affect

ideological alignments.

Luke (2002) recognizes that discourse can have the oppressive intents and effects from classical ideological critiques, but not necessarily. He suggests that “there are forms of talk, writing, and representation that are counter-ideological and act to articulate and configure collective interests in transformative ways” (p.105). One form of resistance to established ideologies, according to Fairclough (1985), is through acts of “disorderliness” (p.760), transgressing conventions, rejecting established positions and discourse practices.

Given the above discussion, it becomes clear that ideology in my analysis is to be found in the discourses of the writers, deduced through my act of interpretation, but based on the meaning potential of the language choices (see Methodology section in Chapter 2) and treated not just as abstract ideas, views or knowledge, but as connected with macro structures and relations at the societal level.

Let me now address a specific form of ideology.

Language ideology

The study of language ideologies is part of a rather recent research emphasis within sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology which Duranti (2003) calls ‘the Third Paradigm’. Silverstein (1979: 193 cited in Woolard, 1998, p. 4) defines language ideology as “any sets of beliefs about language articulated by the users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use”. This definition potentially includes the beliefs that are held by learners, prospect-learners, teachers, by-

standers, observers of the language used or conceptualized as a foreign one, as long as these beliefs are displayed as *verbal behaviors*. Heath (1989) instead defines language ideology as “self-evident ideas and objectives a group holds concerning roles of language in the social experiences of members as they contribute to the expression of the group”. Though her definition underlines how *groups* share ideas about their language and its speakers (e.g. nonnative speakers or teachers), she presents language ideology as intangible macro-level beliefs about language held by many, but nobody in particular. Briggs (1998) points out that it is not very helpful to consider language ideologies as simply ‘linguistic background shared by the members of a speech community’ (p. 230) or as “homogeneous cultural substratum” (p. 232) but as ideas deployed in discursive interaction, constructions that emerge contingently in interactive settings.

Phillips (1998) emphasizes that the point in using the term ‘ideology’ rather than ‘culture’ “signals new awareness of and attention to the way in which the salience and prevalence of particular ideas are themselves form of power” (p213) because ideologies refer not only to the language and language use, but also to its social consequences in terms of roles, status, and power. As Gal (1998) puts it, “ideologies that appear to be about language, when carefully reread, are revealed to be coded stories about political, religious, or scientific conflicts” (p. 323). For Woolard and Schieffelin (1994) a linguistic ideology “relates the microculture of communicative action to political economic consideration of power and social inequality, confronting macrosocial constraints on language behavior” (p.72). Research has shown linkage between ideologies and social position, between linguistic skills and access to resources and

positions in key cultural institutions, or to participation (or not) in decision-making events. Besides, ideologies become accepted and reproduced even by those who do not benefit from them. As Gal (1998) argues, “ideas about language often contribute to legitimation [...] of political arrangements” (p. 324). Thus, it is useful to study language ideologies looking at the dimension of interest, and questioning fixed cultural explanations and also the researcher’s own sociohistorical perspective (Kroskrity, 2000).

Sociolinguists and linguistic anthropologists that study language ideologies have focused more on the study of naturally occurring talk. Their research methods attempt to adopt the so-called emic perspective of the participants with a fine-grained analysis of situated language use and interactions. Other research in language ideology has been based on the analysis of historic documents (e.g. Phillipson, 1992; Irvine and Gal, 2000) and though they have reached a rich level of description of ideologies, they have not been clear in formulating their analytical approach for the identification of ideologies.

This study is focused on language ideologies as conveyed, reproduced, constructed or resisted in written academic language. Language ideologies here refer not only to conceptualizations and rationalizations about the English language and its role in a society, but also about how students learn and educators should teach the language. I have extended the use of the word ideology to refer to what others call “conceptions” or even “beliefs”, because I have wanted to emphasize the fact that these are often related to macro structures. I often refer to these types of ideological discourses as conceptions. Following Giordan and de Vecchi (1995), conceptions are explanatory models underlying our discursive construction of the world. And these are interesting here if they, from my

standpoint, reproduce the interests of a specific group and/or are in detriment of another one. In general, I will analyze the workings of discourse from the perspective of those who have less power, or are in disadvantageous positions.

Identity

The notion of identity used in this study has a poststructuralist flavor in that it avoids biological determinism and does not attempt to find rules, laws or rigid categories that can be universally applied to classify groups and their behaviors. It is also conceived of in broadly understood sociocultural terms, following Norton (2006), who has demonstrated how in second language research social and cultural identities are no longer opposed, but rather are seen as theoretically more fluid. Scholars have been discussing identity by observing how both institutional (the social) and community practices (the cultural) shape the use of the target language.

Identity, in simple terms, means “being recognized as a certain ‘kind of person’” (Gee, 2000-2001, p. 99). Ochs (1993) defines it as “a range of social personae, including social statuses, roles, positions, relationships, and institutional and other relevant community identities one may attempt to claim or assign in the course of social life” (p.288).

Theorists of the notion of identity have pointed out the heterogeneous, dynamic and changing nature of a person’s identity (Tabouret-Keller, 1997; Harklau, 2000; Howarth, 2002; Pennycook, 2006) as well as its complex, contradictory and multifaceted nature (Norton, 2006 drawing on Pavlenko (2004) and Toohey (2000)). Individuals can

not only have different affiliations, roles, positions, but they can create new identities depending on context, situation, purpose, etc.

Identity and discourse

The process of identity construction is a semiotic process that can involve many forms of representation. Language is a major system for social and individual representation (Tabouret-Keller, 1997) and a privileged resource for identity construction. “Identities [...] are discursively, by means of language and other semiotic systems, produced, reproduced, transformed and destructed” (De Cillia, Reisigl & Wodak, (1999, p.153). A similar idea is expressed from a socio constructivist perspective. Following Ivanič (1998), discourse is “the mediating mechanism in the social construction of identity” that is, “the way in which people take on particular identities is by reproducing and receiving culturally recognized, ideologically shaped representations of reality” (p.17). And yet, she also recognizes that it is possible to contest ideologies that control individuals’ sense of themselves.

There have been a number of studies that show how identity can be created and negotiated as interaction develops, especially but not exclusively, in the traditions of variationist studies, Conversation Analysis and Interactional Sociolinguistics. Despite the fact that spoken language provides a number of semiotic resources not available in the written form for the representation of identity, a number of features present in writing do convey it.

Gee (2000-2001) distinguishes different types of identity and among them is

discourse identity or D-identity. An individual is recognized as a certain type of person because of how other people interact with him or her, or through the kind of discourse of other people about him or her. What is at work is a process of recognition, or of interpretation of the identity of the individual based on certain behaviors in a particular environment. Following this idea, it seems logical to suppose that a reader can ascribe or deduce a certain type of identity to a writer based on an interpretation of the linguistic choices of the text and the type of interaction accomplished in the reading process which in turn is propitiated by the choices in the discourse of the writer. In other words, and following Blommaert (2005), “in order for an identity to be established, it has to be *recognized* by others” (p.205). He distinguishes between “ascribed” and “attributed” identities. The former is the identity people themselves claim, and the latter is the one given by another person (2006 cited in Block, 2007).

Wenger (1998), however, argues that who we are is not so much who we say or what others say we are, though these can be part of what we are, but identity “is produced as a lived experience of participation in specific communities” (p.151) . For him, the construction of identities is profoundly connected to the participation of individuals in the practices of social communities. He also observes that becoming a member of a community of practice is a form of competence. The notion of community of practice, however, has been used to refer to people collectively engaged in learning within any specific domain.

A similar idea, but specifically focused on the use of language, has been developed around the notion of discourse community, though it has not often been

addressed in terms of identity construction. Swales (1990) preferred this term over speech community to emphasize a community's sharing of linguistic forms, rules and use of the more stable and farther-reaching written medium rather than the oral one. In a discourse community there is predominance of the functional goals over the social ones, though those may occur too; membership in a community is the result of training or qualification. Discourse communities share communication values, discourse patterns and expectations that can be called genres. Bhatia (1993, p.13) synthesized Swales' (1990) definition of genre as "a recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purpose(s) identified and mutually understood by members of the professional or academic community in which it regularly occurs". Belonging to a certain discourse community requires training, a suitable level of relevant content and discourse expertise in the given genres, that is, a certain competence. Not surprisingly then, there are experts and novices. Experts, according to Duszak (1997) are prototypical members in that they are assumed to combine high field expertise with high language skills for the purpose of scientific exposition: (p.25-26). A small elite of experts, however, are allowed to deviate from the norm. There is then a unequal distribution of symbolic power relations (Bourdieu, 1977 cited by Norton & Toohey, 2002) around these communities. Norton (2006) also recognizes that the notion of identity construction should be analyzed within a larger context, where power relations can be either coercive or collaborative. The editors of international publications in English serve as gatekeepers scrutinizing the texts they receive and asking for repair or edition if they consider that they do not conform to the standards of structure and style. The English-speaking community

“absorbs’ people with different linguistic and ethnic backgrounds, and makes them try to adapt to uniform discursal standards of academic ideation” (Duszak, 1997, p.27). In regional communities, Duszak notes, these standards are not so rigid and message exchange is what matters.

Several theorists have privileged poststructuralist theories of language to research the workings of identity. Norton and Toohey (2002) resort to Bakhtin to underline that individuals do not construct their utterances by themselves, but they use the words of others in a complex and conflicting process. In Bakhtin’s words,

Our speech, that is, all our utterances (including creative works), is filled with others’ words, varying degrees of otherness or varying degrees of “our-ownness,” varying degrees of awareness and detachment. These words of others carry with them their own expression, their own evaluative tone, which we assimilate, rework, and reaccentuate” (1999, p.130).

It can be said that part of the academic task consists of precisely this borrowing, appropriation, and reelaboration of somebody else’s voices, usually those of the authorities and experts, in order to be accepted as part of a specific community.

Ivanič (1998) refers to different types of identities, and one of them is the Discoursal Self, comparable to Gee’s (2000-2001) D-Identity. She defines Discoursal Self as “the impression – often multiple, sometimes contradictory – which they consciously or unconsciously convey of themselves in a particular written text” (p. 25). This type of identity refers to how the linguistic choices of the text represent values, beliefs and power relations in the context. Another category used by Ivanič is Self as

Author, which he claims is particularly useful when analyzing academic writing. This perspective on the analysis of identity can focus on the degree of authority of the author with respect to the content in a piece of writing. Hyland (2002) also argues that academic writers do not all stick to impersonal, faceless discourse and that even in this apparently dry genre there is room for negotiation of academic identities. According to Ventola (1997), “academic texts are not more objective than other texts; they are simply more effective at hiding subjectivity linguistically” (1997, p.176).

Ivanič (1998) resorts to Fairclough’s (1989,2001) framework of Critical Discourse Analysis to establish the connection between the microlevel of the text and the macrolevel of social conditions in the context, which can be understood as an institution, a nation, a historic moment, the world, etc. He criticizes a rigid notion of register and genre emphasizing that contextual characteristics do not determine fixed choices of language, but rather that particular language choices are “shaped by current interests, values, beliefs and practices of particular groups” (p. 45). Ivanič and Camps (2001) provide a framework based on Functional Systemic Grammar for the recognition of voice as ‘self-representation’ in academic writing and for analyzing how assertive, authoritative, tentative, or deferential a writer can be. She uses the three macrofunctions of language in Halliday’s (1994) and Halliday and Matthiessen’s (2004) systemic functional grammar to identify three different positionings of a writer in academic discourse: a) how the writers represent the world, b) how and to what degree they establish authoritativeness over the content of the writing and in relation to the readers, and c) how they position themselves in relation to the mode of communication, or how

compliant with the genre conventions in terms of cohesion and structure, and also how 'reader-considerate' their writing appears to be.

Addressing specifically the issue of thesis writing for international students, Cadman agrees with Fan Shen (1989) in arguing that learning to write in English is a process of creating a new identity. There are a number of criteria she has used for thesis assessment and which she claims "are widely recognized in the English language humanities and social sciences" and which she derives from Masden (1983). Some of these criteria are "a convincing account, an ordered, critical and reasoned exposition, ability to make critical use of published work and source materials" (p.177 cited in Cadman, 1997, p.5). International thesis writers, however, usually find these concepts mystifying, because it is not clear to them how these features are constructed. Cadman says she resorts to the term *voice* to refer to what others call intelligence of the writing, positioning, or writer's claim. She defines it in simple terms as "the language of the academic writer's position or contentions, integrated into the text with information from external sources" (p.5). Even though there is considerable debate about the use of impersonal language, the avoidance of "I", she converges with Ivanič and Simpson (1992) to assert that the use of the first person pronoun not only constructs the text but constructs the writer in that it allows them to write their own ideas. And yet she considers that it is possible to express strong views in impersonal language by using evidence in the data to support them.

In the following chapter I will enunciate the objectives of this study. I will also describe the texts which will be the focus of the analysis, the context of production and

circulation of these artifacts, and, finally, I will explain the methodology of the analysis as well as its theoretical support.

CHAPTER 2: THE OBJECT OF STUDY, OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

OBJECT OF STUDY

The present study focuses on the written production of a group of twenty in-service teachers from the Caribbean coast of Colombia who took a diploma course in English Language Teaching for one year at a private university in the region. The course is at the postgraduate level and leads to the title of “Specialist in the Teaching of English”. It also counts as the first year towards a Master’s degree in Education with emphasis on the Teaching of English offered by the same institution.

The teachers come from big and small towns in the region; they teach at schools (pre-school, primary and secondary), universities and language centers in the region. Classes take place during Fridays and Saturdays every other week. For some teachers attending the sessions necessitates traveling two to five hours from their towns to the University and sometimes paying for overnight lodging though some find accommodation with relatives. They all feel they need to study to become ‘better’ teachers and serve their students and institutions better.

During the Diploma Course the teachers take classes in History and Theory of ESP, Learning Processes, Language as Discourse, English Teaching Methodology, Materials Evaluation, Materials Design, Course Design, and Evaluation and Assessment. Simultaneously they carry out a Needs Analysis inside the institutions where they work and based on the results they design a course and materials for their target groups. In this process they have the support of a tutor during research tutorial sessions in small groups

every weekend that they have classes. The readings for the courses are almost all in English. The texts, usually book chapters and articles from the publications in the field of applied linguistics, are made available for the participants and with very few exceptions, they are all in English. The exceptions are usually texts that deal with general educational issues, as well as some of the official documents emanating from the Ministry of Education. The tutorial sessions are held in the language chosen by the participants. Some groups decide to use Spanish all the time, others start in English and switch into Spanish at certain points, and others stick to English until the end. At the end of the first semester the teachers submit a first report on their research process. It contains a description of the context and methodology of the research, and the results and implications of their Needs Analysis. On completion of the Diploma Course six months or so later, they submit the whole research work as a thesis. The theses are read and graded by the tutor but also by another evaluator, usually a faculty member in the program.

These theses (a total of twenty) will make up the main body of data to be analyzed in the present study. They were chosen randomly in the order they were submitted and made available for public access in the library of the institution.

The first part of the theses invariably contains the following chapters: Introduction, Rationale, Research Methodology, Results of Needs Analysis, and Pedagogical Implications. The second part is the description of the English course they design to meet the needs identified in their research. This part includes: Approach to Education, Approach to Learning, Approach to Language, Goals and Objectives of the

Course, Syllabus Design, Content of the Course, Teaching Methodology, Learning Evaluation and Course Evaluation. Appendix U contains an overview of the contexts where the writers teach and the main theoretical decisions of their course designs

The study of theses has not been very popular (Bunton, 1999) because of the size of these texts and the apparent inclination of text linguists to deal with shorter texts and text fragments. The theses are approximately 80 double-spaced pages each and they make up a body of around 400,000 words, not including the booklet which contains a sample of materials which the theses writers have to design, and which should correspond to approximately 15% of the materials needed to develop the ideal course. The booklet contains, apart from the actual materials that students would use, an introductory section that synthesizes the rationale, context, approaches and methodological decisions linked with the course. Some of the booklets also contain instructions for teachers of the particular course in the form of ‘teacher’s hints’ or ‘teacher’s guidelines’.

These theses are artifacts that can be considered as a partial condensation of what the teachers are left with, or what they choose to represent as their gains in knowledge, growth and development as teachers and researchers after a big effort towards professional and personal development. Each of them should reflect an awareness of a problematic situation, needs that are unmet, and also an attempt to provide a solution based on a personal understanding of the knowledge that has been made accessible to them through the Diploma course.

Other artifacts make up the body of data: the official documents of the program, the syllabi of the courses, three brief autobiographies by three of the writers, and two

written interviews to two of the authors.

OBJECTIVES

General objective 1

Identify ideological positions in the theses of in-service teachers after completion of a Diploma Course in the teaching of English

Specific objectives

- a. Identify ideologies of English represented in the texts.
- b. Identify the conceptions of the teachers regarding research, teaching, and learning as represented in the text.
- c. Describe the linguistic features that convey ideological positions in the written discourse of the teachers.

General objective 2

Characterize the identities teachers construct for themselves in their theses.

Specific objectives

- d. Analyze how the writers position themselves towards the body of knowledge and knowledge construction process represented in their work.
- e. Analyze how the discourse of the teachers positions them as members of the discourse community they strive to enter.

METHODOLOGY

This study embraces a critical approach to the analysis of written texts. The written texts are not considered isolated artifacts, but rather language in use produced in a context, by writers who are also embedded in a socio-cultural environment, and who write these texts to realize a number of functions. The linguistic choices in a text, whether conscious, subconscious or intentional, are closely linked with the context in a dialectical relation: they are interdependent and reconstitute each other. Let me explain: The fact that the texts that make up the body of data in this dissertation were produced as the final requirement for graduation, in an applied linguistics program, that they are called “theses”, that they have to comply with certain conventions dictated by the program (which were in turn adopted or adapted from a larger community) certainly influence the choices made by the writers: the structure of their texts, the degree of formality, the choice of tense, person, aspect, etc. Simultaneously, by writing this kind of text in the way they do, they are contributing to the construction and reconstruction of that academic context and its academic community, its rules and conventions.

The critical part of my analysis derives from the understanding that the context of a text does not end in the specificity of the immediate situation of production but it reaches wider social practices and relations which involve issues of power and domination. The model proposed by Fairclough (2001) for Critical Discourse Analysis serves as a general frame to establish the relation between the linguistic features at the micro level of the text and the social context. That is, the analysis goes through

description of the text, *interpretation* of the context and relations it establishes, and *explanation*, or the relation of the text to macro issues. The description of the text concerns the fine analysis of linguistic choices of ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings. The interpretation stage refers to a broader level of analysis rather than “the interpretation of texts by discourse participants” proposed by Fairclough. I do not claim to be able “to explain how participants draw upon their [interpretative procedure]” (p.138) although as an analyst in this concrete case, I have a privileged position (I address this point below). At this level I address considerations regarding the type of function of a particular piece of discourse within the whole thesis, the thesis in the situational context, the identity construction of the writer, the relation between the writer and the reader, intertextual resources, and presuppositions.

The purpose of a third dimension of the analysis is to see the text within a macro institutional context or social processes and explain how it either reproduces, maintains or contests established social structures, which in turn can open or hinder access to valuable resources, roles or positions to certain groups. One of the criticisms of Critical Discourse Analysis is that this final level of analysis is sometimes the essence of the analysis and by excessively relying on social theory to explain discursive practices there is little attention to the meanings as constructed by participants as they interact (Macbeth, 2003; Slembrouck, 2001; Schegloff, 1997, 1999). Schegloff (1997), for example, criticizes the “theoretical imperialism” of academics and critics, because they impose the terms by which to interpret the world. This work has tried to avoid this type of imposition and, as will be described below, has tried to let the data speak for itself by giving

linguistic fine-grained analysis an important place.

The theses were analyzed manually in what can be called a “text-driven” methodology (Bednarek, 2006) which consists of approaching the texts with “as few theoretical assumptions as possible” [...] rather than using a previously established theoretical framework to classify the data” (p.637). But unlike her, who went “hunting” for certain types of expressions or linguistic features, I read the theses looking for ideological positions, intuitively trying to find answers to my research questions. This approach I took is just one way of doing it. Other analysts would start with an analysis of the lexico-grammar systems, and from it move into ideological positions. The idea behind starting with intuitions and impressions is to then go back to the text, examine it in more detail and identify the features with the potential to bring about the given interpretation or intuitions.

It is important to concede that the researcher does not address the data innocently. My construction of the teachers’ ideologies and identities is mediated by my understanding of the conventions the teacher-writers use and of the background against which these pieces of writing are constructed; in addition, since I can’t ignore my personal goals in the analysis, it is influenced by my dissertation-writing task.

My understanding of the conventions that the thesis-writers use and their language choices is shaped by a numbers of factors including my everyday life experiences with English but also my academic history, the kinds of theories I am acquainted with, not only in the linguistic, sociolinguistic, educational ones, but also political and social theories, whether with a recognizable name or informal ones. The

evident bias in the review of literature in the preceding section reveals that I approach this task “with an attitude”, as van Dijk (2001, p.96) puts it when defining Critical Discourse Analysis. The point is to highlight the interpretative character of the exercise I undertake in this work. That said, I justify my reading of the theses precisely because I resort to academically recognized procedures, categories, approaches, and conventions that others have tried and justified themselves.

A thesis in the postgraduate program, as a final product, is constructed to be read by the tutor of the teacher-writer one last time, and by another evaluator. This other evaluator is aware of the general process of the student-teachers in the program, the courses and requirements to meet, but does not follow the individual process of the particular writer whose thesis she or he is to grade. As an insider in the program even after four years of detachment while doing my SLAT degree, I qualify as this “other” evaluator for all of the theses I have read and analyzed, even if I bring now some discourses which do not circulate in the program. But this is without doubt the prerogative of every evaluator and also of any reader of these works, which are now open to public scrutiny.

My analysis of the theses, the ideologies, and identities of the teacher-writers is shaped within the possibilities of and expectations of a dissertation. This can be regarded both as a point to deprecate but one that heralds possibilities. My reading is not the usual one of the evaluator whose job is to assign a grade complying with a list of criteria. I am expected to invest a lot more partly because the end product is expected to be of different nature and for a different purpose. That is, I myself have to construct a particular identity

through the writing of the analysis and interpretation of the data, one which allows me as a writer and graduate student to be assimilated to or to be recognized as affiliated with a certain academic community. Given that I have had access to representatives of that community and their discourses, and I presumably have the ability to modify my own discourses, it can then be said that my choices of topics and categories, my wording and organization of the analysis and my conclusions are part of this self identity-construction process, contingent upon the benefits I see from this affiliation to that community through the approval of my supervisors. However, there might be other communities or other affiliations I want - and I may have in the past found pleasurable- to be associated with: that of critical thinker, idealist, rebel, non-conformist, de-constructor, FL teacher in the periphery, teacher educator, parent, etc. Even though there may be a dominant perceived identity in a piece of discourse, there may be others simultaneously at work too. And this applies to the discourses I have analyzed here. The meta-analysis of my own task as a thesis-writer myself helps to make my reading of the theses plausible.

Procedures

At the initial stage, I read the theses to identify statements about the English language, and about English teaching and learning that raised questions for me, or that expressed positions I did not agree with, or that struck me as absolutist, exaggerated or naïve. A first set of gross categories was identified. These categories indicate a general topic or an aspect of English itself, or English teaching or learning that has an ideological representation in the text. Whenever possible, I wrote a brief but full statement next to

each item to express the point in the teacher's discourse that I considered conveyed an ideological position or a conception. I defined ideological discourse as that which conveys a representation of the world that is attached to or can be said to benefit the interests of a group that holds power usually to the detriment of another group. Conception means here explanations or elaborations about teaching, learning and knowledge construction that are represented as definite truths without being necessarily so. By holding these conceptions teachers are not necessarily bringing the benefits they claim for their students or for their teaching and research activity. Thus, ideology was linked specifically to discourses about English; conceptions - to educational, pedagogical and research decisions and approaches. Traditionally, these latter aspects have been treated from a cognitive perspective as teacher cognition, teachers' beliefs, personal theories, models of thought, conceptions, and perceptions. I call them here conceptions but also ideologies, especially when they work against their growth as teachers and researchers or are not likely to benefit their students. I do not attempt to look inside the mind of the teacher-authors, but rather to examine their discourses and how they represent the English language, their practice, the theories and approaches they learned in the postgraduate program.

It is not possible to produce discourses that escape the possibility of being interpreted as ideological. That is why instead of developing whole new discourses to oppose the ones I identified as ideological, I have mostly tried to point out silences and starting points for alternative explanations, discourses and positionings which could be considered valid and would work better in the interest of the teachers and learners.

As the reading progressed and the list of ideologies and conceptions grew, certain identities-in-the making were identified. They were tentatively named (“identity as x”). See a sample of this initial analysis on Table 1 at the end of this chapter.

After this type of analysis, a number of commonalities, general trends, and repetitive topics emerge. The process, however, is not smooth because the naming of the topic and the wording of some of the ideologies is messy and commonalities or relations do not strike immediately. That is why it is necessary to go back and forth a number of times, regroup categories and give them new names even as a second stage was going on.

A new stage after the identification of broad issues was the closer analysis of the discourse stretches where I had identified ideologies and conceptions. The purpose was to refine the categories related to ideologies and also to identify the linguistic features that are associated with these categories that is, to try to objectively describe the aspect of the use of the language with the potential meanings I had found. This step implied resorting to several discourse analysis tools and to look into different aspects of the discourse. While doing this I did not attempt to find systematic patterns or features across theses or within a thesis, but rather to explicate the representations conveyed by the features present in each excerpt.

After the ideologies of English I analyzed the conceptions related to English for Specific Purposes and Needs Analysis because these were the most general issues, they were quite recurrent, and they are related to the specific approach of the program. A next step was the analysis of theoretical decisions regarding theories or theoretical constructs with pedagogical implications. The analysis of conceptions implied sometimes

reconstructing the thesis writers' reading process, finding the texts that served as their sources and comparing it with the writers' elaborations. Part of the analysis consisted also in comparing the theoretical decisions and adherences with approaches and their realization in the materials they designed in order to identify coherence or lack thereof.

The procedure for analyzing the conceptions varied. The discussions on the teachers' understanding of the chosen approach to language learning were analyzed first in general, that is, what their discussions, as a whole, had in common or some salient features among the theses. Then I grouped the sections according to the approaches chosen and analyzed their discourses to see how they discussed the theories.

The decisions to analyze the representation of popular notions in applied linguistics – learning styles, learning strategies, multiple intelligences, autonomy, authenticity and motivation – came from the initial stage in the analysis. I had identified a number of conceptions and that made me go back and look in more detail at how they were treated discursively. Here I worked partially as if with a concordance software, looking for every instance of use of key words.

A review of the literature on Needs Analysis, learning styles, multiple intelligences, authenticity, autonomy, motivation, teacher and teacher education was necessary after the analysis of the treatment of each of these topics. This helped me in many cases to understand the positionings I was encountering in some of the theses. These theoretical discussions are not presented in Chapter 1 with the Review of Literature in order to represent the fact that they came later in the study, not as a framework from which I approached my reading of the texts, but as an *a posteriori*

reflection derived from my analysis.

Analytical resources

Categories from the transitivity system of Systemic Functional Grammar (Halliday, 1994; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Eggins, 2004) served to identify the choices that convey the experiential meaning of the text that is, those features which represent reality in language: process type, participants' roles and circumstances. In the transitivity system every clause has a process type (roughly, the choice of verb) and each process is associated with certain types of participants. Every choice, including the choice not to mention a participant, has implications in the meanings that are constructed, how we represent and think of the world.

The assumption is that there are more or less “congruent” ways of representing the world or ways “closer to the state of affairs in the external world” (Thompson, 2004, p.222). Non-congruent or less congruent ways or metaphorical expressions construct new meanings, meanings that emphasize or de-emphasize certain aspect of the external or imaginary world.

Of special interest is the notion of stance. Ochs (1993) drawing on Biber & Finegan (1989) and Ochs & Schieffelin (1989) defines it as “a display of socially recognized point of view or attitude”. There can be affective stance, style stance, but more relevant for this work is epistemic stance. Conrad and Biber (2000) define it as the expressions concerning “the certainty (or doubt), reliability, or limitations of a proposition, including comments on the source of information” (p.57). Epistemic attitude

or stance has also been discussed under the general notion of evidentiality, for example, by Chafe (1986), who compared a range of issues that express epistemic and affective attitudes in conversation and in academic writing. Chafe found that conversation and academic writing have about the same amount of evidential markers in an equal amount of words, only these markers are of different kind. He analyzed markers of the degree of reliability of knowledge; of the mode of knowing -belief, hearsay, induction and deduction; markers of the source of knowledge – problematic source, evidence, language, and hypothesis; and also markers of the matching of knowledge against established categories or against expectations.

The linguistic expression of knowledge is also called epistemological positioning, which as Bednarek (2006) points out is a notion that overlaps with evidentiality. However, like Chafe (1986), he distinguishes between a broad and a narrow definition of evidentiality. The former, following Chafe and Nichols (1986, Caffi and Janney (1994), Stubbs (1996), Mushin (2001), is “concerned with matters of truth, certainty, doubt, reliability, authority, confidence, personal experience, validity, inference, reporting, factual and imaginative stance, evidence, confirmation, surprise, and expectedness”(Bednarek, 2006, p.637). The narrow definition in his view has to do exclusively with the markers of the basis of knowledge, which he prefers to call epistemological positioning, which in his view includes four elements: basis of knowledge, which he calls evidentiality in the narrow sense; certainty of knowledge or epistemic modality; deviation from knowledge or mirativity, and extent or limitation of knowledge.

An important distinction for this work in the source of a proposition is that between attribution and averral. Drawing on Sinclair (1986) and Tadros (1993), Hunston (2000) says that a piece of language is attributed if “it is presented as deriving from someone other than the writer”. It is an averral, if “the writer him or herself speak” (p.178). These two, however, can be manipulated. What is attributed can be related to ‘respectable’ sources or can be introduced with expressions that indicate writer agreement or criticism. Likewise, what is averred can be modified through modals, vague language, hedging, etc.

In discussing the variety of functional approaches and terms to cover the speaker or writer’s attitude or opinion, Thompson and Hunston (2000) in their edited volume decide to use a superordinate term: evaluation. It is a broader term and it would also include emotional attitude or stance (Conrad and Biber, 2000), Halliday’s (1994) categories of interpersonal meanings, and Martin’s (2000) system of appraisal with categories related to attitude- affect, judgment and appreciation. Thompson and Hunston point out that the analysis of evaluation is important in identifying ideologies of the society or a subgroup of the society where the text is produced. “Because ideologies are essentially sets of values-what counts as good or bad, what should or should not happen, what counts as true or untrue-evaluation is a key linguistic concept in their study” (p.8).

Other useful categories for the analysis of stance were drawn from the notion of dialogicity (Bakhtin and Vološinov) by White (2003). White gives a different treatment to the resources used for evaluation in a text by extending the notions of engagement developed by Martin (1997) and the category of modality in order to embrace expressions

that convey attachment or detachment to propositions: “Textual voice acts first-and-foremost to acknowledge, to engage with or to align itself with respect to positions which are in some way alternatives to that being advanced by the text” (p.260). The written language, like face-to-face communication, implies a kind of interaction where the writer affirms, responds, anticipates, objects, supports, etc. White considers that the resources related to evidentiality, hedging, and modality can serve the purpose of signaling engagement with alternative voices or positionings.

Thus, a text or an utterance is “monoglossic” or “undialogized” when something is declared absolutely, when it is not in tension with alternative voices in the text. Typically, bare assertions convey this type of disengagement, especially if they are followed by evaluation. Myers (1990 cited in White, 2003) affirms that in scientific discourse these utterances assume that both the audience and the statement share the same knowledge, beliefs, and values.

On the other hand, heteroglossic engagement can be found in texts which recognize or engage in alternative positions and voices. Heteroglossic engagement can take the form of *dialogic expansion* when the alternative positions are represented as possible, as with expressions of tentativeness, cautious opinions (it seems, evidence suggests, I suspect -- hedging), or the form of *dialogic contraction*, when the alternative position is represented or suggested but is rejected, confronted or ruled out. Negations, concessives, and adversatives exemplify this type of engagement as do different types of proclamations, in which there is personal engagement, intensification, or emphasis.

Conventions

All the excerpts are reproduced as in the original. They often contain ungrammatical structures, incorrect vocabulary (in the context), incorrect punctuation, misspellings, etc. but the analysis of these features is beyond the scope of this study. With the intention of helping the reader, I have underlined those parts that are more relevant to the analysis in question. In cases where the writers have made their own highlighting, I have explicitly made it clear to the reader. I have avoided taking isolated sentences from the sentences in order to provide a reasonable context for the use of the language. The question of how much is enough context, however, is inevitably subjective. Sometimes, due to space constraints passages have been deleted but always signaled with square brackets [...].

The source of every excerpt is identified with the number of the thesis, the section and the page number. For example, T5 Ap.Ed:45 means the excerpt is taken from Thesis 5, the section titled Approach to Education and can be found on page 45. The abbreviations used to indicate the name of the section where the passage is taken from are the following:

Intro	=	Introduction
Rat	=	Rationale
Meth	=	Methodology of Needs Analysis research
Ped Imp	=	Pedagogical Implications
Mat Ev	=	Materials Evaluation
CD	=	Course Design
Ap Ed	=	Approach to Education in the Course Design
Ap Ln	=	Approach to Learning in the Course Design
Ap Lg	=	Approach to Language in the Course Design

CD Meth	=	Methodology of the course. It includes subsections like Roles of Teacher, Roles of Learners, Roles of Materials.
Ev	=	Evaluation and Assessment in the course
Conc	=	Conclusion of the thesis
Mat	=	Sample of materials of the course design

Table 1 Sample of initial categorization – Thesis 1

Pg	Sec	Quote	Cat	Subcat	Ideology
9	Rat	the Ministry of Education has brought English with the bilingualism to elementary public schools, which will be a great help to overcome Colombian poverty, specially on the Caribbean Coast	English	role	English overcomes poverty
11	Rat	Advantages ESP has in the Colombian context: 4. it may be more convenient for the Free Trade and Internationalization Agreement	English/teaching	ESP	ESP does what other approaches don't
11	Rat	Advantages ESP has in the Colombian context: 2. Gives opportunities to apply for scholarships and work overseas	Teaching	SP	ESP does what other approaches don't
13	Rat	Advantages ESP has in the Colombian context: 3. Gives opportunities to know the oral rhetorical of other countries	Teaching	ESP	ESP does what other approaches don't
13	Rat	Through needs analysis teachers may have the opportunity to discover each learner's general necessities in the acquisition of a foreign language	Research	Needs analysis	Needs analysis provides a window to each learner
13	Rat	Through needs analysis language teachers can find the kind of method and syllabus that are to be set for an ESP course	Teaching	Needs analysis	Needs analysis solves problem of method and syllabus decision
14	Rat	Besides, the University wants to link to the International community, developing associations and agreements that ensure its incorporation into the Global community	English	role	We are outside/ it's not about new roles.
16	Met	[classroom research] is a special event in which teachers have the opportunity to investigate and get the response to problems that occur in classrooms	Research	Benefits	Research is about solving problems
22	Res	The purpose of the informal observation was to find out what was wrong with the whole class in terms of writing	Research	Benefits	Researchers are to find wrongs
25	Ped imp	the course is based mainly in the development of reading skills, so that students can improve their vocabulary	Teaching	Beliefs/ -e	Reading improves vocabulary/this is reason to read.
25	Ped imp	the focus should foster students' reading skills, which will determine understanding and usage of appropriate language	Teaching	Beliefs/ c-e	reading assures language competence
Pg	Sec	Quote	Cat	Subcat	Ideology
25	Ped imp	in order to motivate students towards these strategies (?), it is of relevance to provide them with stories and articles from newspaper that can bring discussion to class	Teaching	Motivation	Articles from newspapers motivate students

30	CD	By opening up micro worlds to play with, by providing opportunities for autonomous, exploratory learning, for analyzing, synthesizing, interpreting social phenomena, these technologies ...] encourage teachers to devise more refined procedures for the organization and presentation of knowledge.	Teaching	Technolog	Tech is superior to traditional techniques
30	CD	the three approaches mentioned above [cognitive, affective and metacognitive] are indeed going to help learners arrange and plan their language learning in an efficient, effective way.	Teaching/earning	Approach	Resorting to x approaches produces efficient, effective learning
31	CD	One of some students' wants in this study is the inclusion of grammar in their classes to be able to express and write well; therefore, the structural approach is also taken into account in the construction of materials. Even though, it is not highly emphasized, for the design of this course the grammatical structures will be presented through the use of authentic texts. Students are going to deduct the tenses from the first paragraph of each reading, since this course is a review of the former courses.	Teaching	Approach	Any teaching of grammar is the structural approach
31	D	the approach to language should be skills-based , which is going to help learners to arise strategy awareness, fluency, vocabulary development and comprehension	Teaching	Approach	Skill-based approach brings about fluency voc dev and comprehension
31	Ap Lg	the most basic skills [that] will encourage these students to understand that the best way to enrich vocabulary in any language[...] is through texts of any kinds	Teaching/earning	Beliefs	Use of texts is best way to enrich vocabulary
38	CD Met	authentic readings, which will originate improvement in their communication and writing skills	Teaching	Beliefs/c-e	authentic readings improve communication and writing
39	CD Met	Research can be done in any place at the university because internet ports have been installed around the campus	Research	Technolog	Internet equals more research
39	CD Met	She/he will provide students a list of websites that shall take them to a different stage of knowledge.	Teaching	Technolog	Websites take students to more knowledge
46	Con	I see myself as a better teacher because I am practicing all the strategies and methodologies I have learned.	Teaching	Identity	Using all strategies and methodologies makes you a better teacher

CHAPTER 3: IDEOLOGIES OF ENGLISH

This chapter is devoted to the analysis of ideological discourses regarding the role of English in the world and in the Colombian context. I analyze how the writers represent their English-speaking interlocutors and the benefits that the English learners derive from knowing English. I will also discuss the representation of the cultural aims of foreign language teaching in the theses and the often contradictory course design decisions regarding these goals.

Absolute Dominance of English

English is often represented as the dominating language in the world and the only possible choice for communication among people from different cultures. In addition, some teachers fail to see this as a temporary phenomenon.

Learning English has always been important and it used to be taken as a synonym of a “high status”, but in our era, learning English is a necessity. (T2 Intro:1)

Another important reason why people should study English is that the capability of speaking English is required in the modern international society. Students who enter this field will undoubtedly be faced with foreigners and it is absolutely necessary to be able to speak in the international language in order to communicate with them. (T2 Rat:4)

English, seen as a “universal language”, constitutes an important tool to communicate with the entire world. It has become a key element of academic education and professional development as well as a requirement to access better jobs. (T11 Intro:2)

The Colombian government being coherent with its constitution and its current policies of economical globalization and decentralization recognizes the importance of globalizing and strengthening international relationships and thus the necessity to adopt a foreign language as a means of communication. (T7 Rat:5)

When technology advances the world gets smaller and the needs of communication of its inhabitants evidence the adoption of the English language as a means of communicating among the different cultures all over the world. (T8 Ap Lg:40)

The underlined parts of the first three examples above highlight some of the features attributed to English by the teachers: its universality (“a universal language”), the permanent character of its importance (“has always been important”), its exclusive position as international language (“it is necessary to speak in *the* international language”). These statements ignore the fact that in some places of the world English is not the first choice as a foreign language to learn or speak and that its expansion is relatively recent in the history of the world. In the fourth and fifth examples, the language used by the teachers conveys the assumption that a country needs to choose *one* foreign language to communicate with foreigners and that this language is English. This assumes then that for Colombians strengthening relations with Brazil, China or Russia is to take place through English only. The expressions “with the entire world” and “among the different cultures all over the world” would be cases of overgeneralization in that they ignore intercultural communication in many parts of the world that does not take place in English.

Innocent Account of the Leading Role of English.

The representation of English as a dominant language is achieved through a naïve account of the spread of English as in the last example in the previous section and in the following ones.

Globalisation is placing at our front doors international communication, commerce, overseas negotiations, cultural and technological innovations and has caused the emergence of English as a global language (lingua franca). (T9 Rat: 8)

This globalization era has generated the need of having an international language for communication and English has been the chosen one. (T2 Intro:1)

When the writer chooses to use metaphorical language like “the needs of ...evidence the adoption of the English language as...”, or “globalization ... has caused the emergence of English” or “globalization has generated the need of having an international language”, the grammar allows some ideational elements like time and actors to be absent and almost unrecoverable (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p.636-652), which will probably contribute to further mystification of the English language. In the example below I provide the metaphorical form and below what could be its congruent form. I have put in square brackets the relations, participants, tense specifications which I think are ambiguous.

Metaphorical The needs of communication of its inhabitants evidence the adoption of the English language as a means of communicating among the different cultures all over the world.

Congruent The inhabitants of the world need to communicate [and/so] they have evidenced (found evidence of) the fact that [the world? the inhabitants of the world? some inhabitants?] have adopted [adopted? are adopting? will adopt?] the English language as.....

What would have been congruently expressed through a clause nexus (they have evidenced/found evidence that +clause) is expressed in a simple clause, in which a process is represented as an accomplished phenomenon sensed by virtually everybody. The choice of ‘needs’ as *senser* (name given to the human participant in mental clauses in Systemic Functional Grammar, Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p.201) in the clause further objectifies the assumption. This representation puts the human beings in the position of passive outside spectators/perceivers of some world events that take place beyond their control or participation. Furthermore, the status of English as the international language is represented almost as a voluntary adoption and a decision made by some others who did have the chance to voice their will. The use of this type of

language suggests unawareness of the fact that a number of cultures around the world did not and do not have the opportunity to choose which language to use or learn and that it was not their inhabitants' need of communication, but the need for economic expansion of the leaders of English-speaking countries, that gave impulse to the expansion of the language (see Phillipson, 1992).

The notion of “globalization” is taken for granted across all the theses. The thesis writers never define or discuss it. It is taken as a ‘done deal’, so none of the authors questions its existence as a recent phenomenon, though there are opposite views regarding when it started, how real it is and what it means (Block and Cameron, 2002). Additionally, there is no mention of who globalizes, (since) when, what, or for whose benefit. Equally unquestioned are expressions like “emergence of English”, which construct an unintentional, self-engendered process as fact.

The status of English in the following example is presented as based not only on an incorrect assumption about the language that ‘developed’ countries speak, but it is also represented as a fact naturally evolving on its own.

Due to [the fact that] English is the main language of the majority of developed countries, it has turned in[to] the main means of communication worldwide. (19 Rat:5)

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987) after the second War World, English became the most popular language in the world. The United States became one of the most powerful nations in the world. By the 1940's English became the language used for communication among countries, the language of technology and science, the language of business, the language spoken in America, the new home for millions of immigrants and the place where millions of people wanted to live. Everybody wanted to learn it and English has been, since that time, on the top of the list of languages desired to be learned as a second language (T20 Rat:6)

This innocent account of the spread of English, partly achieved through a choice of verbs (“became”, “wanted”), is taken from Hutchinson and Waters (1987), both of them representatives of the British academia, and can be read in similar paraphrases

across different theses. This account includes no word about the role of Great Britain in this spread.

Native Speakers as English Users

Though concrete interlocutors for the users of English are not often found in the theses, these were represented as native English speakers in a couple of the works. The writer of Thesis 6 is the one that most clearly holds this view and makes it evident in numerous parts of his text. He also apparently considers that there is one true type of American English.

As they in the context are all teenagers who have to be trained for job situations at tourist settings where they will have to deal with native speakers of the target language (T6 Ap Ln:26)

[...] this course design will be skill-oriented concerned with the speaking ability for a specific target job situation where the learners will have to be in contact with native speakers of the target language. (T6 Ap Ln:26)

Since they are going to be involved in personal interactions with foreigners in tourist environment it is also necessary and according to the results that the students receive a very good instructions in the understanding of the American culture as regards to the tourist situations. (T6 Res:14)

There are two reasons why this course is entitled True Colors. It presents the true voice of the native speaker of American English, and it [...] T6 Mat Ev:17)

In the following example the teacher endorses her school's initiative to encompass wider cultural goals for the students. This apparently comprises respect for two types of culture: their own culture and that of "English native countries". Though it is not clear which countries are meant, it certainly leaves out the greater part of the potential international interlocutors and their cultures. It also presumes that English-speaking countries and their own country have each one homogeneous culture (singular

use of ‘culture’).

On the other hand, considering education as a long-term process, the institution wants to generate leadership and cultural transformation in their students, teaching them not only the culture of English native countries, but respect for their own culture as well. This way, the school educates citizens who value their own identity, while keeping a global vision (T11 Rat:4)

According to the teachers’ reports of their Needs Analysis, students also consider native English speakers as their most probable and ideal interlocutors.

In question six they prefer to have native speakers (92%) in their classes because they have the perception that with this condition they can learn and practice more. (T3 Res:37)

Students think that they will use the language with native speakers (71%), when communication is oral, because lectures will be given by people from English speaking countries, when given in English. (T2 Res:30)

There is a concern about their command of English, some are worried about their ability to speak to and listen to people, so they want to be in an advance level of interaction, due to the fact that they would probably be in touch with native speakers and that the abilities mentioned above are definitely of help.(T4: Res:12)

The first example refers specifically to “the learners’ preferences regarding a specific teacher for the course” (p.35), a question included in the interview with the students in that context. In the Needs Analysis questionnaire the researcher author of Thesis 3 asked questions that dichotomized the users of English in terms of nativeness (see question 7 in the Needs Analysis questionnaire reproduced in Appendix H). In terms of the places where students think they are going to use English, the researcher establishes clear-cut differences (see Question 5 in Appendix H). The ideological stance held by the teacher may, then, possibly influence students’ responses.

The other two examples illustrate how enhancement clauses of the causative type may blur the source of the assertion. In the second fragment, the assumption about interlocutors being native speakers of English is attributed to the students, but actually, the question in the questionnaire was: Who will you use English with? A) Spanish-

speaking people B) English-speaking people C) Friends D) Chat (p.88). So, equating English-speaking people to native speakers is the researcher's own interpretation. (Note how the choices seem to exclude combinations like 'chatting' with 'English-speaking' 'friends'). Moreover, "students think that they will use the language with native speakers when communication is oral" is followed by an enhancement which is not attributed and not taken from the results of the questionnaire applied to the students. The ambiguity in the cause relation does not allow determining who states that lectures in English will be given by people from English-speaking countries. The ideological assumption is that lecturers from those countries are native English speakers. This is not necessarily true today when the multicultural nature of the population in these countries is evident.

In the third example, the students expressed their worries about their oral skills. The enhancement of the causative type with its source ambiguity expresses the assumption that it is interaction with native speakers that learners need to be worried about when developing their competences. This kind of statement confers some higher status to English native speaker interlocutors because it could be inferred that interacting with non-native English speakers does not require advanced competence level of interaction. The analysis of how these teachers represent their learners' opinion suggests that they tend to justify their students' by providing reasons for them.

Native speakers are also considered the prototype of English users.

Who should decide what the language needs are? Three principal parties involved: teacher, student and sponsor. Various sources for needs analysis: those already working in the target situation, notably former students and specialist/native-speaker informants. It is important to have the maximum number of sources of information so that the identification of needs be reliable. (T2 Rat:9)

[...] the EFL student needs abundant authentic models of native speech. (T6 Mat Ev:19)

The approach emphasizes the use of authentic materials, for instance newspaper columns, advertisements, catalogues, etc., in order to reflect real life situations. Use of visual resources stimulates and focuses pupil's attention. It is very important that students have opportunities to develop strategies for interpreting language as it is actually used by native speakers. (T17 Ap Ed:28)

In the first example, the use of informants to provide information about the type of language needed in a target situation is taken from West's (1994) account of aspects to consider in a Needs Analysis. The author chose to include the "native" attribute in her elaboration. The other two examples also highlight the type of input the students are said to need in those contexts. The explicit mention of "nativeness" suggests a limited view of the users of English today and the association of authenticity with native speakers.

The "Magic" of English

In the Introduction and in the Rationale most teachers refer to the importance of English and what it can do to people. The reader comes across statements that clearly overestimate what the knowledge of English can achieve.

[T]he Ministry of Education has brought English with the bilinguism (sic) to elementary public schools, which will be a great help to overcome Colombian poverty, specially on the Caribbean Coast (T1 Rat:9)

The Colombian government wants to enter the country into the universal communication process, into the global economy and into the cultural expansion in order to make it a more competitive country and raise its quality of life. This is why its Ministerio de Educación Nacional (National Ministry of Education or MEN, for its Spanish abbreviation), has set a deadline of 2009 to bring students' English communication skills up to par with international standards (T11 Intro:2)

This bilingual project has an overall goal which says that Colombian citizens will be able to communicate through English with internationally comparable standards which will contribute to the insertion of the country in the process of universal communication and the global economy and cultural openness. It is belief through the setting of this goal that this should help increase the level of competitiveness and raise the quality of living in Colombia.(T5 Rat:5)

Both teachers present an account of a fact from the political life of the country -

an apparent commitment with a new impetus for the teaching of English - and a statement about the purpose of the policy. In the first example the purpose is expressed with a positive evaluation and with a high degree of certainty (“English will be of great help”). In the second example, the government is represented as a Senser, human-like, and almost as ‘endowed with consciousness’ (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004, p.201), with which the writer seems to convey certain adherence to the purpose. The expectation these teachers chose to express in these texts is huge.

Within the educational institutions, the teaching of English is also expected to help students accomplish a lot more than having a communication means.

The aim of this school in the area of foreign language is to help students to use English as a necessary communicative means, which can allow them to develop their ways of thinking to respond to scientific technology and cultural challenges that the today’s world requires. (T8: Rat 18)

In order to work together at an international level, it has become a necessity to teach English at Colombian Universities, it could be included in the curriculum or as free courses. ”. (T2 Rat:4)

As has been mentioned above, most of the half of the subject teachers does not have a complete management of the English language, but some of them are taking English courses in different institutions to get more prestigious as international researchers. (T7 Res:22)

While in the first example being able to use English as a communicative means “can allow” students to accomplish certain cognitive development, in the other examples the relation between English and the underlined purposes is more direct. Somehow writers of Theses 2 and 7 chose to represent a naïve connection between English and an ideal type of cooperative work with international partners and the achievement of prestigious researcher status. Working together at international level, as represented in Thesis 2 in the second example above, seems to imply that international researchers are all English speakers, and that “international’ means “English-speaking world”. This type

of discourse diminishes the desirability and probability that Colombians develop research work together with other South American countries or with Spain, for example. In Thesis 7 associating prestige of researchers with competence in English leaves out other types of perhaps more basic activities, competences and achievements. It is also important to point out that if cognitive development is to be associated with English learning, it is necessary to define cognitive development, how it becomes evident, how it can be achieved and assessed. Otherwise, the risk is that the English language itself is endowed with the cognitive properties.

Knowledge, Technology and Information as the Gains.

One of the usual gains associated with competence in the English language is access to knowledge, technology and information. The rationale is that these will bring about some kind of positive outcomes for the individuals and for Colombian society. This idea was conveyed in a number of theses, in different places and in different ways.

No country is able to face its future without producing or (in our case) consuming technology, because these are the pillars which the modern world is based on. Colombia as a consumer, must be prepared to get this information (most of the time in English) from the international communities that will help in our enrichment and transformation of this society. (T7 Rat:5)

The world today is more than ever a global village which is intercommunicated and interdependent, where information and knowledge are the most valuable patrimony for a person or society and the access to the main flow of information and knowledge, is clearly defined by the mastery one has of the languages spoken by developed societies. (T9 Rat:7)

The foreign language area should point to the needs of the students, it must provide into its possibilities, a clear orientation that allows the students to interact with the real world and allow them have access to technology and the informatics, as a means to reach knowledge. (T8 Rat:18)

The first example in the group above not only accepts a passive and dependent

role of the country as consumers of technology produced by other countries, but it also establishes a direct connection between competence in English and access to information that will have a positive effect in the country. Underneath this idealistic account lies the assumption that the technology English users will have access to is the one that the country needs and wants and not just what is convenient for the producers to release and sell. The second example is also very emphatic: mastery of languages like English “defines” access to knowledge and information. What is left unspecified here is the kind of knowledge and information (I will return to this topic below) that is usually flowing and the price to pay for the valuable pieces. In the context of Thesis 8 (third example) its author suggests a relation between English (the only foreign language taught in the school), the real world, technology, informatics and knowledge. Though this relation is not very clearly delineated, it seems that informatics (=informática), a term used in Colombia to refer to the use of computer and software development, accessed through English, is a means to reach knowledge. It may be assumed that the knowledge available through this means is positively appraised.

Erratic Assertions

Sometimes the reasons, possible uses or benefits arising from English for the students are expressed in too general and perhaps not carefully chosen terms. As a result the assertions sound exaggerated or naïve.

It would be difficult to succeed in life for those people with no knowledge of English. [...] This is why it is said that English is an international language and it is also said that all people should be able to speak English in order to have relationships with other countries (T3 Rat:

In the following example, the still unratified Free Trade Agreement between Colombia and the US is represented as a reality, as bringing benefits for Colombians, as requiring a specially qualified army of English speakers, and as having already caused a number of unspecified changes in education.

Our country is currently immersed in the TLC Program – an economic trading interchange among our country with the USA - which will provide many “opportunities” for our development. Education has not been the exception during this situation of changes. In the same way, the Teaching Process and being more specific the Teaching of Foreign Language Process has changed in these last few years. The English Teaching has been given prominence because of the need to provide well-prepared students who face and fulfill the requirements of this process. (T7 Meth:3)

Equally fancy but unspecific is the argument that globalization requires English for Specific Purposes. It seems contradictory to say that in a globalized world engineers or businessmen would need one specific type of English or should be limited to one specific purpose as suggested in the following excerpt.

Some of them come from other universities. And a few of them are in high school. Those at the university might need a type of English related to the reality of the current situation (globalization) which demands an English for Specific Purposes and to the reality of their careers (engineering, international businesses, etc.) (T13 Rat:10)

The Pragmatic Side of English

In spite of the above ideological discourses, teachers do see more concrete or realistic needs.

Due to Colombian Government requisition the state universities in Colombia has made mandatory for University students in all faculties, to take a test of text comprehension in a foreign language, which for now is English, and pass it in order to graduate. This exam is not an oral exam, it is written. So English Teaching at Universities should be addressed mainly to the Reading Comprehension and Writing skills. Though this is the main reason, there are others:

Passing an English test is becoming an eliminatory requirement to enter postgraduate studies at

most Universities in the country. If the studies are outside the country the need is even stronger. And in order to pass this test, the same skills must be developed. Most of the Bibliography for students is in English. They need the reading skills in order to comprehend the papers they have to read. (T2 Rat:7)

In this context the need for English finds concrete shape in a reading comprehension examination and the ability to cope with assigned texts in English. This latter need, however, is not confirmed in the Needs Analysis results, because the author also writes: “A constraint regarding the use of books to practice English is that the university library does not have many books in English” (p.29). And yet what really matters is the exam, as she later states:

The institution will evaluate the design when at the end of the course, students take the reading comprehension exam that is to be taken at the University and most of the students pass this exam. Then, is when the real outcome will be seen. (T2 Eval:81)

Another more realistic position is conveyed when the writers express the benefits of English in moderate terms, as in Thesis 7, where English is seen as “increasing possibilities to” a number of opportunities for the students after graduation.

Equally important is the position students have towards their future with the English language; individually all of them recognize the advantages of knowing and using foreign language as a means of increasing their professional development. Teachers and administrators see specific opportunities for students with the management of English, for example, increasing possibilities to win a scholarship, being up to date in Chemistry and other science, to go abroad for studying, to participate in research groups, to exchange information with students from other institutions around the world, etc. (T7 Res:23)

The writer of Thesis 8 comes all the way down from the need “to enable the participation on equal terms in the global culture” (T8 p.17) to becoming a tourist guide, a usual role in his town.

Finally our city is a tourist place and it is visited by people from all over the world, which indicates the need to teach English as a foreign language in order to show our wonders to international visitors.... (T8 Rat:17)

In the end, he acknowledges the pressures of the job market, and he sees his job in training workers for the multinational companies.

On the other hand, there are the factories that in a short time will require very qualified people with special skills in English and even more in other international languages. It means that if people want to get a better job, they will need to have a special English training. These phenomena have increased lately with the multinational that require people to work into the country and abroad. These people apart from having knowledge in their own profession need to know English applied to their jobs. (T8 Rat:21)

This ultimate goal of pleasing the appetites of money-makers and the job market becomes explicit in other theses. Authors of Theses 8 and 10 teach at secondary and preschool levels correspondingly, while Thesis 20 refers to a public university.

A school in a global society should decide what is the most relevant skill to be developed and what is the preparation kids need to meet life's challenges. It means to face problems, have values: accept and respect others, honesty, be able to work cooperatively and have knowledge of the English language, that's [what] business enterprises are looking for... "The growth of business and increased occupational mobility is resulting in a need for English as a common medium of communication" (Kennedy and Bolitho.1994) (T10 Rat:8)

So, it is indispensable to identify what the students needs are to design a course, that is why there is a lot of research related to what the role of language in student education is and how teacher encourages the students to face challenges of a global society, what is the most important skill to be developed in the new millennium and how teacher builds a perspective of work characterized by international competition in the English Language. Knowledge of the English Language is the key to get started in this preparation process, so, it is important to begin this with children that are the future of Colombia. (T10 Rat:17)

The project of the Language Center was launched in order to offer low-price English courses to students for them to be more competitive in the working market. (T20 Rat:11)

But even these demands are sometimes expressed in rather vague and even contradictory terms:

English has to be considered as a main element that makes people able to compete in different fields, because thanks to the use of the language and new technologies, learners can access to lots of cultures and get involved in worlds that perhaps they might not ever see in person, but they can compensate through the amount of interest they show during their learning process. (T5 Rat:8)

Here the modulation (“English has to”) used by the writer reveals the obligation to admit that people require the ability of English to become competitive and the reason for that is that by learning a language people get to know other cultures. However, the contemplation of the (more often than not real) possibility that students never really experience the so often advertised intercultural experience considerably weakens the whole argument.

Besides, competitiveness seems to be an issue primarily affecting educational institutions and English is represented as part of the solution.

The institutions to be competitive in all aspects have to adopt English programs taking into account a variety of classroom activities, effective classroom management and innovating materials. (T10 Rat:10)

In consequence, schools, universities, and language institutions should direct their efforts to prepare their teachers as well as their students to face all the new reforms that will take place. I think that this will make them more competitive in terms of language teaching. (T17 Rat:7).

There is a clear interdependence between the quality and productivity of an educative institution. It is necessary to obtain an improvement in the chain of all the levels to assure the global competitiveness of educative services. (T20 Rat:5)

The discourses in this section point to a very unfortunate but real situation.

Learning English is not likely to benefit the country as some would hope, but the foreign capital. It does not necessarily benefit the learners, who are not getting books to read and obtain the information they need, but the institutions which gain prestige if their students do well in the standardized exams. And when the learners benefit from the courses they take, then they are ready to leave the country.

Contradictory Representation of Cultural Aims

Target Language Culture is defined once in the theses: “The traditions and culture of the country whose language is being studied” (T20 Glossary:124). And in general, though the notion is found multiple times in most of the theses, it is not discussed and it is rarely considered a goal.

One teacher practically discarded the cultural aspects of the language as a valid objective for language learning today.

Previously, learning a foreign language was a cultural or an academic issue; at that moment, learning English became the only tool to have access to the information in the different fields that were transforming the world (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). (T16 Rat:4)

The notion of intercultural competence is found very few times in the theses and is never defined. One assumption is that intercultural competence or awareness is achieved almost automatically together with linguistic competence and the earlier the language is taught the better.

Moreover, the General Law of Education also cites the access to science, technique and research, especially in the articles 3, 5, 22, 23, 31 y 91 where the comprehension and capacity of expressing ideas in a foreign language is considered an objective of the basic education, because through the knowledge of the language students have the opportunity to achieve an intercultural competence. (T5 Rat:3)

The hope is that early childhood exposure to another language within a “natural environment” will facilitate the students’ speaking and understanding abilities when they study it further. In this way, they might develop an early consciousness of culture and of the diversity of human beings (T11 Rat:4)

Linguistic competence and cultural awareness go hand in hand; and both are vital necessities for today’s children. (T11 Rat:15)

The role of the cultural dimension in language teaching is difficult to deduce clearly from the writings analyzed. Access, presumably understood as contact with

others, seems to be the alleged cultural aim in several theses.

I am referring to the English Teaching – Learning Process, not only because the English is one of the most spoken languages in the world, but also because it allows you to have access to technology, to other cultures and to professional success. (T15 Rat:10)

As an answer to this reality, it has been established an educational policy, which intends to bring the students the possibility of having a better contact in experiencing a foreign language and another culture.(T8 Rat:17)

[...] because thanks to the use of the language and new technologies, learners can access to lots of cultures. (T5 Rat:9)

In other theses culture is the context, an important variable to construct meanings and communicate appropriately.

Words also change meaning according to the culture where they are expressed and students should be aware. Even in our own language, expressions or words change their meaning according to the area they are being said. In a foreign language, the meaning or the appropriateness of the words or expressions vary from the ones in our first language context. (T2 Ap Lg: 44)

Further, when teaching oral proficiency social cultural norms are of primal importance because they enhance the communicative competence when speaking the target language. They consist of formal and informal ways to address to others.(6 CD:27)

The culture goal is teaching respect and understanding.

On the other hand, the [name of institution] has its own Proyecto Educativo Institucional (PEI) which searches for the development of communicative competences to use the language as a medium of communication to exchange knowledge, understand and respect other cultures. (T20 Intro:4)

The program goal for students is to acquire command of a second language and to understand other cultures because globalisation is part of our world therefore communication also turns global. (T9 Rat:9)

The cultural dimension of language is sometimes represented as a homogeneous teachable object.

The English program encompasses literature, grammar, listening, speaking and writing; and the material used in the different grades gives students opportunities to learn about English culture and make connections between and across subject areas. (T17 Intro:4)

[...] the institution wants to generate leadership and cultural transformation in their students, teaching them not only the culture of English native countries, but respect for their own culture as well. This way, the school educates citizens who value their own identity, while keeping a global vision.(T11 Rat:5)

[I]t is also necessary and according to the results that the students receive a very good instructions in the understanding of the American culture as regards to the tourist situations. (T6 Res: 14)

One idea found in four theses is that instructional materials that reflect or depict other cultures and not Colombian or Latin American ones are deficient or not interesting enough.

With regard to cultural aspects, the material seems to be culturally biased in the sense that topics (sports) like cricket may not be common for a student or appealing. (T18 Mat Ev: 25)

As it was said before, readings are culturally oriented to different ethnic social groups with easy to read paragraphs that might maybe not be of adolescents' interest. (T20 Mat Ev:22)

They (readings in a text) do not reflect any topic related to Latin America or Colombia. It reflects the culture of the European countries, Asian and African. (T7 Mat Ev: 66)

The presentation of the units is good; lots of white space, pictures, the colors of the cover may not be motivating, though. Also, the choice of cultural aspects is quite good, but there are no local references. The context and illustrations are biased (only Americans and Asian people), they may make students feel aliens, culturally speaking; (T4 Mat Ev:23)

There is not a uniform representation of the relation between language and culture, of what the cultural dimension is or should be in the teaching of a language, and what the concrete achievements for foreign language teaching should be in terms of cultural gains. More often than not culture is an important and necessary aspect to mention when talking about English and English teaching. In the theses of the examples that follow the topic of culture is not taken up anywhere else in the authors' texts.

In Theses 13, “cultural” demands, whatever that means, are put together with other important, necessary and ever-present demands (political, economic, and technological). In this same thesis, the author starts his blurb on “Approach to Language Learning” listing a number of facets language can have. But he quickly defines what the important ones are: fluency, skills, and strategies.

In Thesis 20, the third fragment below, the author, after stating the importance of

intercultural development proposed by the Curricular Guidelines emanating from the Ministry of Education, soon switches to the urgency to prepare learners to get good scores on the standardized test that high school students must take before entering any higher education institution and he stays with it. This exam, as the teacher writes, is about reading comprehension not intercultural competence.

Since one of its central, crucial objectives is to educate a human being according to the social, political, economical, cultural, and technological demands of our time, education is trying to reach a sense of quality that strengthens every stage implicated in the education process. Language teaching is undoubtedly influenced by this tendency as well (T13 Rat:7)

Learning a first, a second or a foreign language is a complex process. There are Linguistic, psycholinguistic, social, and cultural elements involved in this process. In applied linguistics, second language acquisition is seen as the process of developing fluency in a second or a foreign language, Richard and Platt (1992) . In language teaching, one of the most important aspects is that the learner needs to develop specific strategies to improve his/her macro skills. So, this would be the principal focus of any language learning view. The skills provide the learners with the necessary ability to use target language effectively supported by the application of determined strategies that help them produce and receive the target language. Under this view, language learning attempts to highlight the procedural knowledge, which is the knowledge of how the language is used. That's why, functions are taught together with skills, (Tomlinson and Brian, 1998). (T13 Ap Ln:31

However, it is very important, too, to keep in mind the main objective of the Lineamientos Curriculares which pretend that Colombians' students learn the language as a medium of intercultural development, a tool to build knowledge and mainly as a means of acquiring specialized information in different fields that could help us in our scientific, technological and commercial development, and according to this objective, high school students must be prepared for the ICFES national exam which is rather oriented to reading comprehension.

Considering these aspects it is necessary to design a course in which students should be able to develop reading comprehension abilities as a medium of knowledge acquisition and the development of communicative skills such as speaking and listening through reading that enable them to be prepared for the ICFES examination. (T20 Ped Imp:16-17)

While some teachers seem to entirely neglect the inclusion of teaching culture or developing intercultural competence after the Rationale of their text is over, others make statements in the Course Design section of their theses, which could make the reader believe there is still some preoccupation for culture. For the author of Thesis 1 culture was not an aspect to mention in the entire thesis until the description of her materials. She

wrote:

The role of these materials is summarized as follows:

- Attract students' attention
- Engage students with other universal cultures (T1 Cd Met:40)

Interestingly, culture-teaching is not a goal or a topic to discuss in her writing, but she seems to expect that this culture component will nevertheless be present in her course, because she selected readings in English which deal with people, events and problems in other countries. It is clear, however, that whatever is achieved is not really central to her purposes, but more like a side effect.

As seen, teachers engage in discourses that apparently give culture a prominent place in foreign language teaching and concretely in their contexts and courses to be designed. Only two teachers actually include a culture goal for their courses. These are authors of Theses 5 and 9, who teach English to students who major in International Business, Business Administration and Economics. Let us have a closer look at their cultural aims.

The writer of Thesis 5 is the only writer who openly criticizes the whole industry around English and the false expectations language academies create when advertising their courses. She criticizes how bilingual schools prioritize foreign culture in their institutions while neglecting the local culture. She also states the ideal goals of culture-teaching in terms of enabling learners to interact and come closer to other cultures.

She sets the following Human Goal for her course: "Showing respect for others' opinion and integrate students to achieve common aims." In the analysis of what this goal implies, she writes that her students will need to know that "there are different

cultural patterns ” and will need to develop the skill to “adapt and understand to different kinds of cultural behaviors” (T5 CD:33)

Her materials are designed for her students to be able to apply for a job in a typical multinational company, for which her students would have to write application letters, and their CV according to the expectations in an English-speaking country like the USA. Her students would also need to be acquainted with the rules in order to have a successful job interview in English under international parameters. The materials can be regarded as suitable preparation to apply for jobs abroad.

Her thesis is one more example of one of the dilemmas many teachers are faced with. On the one hand she wants English language teaching to be connected with her own culture, with the local necessities of her students, and with an authentic and better way of being. She also considers that since it is potentially a way to get her students to communicate with people from other cultures, language teaching should be a way to make this possible. On the other hand, the whole rationale of ESP, the exercise of putting in writing what her students “really need” English for, compels her to look for more concrete and immediate concerns and a realistic pragmatic position. Her discourse then betrays a passive position: her students need to “adapt and understand”, and that is exactly what her materials show. Her students need to understand what the rules are that are imposed by the cultures that dictate the economic conditions in the country and then adapt to them. And that’s what she teaches them to do in her materials.

The author of Thesis 9 is also an illustration of how lucrative interests stand behind what is to be taught. This teacher repeatedly mentions the need to develop cultural

exchange and to develop understanding of other cultures.

[T]he Ministerio de Educación Nacional, is developing an ambitious program and subscribing important agreements with the British government, with the purpose of increasing Colombia's quality of life through global economy and cultural exchange. (p.8)

The program goal for students is to acquire command of a second language and to understand other cultures because globalisation is part of our world therefore communication also turns global.(p.9)

However, he finds out that his students are not really interested in this type of cultural exchange but in developing their own companies.

Only 10% of the students are interested in knowing about other cultures and countries. Another remarkable fact is that 68% of the students want to create their own company.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS: Students didn't find the relationship between culture and language. However most of them know English is important for them to be good professionals. Since we have already found a deficiency in knowing the culture of the language they are studying, movies and internet could be useful to open a window to give a general view of those aspects.(T9 Ped Imp:19)

He indeed sets a cultural goal and objective: "Human Goal: Awareness of the relationship between culture and language.(T9 CD:29). Objective: Students should be able to recognize the relationship between language, culture and human behaviour" (p.29)

And he puts it at the service of business-making, the ultimate goal. The first unit in his design is titled: Making Business in China, and it contains a text about the concept of face and how it can affect business-making with people from China.

Besides, it is important that the teacher focuses his/her attention on making the students find out the connection between culture and language because this is essential in the world of business. The student must understand that 'behind the words of any language' there are people with a cultural world which it is basic to know to succeed in communication and of course in business. It is necessary to increase the daily contact between the students and the culture that surrounds the language to obtain a more efficient work. (T9 Conc:47)

Some Consequences

In general, it seems that given the academic task these teachers are faced with, they are compelled to depict a positive panorama of what English would open up for their students. They resort to different arguments to sustain that point of view but most of the time they adhere to common ideological positions: English is and has been the number one language in the world, used by everyone beyond the frontiers of Colombia worth maintaining relations with; English will bring about enormous progress to our country, to the universities, and to the individuals; and English leads to access to new technology (and new technology is desirable for development), to knowledge and information (presumably the knowledge and information needed for progress). Teacher-writers reproduce the discourses of their institutions and of the textbooks they read for the postgraduate course. They, nevertheless, know their context and see also the immediate value in pragmatic terms for the future of their students: exams to pass, being competitive for jobs, and meeting the demands of the conditions that come from outside of the country.

The ideology of the absolute dominance of English conveyed by the authors of the theses seems to contribute to consolidating the current tendency to downgrade the relevance of what happens in certain latitudes and hemispheres of the planet, to ignore the variety of cultures within English-speaking countries, to disregard other languages that are used for international communication, and to assume that the world is the English-speaking world. Perhaps this has to do with a limited (western-centered) conception of the world.

This way of writing may be prompted by the need to make explicit the importance of English required for the rationale of the theses, but it is also a common reduction made by teachers, administrators, and national educational authorities. It is not a coincidence that only a couple of months ago the governmental institution in charge of designing and administering the National State Examinations in Colombia announced the elimination of the possibility for high school students to take the State Foreign Language Test in French or German. From 2007 on, only English competence will be tested in this official test. Such tendencies explain why very few institutions have attempted to introduce the teaching of Mandarin, Arabic, and Portuguese, just to mention a few languages, and discourses like the ones reproduced in the theses will probably make this even less likely to happen. The idea that everybody should learn English, the introduction of the new standards for English, the launching of the program “Colombia Bilingüe”, all converge on a progressive Englishization (if not Americanization) of bigger parts of our educational system and our society.

Some of the consequences of this situation are denounced in Thesis 5 in a part where the author criticizes the promises numerous institutions and academies make to potential clients who want to learn English in no time.

To sum up, teaching English has become business, almost an industry, but is not anymore human. Learning languages should be the perfect way to get to other cultures, to communicate and learn from them, but basically to make people more sociable and able to interact with others. (T5 Rat:4)

Unfortunately, the vision of the role of English teaching expressed in the above example is unique across the theses I analyzed. It is the only one that sees the deceitful aspect of the discourses around English teaching in the country and also the one that most

clearly expresses in its own words a cultural goal for the whole enterprise of teaching and learning a foreign language. And yet, as we saw above, her course decisions later are ideologically influenced.

Theses 2, 4, 8 and 19 cite Jack Delors' (1996) four pillars of education, which includes "learning to live together", as a foundation for any educational project. In the Approach to Education section of Thesis 8, the author criticizes the functionalist approach to education prevailing in the country on the basis that it does not embrace three of Delors' pillars of education, including "learning to live together". But this is the end of it. This particular writer, as was shown above (see section "The pragmatic side of English), though he mentions the topic of culture a few times, he ends up reducing the great idea of "learning to live together" to preparing his students for the demands of international companies. Interestingly, in the conclusion of his thesis he expresses his aspiration to contribute to the noble ideal of helping people live together.

It was the purpose of this study to identify the different needs our students had, regarding their English learning process, in order to design a course that will help teachers and students in the achievement of a better education for this new generation of students, an integral education that intend to educate an individual in both academic progress and aware of the respect for other people opinions and ideas within their community, so necessary to live together.

It may be that there is a preoccupation with going beyond helping students 'master' the language, and teachers show they have learned to reproduce some discourses about the fine purposes of language teaching, but it seems that this does not transcend the academic exercise.

When the writers mention the importance of accessing knowledge, technology and information through English, they seem to be subscribing the ideologies that

fetishize knowledge and technological advances as key to, or even synonymous with, development (Crewe & Harrison, 1998 chapters 2 and 5). These ideologies maintain that the lack of access to advances in technology and knowledge, especially those derived from the leading western countries, is the main culprit of underdevelopment and poverty (Schumacher, 1971 cited in Crewe & Harrison, 1998). The idea is that if a couple of people or hundreds of people save time or money through an imported technology, poverty in the country is alleviated.

And yet, the kind of information that the course designers choose for their students is the kind that makes Colombians become increasingly more dependent and subjected to the flood of products coming from the entertainment business of countries like the US. For example, Thesis 8, one of the works which contains allusions to the importance of English for access to technology and knowledge (see section “Knowledge, technology and information as the gains), contains a reading course designed for 10th graders. Its corresponding instructional materials comprise four readings, three of which have the following titles: “How 50 Cent became a superstar”, “Inert 50 Cent doesn’t get off the dime in ‘Get Rich’”, “Vin Diesel’s Biography”. Needless to say, the reading and strategy development exercises build up around these topics.

This designer wrote in the Pedagogical Implication section before Course Design:

It is important to foster great changes in the students’ mind towards the English language concerning the real value of this foreign language. Therefore, since English is a very important international language it should be learned by the Citizens of the world. (T8 Ped Imp:31)

But also:

Results also show that the students do not enjoy the textbook readings because they consider them as difficult, due to their complexity and out of the local context. Another reason is that the textbook readings do not refer to the Colombian context. Students are interested in topics such as

sports, fashion, technology, informatics, etc. They are not interested in literature, science, economy and politics. Thus, reading texts should be chosen focusing on the students' interests. [...]. (T8 Ped Imp:31).

As can be seen, there are contradictory discourses representing different interests in this text. On the one hand, there is the aspiration to convert students to submit to the grand discourses around the English language, the language that connects its users with the world, and conceivably, with its very best achievements. On the other, there is an apparent struggle between the local and the foreign, and the perceptible verbal defence of the former. And finally, a third point - the idea of pleasing the students, their needs and interests: Judging from the materials designed, this last point defeated the other two, but not in favour of the learners and their future, but in favour of deculturalization through the distribution of those products and services coming from the Anglo-American world that captivate especially young, forming minds.

From the analysis presented above it can also be seen that culture is consistently treated as a serious objective for the course only in those contexts where the notions of the importance of understanding the differences between cultures is essential for business that is, concretely in the two contexts of theses with course designs for students majoring in International Business and Finance (Theses 5 and 9). This can be partly considered a product of the ESP approach followed in the Postgraduate course because if students are to be taught what they “need”, and teachers find out that their students need to pass an exam, or to learn to extract information from texts, they will not need to deal with cultural differences, no matter how much talk there is about “globalization”, “internationalization” and the like. And conversely, if teachers realize that their students

will need to deal with cultures different from the students' in order to be able to make business, they will try to do something about that. It must also be said that the contexts where culture teaching becomes a course goal are private universities. In public schools with scarce resources, the goal of teaching culture was theoretically developed, but was not instantiated in the materials the students will be using.

CHAPTER 4: IDEOLOGICAL DISCOURSES OF ESP AND NEEDS ANALYSIS

The postgraduate program uses the framework of the theory of English for Specific Purposes. The teacher participants take a 12-hour course on History and Theory of ESP whose objective, according to the syllabus, is to enable participants to “analyse and evaluate the various theories which have arisen with regard to the teaching of English for Specific Purposes, and apply the most appropriate ones to his/her teaching situation” (syllabus of the course). The following are the topics discussed in the module: Origins and development of ESP (what is ESP, background roots and development and types of ESP); Needs Analysis, its objectives, scope and techniques; and approaches to syllabus design. In addition, the topic of ESP and Needs Analysis is taken up again, discussed and operationalized during the tutorial sessions which take place in groups of three to five teachers and a tutor. The understanding, elaboration and interpretation of the readings, the lectures, and the discussions find partial representation in the theses, especially, but not exclusively, in the Rationale. Almost all the theses include sections with titles like “What is ESP”, “Types of ESP”, “Importance of ESP in the Colombian context” and the like. Other theses discuss these topics as part of a single larger section in their Rationale about ESP. In general, authors seem quite committed to represent ESP as a convenient and advantageous approach for the contexts where they teach. This idea has several sustaining components: ESP is different from English for General Purposes (EGP), it is superior to other approaches, it has special positive features, and it is a suitable response to globalization. These representations will be analyzed below as well as the research

component of ESP, the Needs Analysis, its justification and characteristics.

ESP as Different from EGP

Some teachers do not openly make an explicit discussion of the difference between the two approaches. They focus more on stating that their course is an ESP one. In these cases the act of defining ESP consists of quoting a commonly accepted statement in ESP theory without further comments or elaborations.

The English Specific Purposes course that is going to be designed in this study is addressed to what children desire to acquire English Language for because Hutchinson and Waters (1987) confirm that “ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as the content and method are based on the learner’s reason for learning” (T10 Rat:15)

In this particular example above, the insertion of the quote with the only ESP definition in the thesis as part of cause-effect relation sounds rather forced. The effect is that a potential reader may interpret that the course to be designed is going to meet the learners’ desires thanks to the ideas Hutchinson and Waters expressed or thanks to the authority and weight these scholars add to the ideas (see the use of “confirm”).

The writers of Thesis 4 and 13, however, acknowledged a certain fuzziness in the notion.

Standing for English for Specific Purposes, ESP as such entails a vague definition, i.e., the meaning has not been clearly defined. Holmes (1981) outlines the failures of the concept and considers it as a “restricted repertoire” with a rather negative approach. We shall describe the guiding principle of ESP as “tell me what you need English for and I will tell you the English you need” (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987)

Apparently unable or unwilling to make a decision, this teacher resorts to a quotation, a clean and safe way to tackle the task he is faced with.

The theoretical discussion of the difference between ESP and EGP consisted sometimes of a verbatim copy of some of the required readings of the program. For example, Thesis 6 reproduces almost all of page 53 from Hutchinson & Water's book. Theses 5 and 7 reproduce almost verbatim Dudley Evans and St John's (1998, p.4-5) absolute and variable characteristics of ESP. Conceivably, this reflects some of the lowest levels of appropriation (Colectivo Urdimbre, 2000)

Most of the time, as in standard academic writing, writers use statements supported with quotes that confirm the difference. A quote often found across theses establishes the difference in terms of awareness.

In contrast to their former school learning experience, now these people are well aware of their purpose in learning the language. "What distinguishes ESP from General English is not the existence of a need as such but rather an awareness of the need". (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987) (T2 Rat:6)

Theses 1, 3, 6, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 19 either quote or paraphrase this idea of awareness and in most of these cases, this is the definite differentiating feature. In fact, this is a problematic definition. From my review of the literature, it is not an aspect often taken up in the ESP literature. Many publications in the field intend to show how actually something was done to construct courses which have special features and are based on a careful selection of the language features identified as characteristic of certain registers, or situations of use of the language.

The interpretation of the main features of ESP is contradictory in the following two theses. While for the author of Thesis 14 ESP is "based on actual and immediate needs of learners who have to successfully perform real-life tasks unrelated to merely passing an English class or exam", the author of Thesis 2 suggests exactly the opposite

when he writes right below the subtitle “Importance of ESP in the Colombian Context”:

Due to Colombian Government requisition the state universities in Colombia has made mandatory for University students in all faculties, to take a test of text comprehension in a foreign language, which for now is English, and pass it in order to graduate. (T2 Rat:7)

That is, for this particular writer ESP is really related to the passing of the exam and her responsibility is to help students cope with this requirement through ESP.

The elaboration or reconstruction of the essence of ESP does not show the clear-cut distinction so neatly. In Thesis 13, whose author also recognizes that “ESP is a term which is not easy to define” (p.8), some of the features he identified in the list she makes of the characteristics of ESP are not so exclusive.

But in contrast with EGP (English for General Purpose), some elements might be highlighted from ESP.[...]

- Specific type of English
- Thinking process is analyzed
- Learners’ needs are analyzed for course design.
- Learner-centered
- Goal-directed

A closer look at some of these features reveals their general nature: learner-centeredness is a fairly common alleged feature of language courses today; goals should theoretically be established and pursued in all types of course; the analysis of thinking process is a rather ambitious goal for any course even an ESP one; several authors have taken pains to assert that “ESP is not a matter of teaching ‘specialised varieties’ of English (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p.18).

In the following example, what the teacher writes about the difference does not succeed in making it appear that fundamental either.

[a] All course[s] are based on a particular need some how. [b] This concept gives us the idea in theory that there is not any difference between them, but in practice, a big deal. [c] What makes

the difference between these two concepts [ESP and General English] is not the perception of a need in an ESP class and the lack of it in General English class. [d] There is always a need in all English classes. [e] The point is to be able to identify those needs and use them as a starting point trying to get the maximum potential of the class. [f] This shows that any course should be [based] on analysis of learners needs. (T3 Rat:8)

In spite of the difference between ESP and General English being “in practice a big deal” [b], the conclusion of the discussion is a theoretically desirable state of affairs for any course – that they *all* be based on an analysis of learners needs. If “there is always a need in all English classes” [d], then, all courses are about getting the maximum potential of their class (at least in theory, though certainly with very disparate results in practice). Perhaps the difference could be that ESP teachers *attempt* to define the needs, while non-ESP teachers don’t. This, however, would suppose that EGP courses are offered in a vacuum for the purpose of teaching the language. While this is possible, it would be hard to say that school teachers are not aware that their students are expected to be promoted to the next level, or to get a passing grade at the end. Besides, at least in Colombia, there has been enough fuss about the State Examinations, so it is hard to find school teachers who are indifferent to it. Thus, in a way, it is not by chance that this teacher did not write a clear statement like “The point is that ESP is able to identify those needs and use them as a starting point...” instead of the actual [e] he wrote, which sounds more like a desirable action to take rather than an established feature (“the point is to be able to...”)

It seems that in order to make the case for ESP some teachers find it is necessary to stick to and even overemphasize the rigid and unconnected compartments that sometimes are established in the field, with people making choices for one or the other and overlooking commonalities. In their discussion of the essence of ESP and in trying

to define it, Hutchinson and Waters show what ESP is not. In this discussion the following lines can be read: “[...] these differences should not be allowed to obscure the far larger area of common ground that underlies all English use, and indeed, all language use” and also “ESP is *not* different in kind from any other form of language teaching, in that it should be based in the first instance on principles of effective and efficient learning” (p.18 emphasis theirs).

Actually, the students surveyed in a number of contexts did not have specific needs. That was especially the case with beginner English learners at extra-mural courses or language centers (Theses 4, 13, 16 and 20). Neither these courses nor most of the ones developed for school contexts (e.g. T8, 10, 17 and 19) served any particular discipline or centered on the language, skills, discourse and genres appropriate for the methodologies and activities characteristic of any discipline. Consequently, they do not match most of Dudley-Evans’ absolute or variable characteristics of ESP.

ESP as Superior to Other Approaches

The superiority of ESP can be represented either through its alleged effectiveness or the failure of EGP.

These demands have resulted in the expansion of one particular aspect of English Language Teaching (ELT) search for more effective ways of teaching second or foreign languages - namely the teaching of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) (Kennedy and Bolitho,1984). (T2 Intro:1)

General English has been taught at Colombian Universities but it has failed for English as a main subject.. (T2 Rat:6)

Effectiveness is not an uncommon attribute found in the description of ESP courses, interventions and innovations reported across applied linguistic journals (See

Chiu, 2005; Boshier & Smalkoski, 2004; Sullivan & Ginginer, 2002; Henry & Roseberry, 2000; Sengupta, Forey & Hapt-Lyons, 1999, for example). It is a distinctive feature in the example from Thesis 2 above too. Though the syntax is rather awkward, it is clear that “the teaching of English for Specific Purposes” is a specification or a particular case of the “more effective ways” of teaching. Thus effectiveness is practically inherent to ESP, and not dependent on particular instantiations or implementations.

The failure of General English at a university level is a generalizing statement, which perhaps reflects the existing mood especially, but not exclusively, in public universities, in poorer regions where foreign language education has traditionally not received very much attention, where there are few qualified teachers and resources, where pedagogical issues and research have not been important concerns, and where there are plenty of other difficulties. The failure then is a complex issue which should be investigated. The implied hope that simply replacing GE for ESP would bring effectiveness to FL programs or courses is not realistic.

The superiority of ESP is often rhetorically constructed through positive evaluation.

Taking into account the previous facts and experienced gained so far, it can be said that the ways of teaching and learning have been changing through history and some aspects of education have become more important than before, in this case I am referring to the English Teaching – Learning Process, not only because the English is one of the most spoken languages in the world, but also because it allows you to have access to technology, to other cultures and to professional success.

Considering these true facts about the English teaching in Colombia and also learning processes , it is very important to use an approach to the teaching of English which can help us improve the English language learning processes in this school .For this purpose the ESP approach to the teaching of English rises as the most suitable approach to strengthen the weaknesses found in the student population. (T15 Rat:10)

In the previous example, the first paragraph establishes the importance of English. Then in the second paragraph, the importance of improving English teaching through an adequate approach is also established. (The word “important” is used once in each paragraph). Finally, the last sentence establishes the fitness of ESP for that mission by using the agentless process “rises”, and by expressing positive evaluation in the highest degree (“the most suitable approach”), but without ground for the assertion. Positive evaluations are also part of the following characterization of the ESP approach:

[a] Nowadays, ESP is having a great influence in the learning of a foreign language because it has to do with the ways in which learners acquire language and the differences in the way language is acquired by learners. [b] This approach is widely accepted due to the fact that its use implies carrying out a needs analysis before hand in order to know in advance the students’ needs and the variables that affect the language learning process. [c] Also, it attempts to find out how students learn the language, the different learning styles they use to assimilate better and what motivates them to gain knowledge. (T8 Rat:19)

[a] ESP has made a great contribution to the socio-economic part of the world because now, the communication to make business is faster and easier. [b] People can interact through faxes or phones with their counterparts in other countries using a specific terminology related to their jobs. [c] Now, knowledge is available to everybody. [d] Medicine students, for example, can read, comment and apply the latest discoveries made by scientists all over the world. [e]. Engineering students can read about the technical specifications of a long modern bridge that was recently built. (T20 Rat:7)

In these two examples there is an attempt to provide grounds for the positive evaluation of ESP. In the example from Thesis 8, however, the alleged facts that ESP “has to do with the ways in which learners acquire language and the differences in the way language is acquired by learners” (in [a] and [c]) do not reflect intrinsic features of ESP, but perhaps general aspirations of language teachers and researchers.

Possible assumptions in the second example from Thesis 20 are: 1. Since people have been learning English so well, communication and business go faster and easier (either an arrogant or a naïve presumption). 2) What is needed for communicating

through faxes or phones is reduced to specific terminology; 3) ESP has allowed Colombian students or professionals to know about the latest that has been achieved by science and technology developments in leading countries. That assumption is naïve in that it believes in those immediate and idealistic outcomes of knowing English or learning ESP; it ignores the fact that most of the time it is only certain types of information that reach Colombians, that the prices of subscription to international journals is often too high, that the knowledge about advances, etc. often translates into dependency.

ESP and its Special Positive Features

The features underlined in the following examples unquestionably reflect some of what is considered good teaching practice according to contemporary standards in the fields of applied linguistics and education.

Since this is going to be an ESP course (English for specific purpose) the teachers should have a good command of the language taught so that students can learn from a good model. (T11 CD Meth:34)

Bearing in mind that evaluation in ESP situations is concerned with the effectiveness and efficiency of learning, with achieving the objectives (Dudley- Evans and St. John, 1998), it will be important to establish priorities for evaluation since evaluating everything will be unrealistic. This means to have in mind what exactly is wanted to evaluate. (T11 Ev:38)

In any ESP approach teachers are not expected to be experts, they will play different roles as follows: course and material designer, course planner, risk taker, writer, collaborator, observer, researcher, and evaluator. A teacher who decides to face language through ESP [...] must investigate about genres, language and skills involved, carry out needs analysis, observe situations, analyse sample texts and so on. In addition, when evaluating he/she must test students' performance and also assess the material students are working with at the school. Students involved in this process are expected to be active participants in their educational context, critical analyzers of the material and activities proposed by teachers and their classmates to the class. Moreover, they must be aware of their weaknesses and strengths in particular situations and keep a high motivation through the learning process" (T8 Rat:19-20).

One advantage that the ESP approach offers the learner is that all the preconceptions and background related to the knowledge of the language are valuable to take into account when an ESP course is designed. Holmes (1981: 5) says that we take into account the needs of the students and also the ideas and experience which he brings into the classroom, that at the same time, all this must be connected and expanded with the new knowledge that is going to be acquired. (T19 Rat:8)

Though these examples can correspond to any other course, the writers chose to make them inherent to ESP (again ignoring Hutchinson and Waters' argument) and, sometimes, as if other approaches did not have these features, therefore making ESP better and preferable. For example, in the first passage of the above group, "since it is going to be an ESP course, teachers have to..." implies teachers in EGP don't need to have a good command of English. In the third example, "in ESP approach teachers are not expected to be experts" implies that other approaches require teachers to assume this role. Needless to say, the implication that teachers shouldn't take the role of experts is influenced by some of the current theories (see chapter on Identities-in-the-making), they become almost unquestionable truths.

The point here is that while the writers of these theses seem to have gained some knowledge of some discourses in applied linguistics and education, they are kind of prisoners of the ESP framework and they use their newly acquired knowledge or discourses to reify ESP and its teachers by representing an idealized picture.

ESP as the Right Response to the Globalization Era.

The vague, undefined, and non-operationalized concept of globalization is a useful way to stress the importance of ESP. This idea is a complement to the ideology

described in the former chapter about English being the language of globalization, which now becomes “ESP is the approach in the globalization era”.

The implications of globalization are crossing Colombian boundaries, affecting language teaching especially. The need for a specific English approach under these circumstances and not a general one is a reality in our English language context. The international demand for prospective workers and students makes ESP English courses a suitable option for our complex learning community. (T13 Rat:8)

Those at the university might need a type of English related to the reality of the current situation (globalization) which demands an English for Specific Purposes and to the reality of their careers (engineering, international businesses, etc.) (T13 Rat:11)

Both excerpts deal with globalization, ESP and reality. In the first example globalization is a phenomenon that takes place outside the country, but its implications reach the classrooms. Therefore the need for ESP is a “reality”. In the second example, globalization is “a reality”, therefore students “might” need ESP. The use of “reality” is essential to make the point rhetorically stronger and credible. The “reality” exemplified in the first excerpt is the “international demand for prospective workers and students”, which is presumably what globalization is about in the author’s understanding. The course designed in Thesis 13 attempts to develop the four macroskills by providing extra practice for the students. For example, students will practice requesting clarification, reducing sounds when speaking, leaving telephone messages, making presentations. As regards the reading skills, students will practice identifying the author’s purpose, topic sentences and supporting ideas. The course and the materials do not indicate a clearly defined specific purpose. The ‘real’ situation does not determine the ‘real’ need for ESP in this Thesis.

Ideological Language at Work

So far I have illustrated several apparently isolated ideologies used to justify the choice of the theoretical framework of ESP for the designs of the courses in the theses.

It is necessary to keep in mind that the teachers are required to write this justification; they were not acquainted with any other framework and were possibly not encouraged to take a critical stance towards it. After all, they enroll in the program to find answers to their questions and problems. They would not invest their money in the program if they did not trust the kind of knowledge that was put on circulation through the readings and in the classes. Now, I will illustrate how in order to make the argument work it is necessary for some writers to put together a number of ideological assumptions.

The superiority of and the resulting preference for an ESP approach for courses to be offered in Colombia is emphatically expressed in Thesis 1 when the author lists what she considers inherent advantages of ESP classes and also benefits derived from them.

ESP has facilitated learners' role in the classrooms. Learners do not have to get bored in classes where the material taught is already known or does not apply to their jobs or future studies. Through ESP the learner might develop all the linguistic skills in his situation. (T1 Rat:11)

Making the case for ESP led in her case to unwarranted claims about what is appealing in the classroom. The writer seems to assume that students in non-ESP classes get bored, that studying already known topics is boring, that in ESP classes students should come across topics they don't know about (but Theses 7 provides an example where the opposite is true), that courses that correspond to students' potential needs in the future are interesting and exciting for learners and the opposite, that topics or content

which do not directly apply to job or study needs are not interesting or exciting. These ideas may be derived from the expectation created with the attention paid in the program to ESP theory.

Supporting ESP as a suitable approach for particular interests results in the writers' resorting to a number of assumptions as in the following passage:

For Colombia ESP is quite important in the occupational branch, specially. Even though learners need to have some knowledge of the General English, it will take them less time if they study ESP. Some advantages ESP has in the Colombian context could be named:

1. It is guided toward the specific needs of the learner.
2. Gives opportunities to apply for scholarships and work overseas.
3. Gives opportunities to know the oral rhetoric [patterns] of other countries.
4. Specially now, it may be more convenient for the Free Trade Agreement and Internationalization. (T1 Rat:11)

In the above passage fast is better or preferable, though the writer does not determine for what or for whom. She also establishes a fundamental difference between General English and ESP, which in turn seems to imply a well-defined notion of General English (an idea that is discussed with mixed results in the section "ESP as different from EGP"). ESP also brings about a number of potential opportunities for students, and among them a usual aspiration for young and not so young people – to be able to work overseas, though overseas may stand concretely for a number of English-speaking countries.

Putting together the Free Trade Agreement (TLC) and internationalization raises questions regarding the concept behind these terms. The teacher is implicitly making a

positive evaluation of the Free Trade Agreement and of Internationalization, and by suggesting the suitability of ESP for these purposes, she may be implying rigid, predictable, definable or even quite standardized and limited types of communication needs, which in turn may mean fixed ideas about the roles, status, activities Colombians will be engaged in as a result of both phenomena. That is, if ESP is about meeting the needs of the learners and focusing on the language appropriate for engaging in certain disciplines and activities (according to the absolute characteristics of ESP defined by Dudley Evans & St John, 1998 and cited by the author of the thesis), then an ESP course would imply that the teachers and the students have to agree on certain types of registers, genres, discourses to be taught and learnt. Now in the context of Internationalization and a ‘TLC’ with the United States, how would they define these? In the context of the Free Trade Agreement would that be the language related exclusively to trade, offering and purchasing goods and services? Where would that start and where would it end? Would such an ESP course deal exclusively with business communications? And even so, where does business end today? Farther, if the idea is also to help students cope with “Internationalization”, does this mean a narrow, clearly-defined array of types of relations with other countries? Or exactly the opposite? How can an ESP course be defined, then? It can only be defined if a narrow functional approach is taken for each particular context, one that aims at curtailing possibilities of new types of international relations, roles and dynamics.

The argument made by the writer of Thesis 1 was intended to support ESP as different and superior to General English but it is clear that this idea can only be

sustained when other ideologies about relations and roles in society are called upon.

Actually, in her approach to education she subscribes to a functionalist model of education:

“According to the theoretical framework presented by the two authors mentioned previously [Askew and Carnell, 1998) and the [name of institution], where this study has been carried out, it can be concluded that the most suitable model to this institution is the Functionalist [...]. to prepare young people for the world of work. It assumes the students are educated for a particular function in society and prepared to be good workers as our students indeed are”.

One particular teacher sees the deceptive part of ESP in how teachers can be misled by the notion of purpose because the purpose of an ESP course is dictated by external variables and purposes are changeable and variable. Therefore, he proposes, teachers need to be attentive to what engenders the purpose and what for. This is how he writes about it:

We should know that purpose is a consequence and not a personal decision. Purpose does not belong to the individual. The individual is an actor, a participant of the purpose but not its generator.” (T9 Rat:5).

Purpose remains in the most critical area of the system, in the thinnest, fastest and most changeable one. In order to know what purpose should be, is necessary to be aware of the various aspects that precede it, as well as those ones that follow it. In other words, what produces it and what for (T9 Rat:5)

He concludes

“we know the first step in applying the ESP approach is the “needs analysis”, but these needs are not only found inside the student. The student gives the teacher a partial view, even a distortion in some cases, of the context that has to be analyzed. The student is a source of information, maybe the one that is most frequently examined. But certainly, it is not the most reliable and safest one and it is basically the least responsible one. (T9 Rat:5)

Such statements would imply the recognition that the standard definition of ESP as “an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner’s reason for learning” (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987 p.19) and the

like are misleading, in that the “learner’s reasons for learning”, in fact are not his or her reasons, but somebody else’s. Thus, it is a sophism to try to claim ESP “puts the learner at the center” of the teaching –learning process, or that ESP makes students “active participants.”

Critical as this view may be, it still falls short of becoming a liberating or transformatory approach because his point is to highlight the responsibility of the teacher as an analyst and critic of the context but in order to make students suit into the roles they are to play in it.

It is for sure a very complicated task. We are claiming that there is a critical point called purpose where that one who decides, defines the future of the context and in fact decides about the purpose, is designing the context and this is a huge responsibility. And I would add something else: for the teacher this responsibility is unavoidable. Either analyzing it or not, either taking any decision or not, the teacher is in the critical point of the design of the future. Starting from here it is possible to begin a responsible process about what our students will be in the future and if they will reach what we call success. For the teacher, student’s success once he/she becomes a professional should not go farther than being aware of the purpose design according to the context he was assigned to live. In other words, if the teacher could imagine the future of the context the students would be assigned to live in the right way and design a coherent purpose for it, the new professional would receive the necessary tools to be successful. (T9 Rat:7)

His words confer a diminished role to his students in the making of their own future. Students are first mentioned in a clause that is an attribute to a process (process about what our students will be in the future and if they will reach what we call success.), their roles in the future is represented with certainty (“our students will be in the future”) and the desirable arrival point of that future is “what we call success”, a notion apparently established and agreed upon by an ambiguous ‘we’, which is not likely to include students themselves. The students’ success is almost prescribed and constrained (“students success should not go farther than”) and their fate determined by external forces (“he was assigned to live”).

The teacher represents himself as highly responsible for the students' future, able to foresee and even design it ("the teacher is in the critical point of the design of the future"). Conceivably, this is a doable task because in his words a student "has a context where he is *assigned* to live" (emphasis mine). Consequently, his view of that future is predictable and stable and there exists "a coherent purpose" and "a right way" to live it.

In the particular case of this writer, embracing the life that his students are assigned to live is a privilege. He teaches in a relatively prestigious higher education institution in the country where graduates are meant to become leaders in their region. He also teaches in a newly-created program of International Business, which is meant to meet the latest demands of our time "which tends towards to an increasingly intensive globalization of national and regional realities beyond the boundaries of the nation itself" (from the Vision of the institution).

Given the above analyzed conceptions about the students' role in the construction of their future, the predictable and static nature of that future and the context where they will live, the teachers' responsibility in designing both future and context, and making future professionals fit to their assigned roles, it is just natural that ESP comes in handy.

Let's turn now to Needs Analysis as the research component of ESP.

The Justification of Needs Analysis

Teacher-designers in the postgraduate program take Needs Analysis as a serious research enterprise which will further define their course as an ESP one. Needs analysis has been one of the main established differences between an ESP course and any other

type of approach. Teacher-designers acknowledge this and often make this a central reason why they undertake it.

Any ESP course design must start with a needs analysis, which is the basic point for it (T13 Rat:11).

In this respect (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987: 54) say that if we had to state in practical terms the irreducible minimum of an ESP approach to course design, it would be needs analysis, since it is the awareness of a target (T19 Rat:7)

In order to improve their “formación en lenguas”, it will be important to design strategies that can lead [name of institution] to achieve that goal. This is why it will be basic to start by analyzing their needs. A needs analysis is crucial to any consideration of ESP course design. (T11 Rat:5)

Needs Analysis is also represented as a feature that can make a course better and successful. This reliance on Needs Analysis is expressed in different degrees. The examples below illustrate how the teacher-designers write about the good things they will be able to do after carrying out a Needs Analysis. While some see it as an important contributing factor to the success of their courses, other see it as the only way to obtain better results in teaching (as in the fourth example below).

On the other hand, if we act all the way around, researching about our student’s needs and wants and designing a syllabus using that information, we have the opportunity to be effective and fulfill their needs in a more accurate way. (T2 Syll:61)

If as a teacher, I am aware of my students needs, wants and lacks, I will be on the right path to guide them into language learning. (T14 Rat:15)

In sum, the needs analysis is an essential feature of an ESP course design, because it gives us the elements to determine what and how we need to teach the language in an appropriate way (T16: Rat:7)

[T]here is a great need and demand for improving the training of English teachers in order to get better results in English courses. However, it is important for this improvement, to take into account students needs and it is only possible if training and course design is based on needs analysis process. (T15 Rat:13)

The base of a good course design is the Needs analysis. (T14 CD:40)

The central concern of the teachers is to establish what students are learning

English for, what type of English learners think they would need or want to learn, that is what Hutchinson and Waters (1987) call Target Needs, or what Brindley (1989) names objectives needs. The other main focus of attention in the data collection instruments is learning needs or subjective needs following the two aforementioned scholars' respective naming of those variables that affect the learning process. Their idea is then to try to elicit and then meet the learners' true needs through a Needs Analysis.

Romantic View of Needs Analysis

Needs Analysis is often represented as a profound and comprehensive study of practically all variables affecting learning. As it is represented in some theses, it is effective, it provides “a clear idea” of the ‘real’ needs and it is necessary in order to design a “successful” course for the students.

Taking into account all the fundamental questions mentioned above a needs analysis and can be carried out to obtain the information which is going to give the designer a clear idea about the objectives to reach, bearing in mind the learner's real necessities, wants and lacks (T12 Rat:17)

A needs analysis is an effective means of identifying objectives and requirements for learning development.(T7 Rat:11)

The importance of needs analysis in classroom research is to give us a helpful way to know our students' needs, lacks and wants. This information will provide the necessary data to design a specific course for learners. However, the needs analysis should be taken as a “process-oriented” interpretation as proposed by Brindley (1984:63) (sic) in other words we need to explore every aspect that influences learning. All of this will be used by us to understand the learning process of students related to language learning. (T14 Rat:11)

In the examples above Needs Analysis and its consequences are evaluated positively. In the third excerpt Needs Analysis the information it provides is “the necessary” data, possibly meaning sufficient and appropriate, in order to design the course. Additionally, the use of “every aspect” suggests that the teacher exaggerates

either what a needs analysis can achieve, or what she and other teachers like she can or should accomplish if they undertake a Needs Analysis.

Interestingly, in the third passage the representation of Needs Analysis is not uniform. In the first sentence it is represented as a methodology, “a helpful way” to obtain some information. Later, in the third sentence, it is “an interpretation”. In the fourth sentence it is an exploration that teachers need to carry out. Throughout the theses, the teachers stick to standard definitions of Needs Analysis as found in the literature, providing relevant quotes from Hutchinson and Waters (1987), West (1994), Brindley, (1989), Robinson (1991). Sometimes, however, it is possible to come across non-standard interpretations.

In short, needs analysis is the awareness of target situation. (T5 Rat:9)

Needs Analysis and the Positivistic Paradigm

The optimistic assessment of Needs Analysis can be associated with a positivistic view of science conveyed across a number of theses.

The objectives of this study are to discover the student’s learning and target language needs by administering them questionnaires and interviews which can clearly show the tendency in these two important areas of the study. Moreover another important objective of this study is to collect enough data to be analyzed it (sic) in terms of target and learning needs to draw some pedagogical implications based on the results in terms of target and learning needs so that the teacher who is conducting the study can have a clear basis as regards to the kind of materials and activities he /she has to design in the instructional course. (T6 Intro:5)

The instruments mentioned above, will determine in a precise way the presence or the absence of the indicators and qualities searched (T5 Meth:6)

Needs Analysis is the process of finding out as much as possible before learning begins about the learners’ current and future language use.(Brindley,G,1989, p. 63). This is essential for the configuration of the course design, it allows researchers, teachers and/or anyone involved in the designing process to determine through questionnaires, interviews and other instruments all the issues which best suit the students in a given situation with the English language (T7 Rat:10)

In the first two examples the research methods “clearly show” or “determine in a precise way” what the researchers need to know. “Clearly” in the first excerpt, “precise” in the second, and “determine” and “all the issues” in the third one, convey high reliance or expectation derived from the type and scope of data the research instruments can yield. The instruments are supposed to uncover the truth which then becomes accessible to the researcher.

In the following sentences the researcher is represented as enabled to recognize or discover already existing course objectives and roles of learners, teachers, and materials or those that had existence of their own (rather than some theoretically created or constructed by the teacher putting together what he knows about learners, environment, theories, etc.).

[T]hanks to the findings, the roles of the learners, the teacher and the material were identified and then interconnected.(T5 CD Meth:75)

A needs analysis is an effective means of identifying objectives and requirements for learning development ((T7 Rat:11)

The representation of the teacher-designers as passive receivers of Needs Analysis results is not uncommon. A re-examination of some of an example provided before will illustrate the pattern.

[...] can be carried out to obtain the information which is going to give the designer a clear idea about the objectives to reach [...] (T12 Rat:17)

In this excerpt, the designer is represented as an oblique participant of the clause (“information is going to give the designer a clear idea”); more precisely, he is a *recipient*

of the benefits of the Needs Analysis, and almost a non-conscious entity who gets informed as to what is to be done (“the objectives to reach”). This language removes the intervention of the designer in weighing, pondering, and making decisions based on a limited set of data about what course of action to take. It seems to confer Needs Analysis an independent status outside the researcher. A comparison with another passage provided before will highlight a contrasting way of representing oneself.

However, the needs analysis should be taken as a “process-oriented” interpretation as proposed by Brindley (1984:63) in other words we need to explore every aspect that influences learning. All of this will be used by us to understand the learning process of students related to language learning (T14 Rat:11).

The writer of Thesis 14 portrays herself and other teachers as followers of the movement of ESP and Needs Analysis (“we need to explore every aspect that influences learning”) who will actively engage in the exploration process. She is represented as an active and conscious participant who engages in the mental process of processing the data obtained.

The scope of Needs Analysis in the view of some teachers covers a wide variety of types of information.

Obviously, there are some strong reasons for these students to have taken an English course but also there are some needs not so easily observables (sic) like future plans, motivational conditions, forward studies, learning abilities, etc. Therefore, a Needs Analysis must be carried out during the planning of this course where all of the learning and target needs will be presented. // This research work seeks the necessities, not only academic but humanistic ones too, of the English language for these students. This point granted the adequate performance of the course. In addition, with this analysis the communicative abilities students possess will be found, and which skills they need to develop according to their needs. (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). // Finally, with this work of needs analysis the internal and external factors that influence the learning situation will be pointed out and studied.(T7 Rat:9)

In my opinion, needs are demands from the outside world that teachers should help students to meet. In this course of action, students’ learning styles, motivations, cultural background and so on, should be taken into account. Needs analysis for learning is also one of the most difficult things to do well.(T7 Rat:11)

Given the great scope of the intended study in Thesis 7, it is not surprising that at one point the author acknowledges some difficulty. However, the difficulty lies in being able to do it well; this implies that there is a way to do it well, but the enterprise and the outcomes of a 'well-done' Needs Analysis are not problematized.

The claims of objectivity of the research enterprise is often established in the discussion of the research methods

Questionnaire. This technique was chosen because the analysis for the research had to be objective and the questions selected needed to have both kind of questions [...] (T1 Meth:19)

The writer of Thesis 9 lists a number of characteristics "the teacher needs to awaken, develop and improve in order to succeed in his /her role as a teacher and as a researcher". According to his discussion, eliminating opinions and feelings when doing research, is difficult but it is obligatory and feasible.

In addition, teachers must be characterized by a lot of OBJECTIVITY. From the research perspective, and especially while carrying out the needs analysis process, the researcher-teacher faces the difficult task of eliminating his feelings and opinions. The analysis must match with reality. In other words, it is important to bear in mind that this is the basis for any teaching strategy design. (T9 Conc:47 his emphasis)

As a rule, teachers evaluate their research effort and outcome positively and without reserve.

Finally, every institution is free and autonomous in creating its own programs. Therefore, this course has been built on the basis of serious research through which the students' learning and target needs have been established. After the analysis of these needs a suitable course has been the final outcome.(T7 CD:27)

I made the most suitable decisions to this course after having studied in detail each one of the aspects concerning this course (T15 Conc:67)

A minority of teachers, however, timidly take a slightly more cautious position

towards their findings and what they can do with them. This position is represented through modalization.

Through needs analysis teachers may have the opportunity to discover each learner's general necessities in the acquisition of a foreign language (T1 Rat:13)

It is clear that teachers are asked to reflect on shortcomings and challenges of their research process . Most of the difficulties expressed by the teachers regarding Needs Analysis refer to procedural issues.

According to Schutz and Derwing (1981), the crux of the outcome information or in other words the interpretation of the results from a Needs analysis process is the most difficult and challenge (sic) phase. Since the answers are extracted from questionnaires, interviews and some observations cannot be analyzed just numerical as typical survey. (T7 Res:22)

In my case I put them in two groups as target needs and learning needs and each category of them focused on some crucial aspects regarding to perceive the students necessities and their interest to participate in their learning processes. I found that it is not easy to design a questionnaire to apply to our students. In order to do it I had to work very hard with my colleagues and the orientation of my tutor. (T8 Meth:25)

It is quite difficult to clearly identify what was left out in the research process carried out by the author since it was a brand new experience on this subject. [...] I might venture to highlight that the lack of time to apply questionnaires more than once and redesign them as the main aspect left out. (T4:Conc:49)

In general, an analysis of the implementation and interpretation of the Needs Analysis by the teacher- authors of the theses shows strong commitment to the idea and justification of this type of study. However, they do not always represent themselves as the driving and decisive force behind their pedagogic decisions, they fail to see the role of their subjectivities at every step of their study, they cede the leading role in this enterprise to apparently objective data and the theory of Needs Analysis, and they project strong certainty regarding the “effectiveness” and correctness of their research, never even problematizing its validity and reliability. As Belcher (2006 citing Robinson, 1991,

Lawson, 1979) points out, needs analysis should not be conceived as a straightforward data collection exercise, in which researchers find ready-made clues for the design of their courses. The learners' current and future context should be seen as multi-layered in which each individual could be acting multiple roles. Needs analysis should be seen then as an ideologically influenced process of agreement and judgment rather than discovery

Hybrid Discourses and Positionings

The analysis presented so far has been sectioned to show some of the positions the writers take in their writing. However, not all of them are consistent with one entirely positivistic view of research that portrays the researcher as passive consumer of insightful and complete data obtained from the instruments they design. Actually, the discourses of the teachers about research express mingled views. They may reflect part of the struggles they have experienced, discourses they have been exposed to, the demands of the academic assignment, and their own emerging and inevitably contradictory theory about doing research. Here is an illustration of hybrid discourse:

It is important to know about what classroom research means, but it is also important to know how to conduct it in an effective way which can give answers to questions. Teachers need to be clear that there are no definite answers to questions, that there are many ways to answer or to solve a problem. Research in a classroom is not only to find out what's going on "in" the classroom but also to see what's going on "inside" the classroom setting. For example, inside student's minds, their constraints, problems, opinions, their work, interaction and response to assigned class material and activities and so on. Doing research makes understand that what happens in the classroom is basic to language learning because it determines what learning opportunities students get. (T11 Con:42)

In the first clause complex the author writes in absolute terms. Classroom research seems to have one meaning and knowledge-about is an unquestioned

requirement for teachers. Effectiveness, the second most important thing about research, is about obtaining answers to questions. Next, she apparently mitigates the possibility of obtaining absolute answers, but what she really concedes is that there are many ways to answer or to solve a problem. She does not really hold doubts about the knowledge that can be obtained through research. She even exaggerates the possibilities of research at one point (“seeing inside student’s minds”), but she also seems to imply that there is a complex network of relations going on that needs to be researched about learning. In the last clause complex, however, “it[what happens in the classroom] *determines* what learning opportunities students get (emphasis mine)” ignores that what happens outside the classroom is also important. The deterministic bottom-up perspective correlates with the acritical view of the macro conditions that shape many classroom decisions or the failure to consider how these factors shape the opportunities students get.

It is also interesting in the previous passage, that the writer uses the phrases “it is important to know what research means”, “teachers need to be clear that”. She does not include herself, but rather uses the impersonal form or the third form. At the same time, she may be saying to the reader (and evaluator) that she is aware of the importance of that knowledge for becoming a (good) teacher and researcher herself. This positioning will be addressed in more detail in Chapter 8.

Needs Analyses and Deception

In this part I will show, how, in spite of the idealistic non-controversial presentation of needs analysis by most of the authors of the theses, the data collection

instruments, the pedagogical implications deduced from the data, and the decisions taken for their courses are not that “clean” and straightforward.

Choices in the questionnaires

The limited choices entered in the needs analysis questionnaires reveal biases, ideologies or narrow conceptions held by teachers with regards possible uses of English. In the questions extracted from Thesis 6 below, question 1 does not consider English for traveling, making friends, having fun, etc. The choices coincide with the separation between English for Academic Purposes and English for Occupational Purposes as if real life uses were as easily separable (for example, making a presentation can be part of a job, or part of the studies at a university can include job training). In question 3 the researcher did not consider important communications that go through email, blogs, fax, etc. His question number 5 indicates a very important distinction between native and non-native speaker interlocutors, a radical way of classifying speakers of English, and implies that this distinction has consequences for the teaching of English. Finally, his question 6 may reflect his own interest for one particular culture.

1. You will need English for: a) studying at the university. b) work c) a combination of both.
3. Through what medium will you use the language? a) Telephone b) Face to face
5. Who do you think you will talk with most frequently? a) Native speakers b) Non-native speakers.
6. Would you like to know aspects of North American culture? a) Yes b) No (Thesis 6 Res:40-41)

The questionnaires also reflect the researcher’s own ideas or knowledge about teaching.

In order to improve your writing process in English you need

- a. Vocabulary b. Grammar rules c. Reading d. Writing (T1 Appendix)

This researcher does not consider strategies training, knowledge of genre conventions, analyzing models, or register features among others as part of the teaching of writing.

Gap analysis

The investigation of the gaps, or “deficiency analysis” (Allwright, 1982, p.24; Robinson, 1991, p.9 cited in West, 1994, p.10) is not a point of interest for most thesis writers. An exception was Thesis 1. She not only designed a questionnaire for her students with questions inquiring about target and learning needs (following Hutchinson and Water’s terminology) but she also analyzed students’ production and made informal observations. According to the results in the questionnaire “the majority (80%) think speaking is the most important linguistic skill to learn a language” (p.24). The analysis of students’ production and her observation, however, were focused on her students’ writing skills.

This is what she wrote about her observation:

The purpose of this informal observation was to find out what was wrong with the whole class in terms of writing. This time I tried with a statement that said: “In Colombia it is possible for women to have a successful life and a successful family”. The students had to write down their opinions, but the results were discouraging, most of them did not know how to express with words what they wanted to write. Due to this constraint, students had to ask me every single word they did not know.

After having gotten such bad results on the first statement that had been written on the board I insisted with another statement that said: It is better to stay single than to get married but there was no different result this time. They kept asking so many questions that I should have had

another peer who could have helped me do the observation. 90% of the students did not know how to say what they wanted to mean in English. (T1 Res:22)

Though the idea behind this analysis is to have an assessment of the specific language ability of the students, she reveals a deficit conceptualization of her students and almost exclusive attention to the lack of vocabulary as the only source of difficulty for the learners and the main component for the development of writing skills. She wanted to find out “what was wrong” instead of “what was going on”. She failed to realize that her students seemed to have been used to the strategy of asking her for needed words and that they usually got what they wanted with her. Her own statement “they kept asking so many questions that I should have had another peer who could have helped me” suggest that it would have been worthwhile observing herself managing the activity with her students and assessing her role in influencing the behaviors of her students. Her conclusions would have included an evaluation of her own performance and strategies rather than limiting them to vocabulary deficiency. Needless to say, the researcher also imposed her view on the needs analysis and the potential objective of the course to be designed when she chose to observe a writing activity only and to center her focus on vocabulary issues.

Deducing implications

The interpretation of the results and their translation into pedagogical implications is where the teachers’ biases and conceptions find concrete effects. Actually, the issue of how needs are defined in concrete situations has been a controversial issue in ESP (see

Belcher, 2006, p. 135 and ss). While the researcher has the intention of considering all parties involved in a teaching situation and the idea is to meet the learners' needs, she or he have to decide whose interests and points of view are going to prevail and which are going to be left out when there are different and even contradictory opinions regarding what a course should be about. In Thesis 15 the teacher-designer used a questionnaire with her middle school students. It contained 23 questions, three of which addressed target needs: Question 11 can be said to address possible gaps, and, according to the answers, only 6 (13%) students felt Reading was the ability they had developed most, and only 2 (4%) said it was Listening. In Question 12, 34 students (76%) said they understood 100% of the explanations of the teacher. The answers to Question 17 showed that 69% of the students had an interest in Speaking while none of them said Reading interested them. Given this picture, the teacher has to decide if she will please the majority of students who have an interest in developing Speaking abilities, if she will fill in the stated Listening gap or if she will ignore that particular set of data and rather believe student's claims that they understand her class explanations. When elaborating on the students' answers, this is what she concluded:

My students, in general, are doing very well in writing and speaking, but they need emphasis in reading, specially in reading comprehension which is also helpful for science and math which are taught in English and it also goes according to the school policy that wants to improve reading comprehension skills in order to get better results in the ICFES exam (a standardized exam all high school leavers must take in the country). (T15 Res:29)

Unfortunately, she did not include a question (or a test) about how much the learners understand written texts which could have provided a sense of the students' level of performance or their perceptions about it. In connection with learning needs,

specifically what activities the learners like the most, “students talk about internet activities, videos, cassettes, essays, word games, however, they prefer videos and internet” (p.28). None of these activities and materials, however, are included in the course or materials designed. It then becomes apparent that with regard to target needs, the teacher chose to follow the school’s policies, rather than her students’ wishes and perceptions, and concerning methodological issues, the teacher made decisions regarding her own judgment. The reader may wonder why these questions were included in the questionnaire at all. One way to see a point in the exercise of applying such a questionnaire, is for the teacher “to become aware” of what their students want or perceive of their abilities. This idea, however, was never taken up again, nor was there any reflection on the information that had to be left out or the contradictions in the stated perceptions of the participants. What I see is lack of awareness of the mythical side of Needs Analysis and the lack of support for statements like the following:

It can be said that this approach (N.A) to the teaching of English in a Colombian specific context is the most suitable for this study to be carried out because it will help us to meet the students needs. (T15 Rat:33)

Thesis 6 provides an example where the teacher went to the potential job place for his students majoring in a field related to tourism services. This is what he wrote:

I could notice that the [ex]students do not speak English with foreigners the most of the time. [...] the ex student did not have time to wait on any foreigner therefore she did not speak English in the time I observed her. On the contrary, when I observed three students at travel agency in [name of neighborhood], I could notice that they did wait on more Colombian people than American; therefore they spoke more in Spanish than English. [...] To close these comments I could say that some students don not speak English at work but Spanish and after some time they forget it completely because whenever they interact they do it with their colleagues and with Spanish speaking people (p.14)

This observation, however, does not prevent the author from establishing the following general objectives for the course: “Students should be able to talk ...with native speakers”, “Students should be able to speak with other people who are also involved in their context”, “Students should identify and select suitable strategies for speaking”. (p.29). As specific objectives, a number of more discrete skills are targeted, for example, asking for clarification, staying on topic, using descriptive words, communicating effectively without hesitation and errors which affect comprehension, demonstrating increasing fluency and control of vocabulary, showing no significant pattern of error when performing functions, etc.

His interpretation of the findings and their translation into course objectives are certainly influenced by the institution’s mission (“to prepare students who are able to solve the needs of the tourist field”(p.5) and vision (“to prepare students who are able to promote and sell tourist services”(p.5) but also by his own assumptions about the scope and content of the interactions of these professionals might be like, what language competence means, and what the teaching of these competences entails.

Making pedagogical choices

The following is an example of how pedagogical choices are made not based on the Needs Analysis but on the teacher’s judgment. The teacher author of Thesis 7 carried out his research with third semester students majoring in Chemistry. From his Needs Analysis it was deduced that reading is the ability students think they will need the most and the one that should be emphasized in their English classes. They all stated that they

consult English texts to do assignments, and most of them are interested in technical terms. Additionally, the institution is creating and expanding conditions conducive to learning and using the English language in the establishment.

However, what to teach even in this apparently specific context entailed a number of decisions. In a course designed for chemistry students, chemistry could be a general theme underlying the choice of readings in order to introduce and practice general reading strategies. Chemistry could also become the object of study with learners asked to actually learn from texts and do the tasks that students do in an English-speaking academic environment (writing reports, making academic presentations, use information to solve problems, take tests on content issues). When choosing the readings for a course, the designer can decide to incorporate topics that surpass the learners' knowledge of the subject, or topics that a lay person can deal with, both options with consequences for students and teacher.

The researcher of Thesis 7 designed a course with emphasis on reading comprehension and writing in which Chemistry is a theme and not a learning objective. As for the choice of texts he wrote in the introduction to the materials:

The material is designed in order to give the students the opportunity to access to it Technical readings taken from the same books they used to study their subjects during their second semester (2 months ago) are the main source of the booklet. With this strategy, we can guarantee that in this moment they already have an up-dated background of the topic proposed in the text.

Indeed, the designer opted for the perhaps more comfortable or less risky solution from the point of view of the instructor, that is, a lower-grade-level content (Weigle & Nelson, 2001 cited in Belcher, 2006) in which the readings do not provide new information to the readers, and attention is paid to strategies they can use to understand

texts (i.e recognizing cognates, skimming, scanning), and where the comprehension questions can be answered using students' prior knowledge.

The following is an outline of the activities of Module 1 of the materials (a booklet) designed for Thesis 7: (the wording of the tasks has been kept as in the original but the layout has been substantially modified)

Title: Organic Chemistry: The Compounds of Carbon

Tasks:

- Read the title of the text and explain with you own words what you know about the topic.
- From the following list of words, which ones are related to Organic Chemistry and which to the electric structure of atoms: protons, nylon, orbital, energy level, polyethylene, fibers, electrons.
- Find in the two readings the words that are almost written in the same way in both languages (English-Spanish).
- Identify what the words in italics refer to.
- From the text what is the definition of: Organic Chemistry, an Atom, Orbital, Nucleus
- Use your background knowledge for writing a report about Organic Chemistry. Then compare with the text. How much do you know about the topic?

Here is how the designer evaluates his own work in the Conclusion of his thesis.

Since it is a multiparagraph text, I have inserted my comments between paragraphs for ease of reference.

Firstly, a deep study from the target situation and the learning situation was carried out in order to find up the most remarkable aspects involve in the process. Results gathered from these two situations and also taking into account all the different groups of people involved into the learning-teaching process led me to consider reading comprehension, writing and increasing vocabulary as the main skills to be developed, of course, without leaving aside the possibilities of implementing oral communication through class exercises, since most of the students considered English important for further postgraduate studies [...] Consequently, the designing of a reading-writing course, focused on the analysis of technical texts regarded to their career and supported by a chemistry English booklet seems as the most suitable in this situation.

Though the positive assessment (underlined words) of the study, its scope and the

relevance of the course designed is somehow attenuated by the use of “seems” in the last clause (*italics mine*), it is evident that there is general confidence in the research process and its product. The characterization of the study as “deep” in thematic position, in the first clause can be read as a given the reader would agree upon without controversy. “All the different groups” involved in teaching learning process did not include actual researchers in the area of Chemistry and their use of English, or postgraduate students of Chemistry in English-speaking environments, to say nothing of an analysis of vocabulary, genres, conventions of the texts, assignments, or oral and written communications these people and the subjects teachers use in English, all of which would have indeed corresponded to ‘deep’ study of needs.

[...]English is a real deal for these students, since they have access to written material in this language. They are eager to be up to date, and they are being requested for doing work using English information. Considering this [...], and their good attitudes towards the target language, we may think that an English course directed towards Chemistry would be preferred by most of the students. Also, most of them wish to join a research group, since this could help them to find better job opportunities and to apply for scholarships to go abroad. Taking into account these beliefs, it is important to give learners the opportunity to interact using the target language in real situations.

A number of needs are singled out in the above paragraph: the need to obtain updated information, to do assignments using sources in English, to do research work, to apply for scholarships and studying abroad. The assumption of the designer is that having “an English course directed towards Chemistry” would be the right response (“preferred by most of the students”) even though none of the mentioned needs are addressed in the course designed. It is not clear, however, if the writer believes the course he designed provides “learners the opportunity to interact using the target language in real situations” because it is expressed as a desirable state.

A list of outcomes was done, where all the necessities, wants and likes are presented as the pillars of the [...] course. These previous opinions support all the theories chosen to explain the pattern of the course and also to set the guidelines of the activities, with regards to learning strategies, the group interaction supported by the cooperation among students and the immersion of grammar topics in a chemistry context; [...] Naturally, the language used and the activities proposed have been intended according to the level of the learners, to avoid frustration and guarantee an apparently successful of the process.

The conviction that Needs Analysis gives access to “all” types of needs surfaces again in this paragraph, where the writer, through a construction metaphor, conveys also the idea that his decisions regarding the design of the course find strong justification (“support”) in the needs identified. It is represented as a “bottom-up” process in which even the theoretical descriptions derive from the data. The final sentence, however, justifies the choice made by the designer regarding the readings, and the level of difficulty, which in turn is represented not as derived from own teaching conviction, but as a “natural” thing to do.

Finally, reading and writing courses based of specific areas of knowledge such in this case chemistry fulfill the needs of the learners of the Colombian society. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that this will not happen without some strong bases in general English, and these requirements mostly depend on high schools and government, since they must guarantee a high prepared student who have a basic grounding in general English before join university. (T7 Conc:42-43)

Two aspects are worthwhile underlining here. First, the absolute conviction of having fulfilled the needs of the target population and that, in general, the approach is the right one for the whole country. And second, a not uncommon disclaimer across theses, something along the following lines: ‘This course works but success does not entirely depend on me’. In this particular case, the writer expects teachers in high school to do a good job, and the government to provide support (other authors expect students to be motivated, responsible, etc.).

In sum, it can be said that this designer fails to evaluate the complexity of a needs analysis, the incomplete and partial nature of this enterprise, the impossibility of identifying and reaching all parties involved, the difficulty of predicting the future uses of English for their students, the enormous task faced by researchers who want to determine the types and features of language that need to be taught, the subjectivity of his own decisions, how these are shaped by his own biases, available resources, acquaintance with theories, others' and own concrete experiences. By failing to take a critical stance towards Needs Analysis and their own research teachers may be inadvertently curtailing learning opportunities and propitiating stagnation.

It is worthwhile observing here that the evaluation of his research is presented in the Conclusion, where most thesis writers allow themselves to use more personal language, convey personal information and, in general, change the register. By contrast, the language here is impersonal (though a discreet 'we' is used once), with long nominal phrases, long subjects, formal choice of words. This lack of stronger voice coincides with the presentation of an apparently objective and unproblematic process and outcome, which conveniently contributes to construing the new identity of teacher and researcher.

Absence of text analysis

A review of the research undertaken by the teachers also shows that it consists of asking what students want to learn, what they think they will need to know or be able to do with the language in the future, how and what they have learned so far, how they will want or prefer to learn, and the features of the context where learning will take place.

Their investigation stops there. There is almost nothing about research regarding the type of language students need to learn according to their stated desires. As Dudley-Evans (2001) writes, “This next stage is when the ESP teacher considers the (written or spoken) texts that the learner has to produce and/or understand, tries to identify the texts’ key features and devises teaching material that will enable learners to use the texts effectively”. (p134) It is then assumed that teachers know the language features of the genres or registers their students will need to use. For example: The author of Thesis 6 designed a course for workers of the tourism industry with the goal of developing speaking skills. He designed the following conversation models:

Asking about airplane traveling information.

Monica is at the travel agency finding out about her flight departure to the States. There she has to attend an international tourist convention.

Monica: Good morning, Miss.
 Clerk: Good morning, Miss.
 Monica: How can I help you?
 Monica: I would like to know my flight departure.
 Clerk: Oh, right.
 Clerk: Your flight will take off on Monday at 7:00 a.m.
 Monica: Thank you very much
 Clerk: You’re welcome

Speaking about the hotel facilities

This is Debora giving information about a hotel facility to a client

Debora: Hello, hello xxxx travel agency how can I help you?
 Client: Do you know a hotel with nice and good facilities:
 Debora: Yes I do
 Client: Which hotel is that?
 Debora: xxxxxx
 Client: Are there good and nice facilities there?
 Debora: Yes there are
 Client: Ok I will book a room there for three days.

These conversations are evidently made up. Not only do they lack a number of conversational features but they are simply not believable or possible in real life. The choices of the models of language to present to the students are based on the teachers’

intuitions and knowledge, and there is no reflection or comment on the need to study the specificities of the language of tourism services, or at least, the features of oral interaction. The author of these materials started the section titled “The purpose of the materials” in his booklet like this: “Speaking about materials in language teaching is something which is strictly concerned with activities. These are the body of the materials [...]” (T6 Mat:4).

One explanation for this lack of interest in the investigation of the linguistic features of specific (oral and written) texts may be Hutchinson and Waters’ (1987) criticism of Munby’s (1978) Communication Needs Processor (CNP) (cited in Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p.54), which allowed researchers to produce a list of the linguistic features of the target situation. In general, Hutchinson and Waters take a critical stance towards language-centered approaches, which they categorize as insufficient. They favor a so-called “learning-centred approach”, which is meant to consider the methodology and the activities through which language is going to be learnt, rather than the language features, as central in deciding the ESP syllabus. They write: “It is unnecessary to analyze language features in detail before the materials are started. A general syllabus outlining the topic areas and the communicative tasks of the target situation is all that is required at the beginning” (p.92)

What can be seen is a correlation between the above discourse and the teacher-designers’ lack of interest in and research on the linguistic tasks, features, conventions and expectations of the discourses learners will encounter or interact with in the target situations, one of the significant contributions of ESP to applied linguistic research,

according to Dudley-Evans (2001).

In this chapter I have shown how the English for Specific Approach is represented as effective and superior to the teaching of English for General Purpose and almost as a panacea for their problems. Though the writers' discourses reveal gains in theoretical awareness of factors influencing learning, by discursively endorsing ESP, the designers ignore the macro circumstances that influence learning outcomes. By deciding that learners have specific needs, they may be contradicting the wealth of opportunities that often accompanies the discourses of globalization and Free Trade Agreement. When engaged in the task of identifying specific purposes for their courses through doing an analysis of the learners' needs, the writers express firm conviction in the objectivity, completeness and depth not only of their own work, but of classroom research in general. The analysis suggests that the adoption of this positivistic and also acritical position towards research may be connected to the fact that the writers are initiating themselves as researchers, but, at the same time, writing a thesis requires them to use the linguistic features and stances of accomplished scholars.

CHAPTER 5: THE APPROACH TO EDUCATION: HOPE AND DECEPTION

The section titled “Approach to Education” entails the first and most overarching decision of the Course Design in the theses. It is a segment which should convey a crucial theoretical and philosophical decision about the course: the view of the purpose of education embedded in the course; the prospect or expectation the teachers imagine for the students’ future, which the teacher-designers are contributing to make come true. The requirement that designers include this part in their work suggests a preoccupation of the people behind the program to promote some reflections on issues of social and moral responsibility.

The discourses which the designers use in complying with the task of describing the Approach to Education can have several functions.

- They can convey a pose to comply with the task.
- They can construct an innocuous decision regarding the approach to education.
- They can be an opportunity to criticize and dream with borrowed discourses.
- They can become a channel for ideological decisions.
- They can be a means to convey non-conformity with the role of English
- They can reinforce the teachers’ own conservative conceptions.
- They can justify and ensure the maintenance of the status quo.

Total lack of authorship was evident in Thesis 3, through what is usually known as plagiarism. It became clear, because a number of unusual terms in the text prompted a quick Google search, which led to a site where a teacher had uploaded her Education Portfolio on the web. This site included an identical Approach to Education. Possible explanations of this behavior include:

1. An 'easy' approach to cope with the task (prior learning experience).
2. The teacher liked the ideas in the original, or most of them, so he decided he could make the text his.
3. A task too difficult to do on his own.

Whether it is any of these or some other reason, the fact that a thesis is a conventionalized written product which implies a considerable distance between the production and the reception and does not require loyalty to the written word, undoubtedly provides the setting conditions for this type of behavior.

An Innocuous Approach

An innocent approach to the task of defining the approach to education is found in Thesis 20. It entails a brief description of liberal education, holistic education and humanism. Humanism is the chosen approach and the one with comparatively longer discussion. The following are the relevant traits in his account:

Humanism. Humanism is a school of thought that believes human beings are different from other species and possess capacities not found in animals (Edwards, 1989). Humanists, therefore, give primacy to the study of human needs and interests. A central assumption is that human beings behave out of intentionality and values (Kurtz, 2000). [...]Humanists also believe that it is necessary to study the person as a whole, especially as an individual grows and develops over the lifespan. The study of the self, motivation, and goal-setting are also areas of special interest.

According to Huitt's (1995) systems model of human behavior, the primary emphasis of humanistic education is on the regulatory system and the affective/emotional system. [...] the regulatory system acts as a filter for connecting the environment and internal thoughts to other thoughts or feelings as well as connecting knowledge and feelings to action. The affective/emotional system colors, embellishes, diminishes or otherwise modifies information acquired through the regulatory system or sent from the cognitive system to action. In our present environment of constant change and uncertainty, the development of the knowledge, attitudes, and skills discussed in these systems is especially important.

Among all the learning approaches I have decided to adopt the Humanism because this approach considers the human being as a person, taking into consideration his abilities, needs, interests and values.

His account of the humanistic approach is based on a model of human behavior based on psychological processes explained in abstract metaphorical language (“the regulatory system acts as a filter for connecting”, it “connects knowledge and feelings to action”, “the affective/emotional system colors, embellishes”). “Huitt 1995” was not found in the list of references of this thesis, even though this list is one of the most complete among the works reviewed. This suggests that it is a secondary source. The approach to education established here is concerned with explaining the human being who is being educated. The wording of his last statement (“among all the learning approaches I have decided to...”) suggests a contingent decision arising out of the limited existing options available and the task on hand rather than a more permanent conviction.

A similar academically-oriented approach to coping with this section can be found in Thesis 13. After a justification of the need for an approach to education:

The success of any society depends on, to some extent, the level of education of its members. That's why, the view of education determines the future performance of the learners in society which guarantees the best way of promoting society progress (T13 Ap Ed:26)

The author reproduces Askew and Carnell's (1998) typology of models in a graph taken from their book, and then writes:

The concept of a social-client view of education (Asken and Carnell, 1998) matches with my course design because its goals are derived from “perceived needs and ability levels” of the learners. The idea is to develop “individual potential” (T13 Ap Ed:27).

As evident from how he worded his decision, it is not about “the best way of promoting society progress”, but about pleasing individual needs and finding the right shoe for each foot.

Criticizing and Dreaming with Borrowed Discourses.

This is the particular case of Thesis 8. Unlike the writer of Thesis 3, this teacher declares his sources and constructs an acceptable though not original discourse on education issues. His critique of the transmission-based education model and of the frequent change in policies is part of the usual complaints about education not only in Colombia but in many regions of the world.

Although, the educational model of Colombia has experienced some changes during the last two decades, it is still having the bases of the functional model of education in most secondary schools. The model is based on the belief that the teacher is an expert in a particular field of knowledge. Teachers give information by using didactic pedagogic strategies-lectures, talks by other ‘experts’; and the students is seen as a passive recipient of knowledge (Asken and Carnell, 1998).

On the other hand, each government has implemented its own model of education and therefore there is not a constant policy on education that can allow us to achieve the planned objectives for them in a period of time. Por esa misma razón, proviene sobre el hecho de que demasiadas reformas en serie anulan el objetivo perseguido, ya que no dan al sistema el tiempo necesario para impregnarse del nuevo espíritu y lograr que todos los agentes de la reforma estén en condiciones de participar en ella (Delors, 1996).

We need, then to move ourselves into a revolutionary system of education that can let us perceive our real situations and being aware of the transformation of our society, regarding the local and the international problematic of the world. Todo convida entonces a revalorizar los aspectos éticos y culturales de la educación y para ello dar a cada uno los medios de comprender al mundo en su curso caótico hacia una cierta unidad (Delors, 1996).[Everything invites us to revalue ethical and cultural aspects of education thus giving each individual the means to understand to world in its chaotic streaming towards a certain unity]

In this way, the education must be understood as the transformatory power of the formation

process of the individual and involve the commitment of all the members of the society. La educación tiene la misión de permitir a todos sin excepción hacer fructificar todos sus talentos y todas sus capacidades de creación, lo que implica que cada uno pueda responsabilizarse de sí mismo y realizar su proyecto personal (Delors, 1996). (T8 Ap Ed:39)

His vision of the education of the future includes word combinations such as “revolutionary system”, “transformation of our society”, “transformatory power”. These words, likely to be a translation from chosen phrases in the one original, depict “us” as mere spectators of outside transformations (“we move into a revolutionary system” rather than “we revolutionize the system”, and “being aware of the transformation of our society” rather than “we transform our society”). The quotes in Spanish, which express ambitious goals like understanding the worlds’ chaotic march and making everybody implement their own projects, break the continuity of the argument. They represent a sudden change in code, which suggests certain discomfort with the use of these discourses in English. A translation of the Spanish quotes into English would have suggested a bit of extra effort invested and possibly certain reflection while reconstructing the meaning from the original. This section does not include an attempt at describing the writer’s own approach in the context and he does not commit to a particular model with a recognized label. In spite of his lack of more evident appropriation of the discourses about education, the selection of issues can be said to convey some preoccupation with matters that transcend the boundaries of the classroom or the English course.

The author of Thesis 19, resorting to various sources, Delors (1996), the current Curriculum Guidelines in Colombia, Morin (2001) and the discourse of one of the instructors of the program, constructs a more cohesive portrait of his mission as educator

in which he includes issues like access to resources, transformation of society, contextualized projects of life. It is an impersonal discourse which does not convey directly any personal commitment or criticism but, which, through the use of modality (e.g. ‘it is necessary’, ‘must be seen’, ‘must be promoted’) conveys discursive adherence to some of the ideas in the sources and sometimes even extreme positions (whole education as “a world necessity” and “in all professions”). This is his final paragraph in the Approach to Education section in Thesis 19:

To permit education to be successful in our Colombian context, it is necessary to invest in the formation of our human resources and give them the possibility to have access to important learning materials and modern technological devices for everyone, but especially for educators who have the mission of transforming societies. A whole education must be seen as a world necessity. It must be promoted in all professions, especially in educational contexts, the formation of competent citizens that are able to participate in a new project of life (Lineamientos Curriculares (1999). Therefore, the approach to education to be chosen is the formation of competent citizens to be able to know the citizen values and apply them to create a project of life in their context.

The two contexts (Theses 8 and 19) are similar in that both deal with secondary school students and the target goal is to develop reading skills and reading strategies. They have differences too: Thesis 8 is a design for 10th grade students of mixed social classes, while Thesis 19 is for 7th grade students in a public school located in a poor neighborhood. In the context of Thesis 8 the idea is to attract students into the reading activity via the inclusion in the materials of texts about foreign movie stars, singers or famous football players. The materials include a number of oral activities too. In the context of Thesis 19 the goal is to prepare students for the state examination which give access to higher education. The materials are made up of entries taken from the World Encyclopedia and they include topics like tropical fruits, animals, diseases, and nature. The stated rationale for the choice of topics is that these should be of general interest to

“foster the students’ self motivation for learning” (p.18), and include a “variety of attractive activities which stimulate more practice at home and that relate to their interests” (p.18). One could argue that students in the first context are closer to the state exam because they will finish high school in less than two years and would need to obtain good scores to have access to universities. Instead they are entertained with texts taken from websites dealing with reviews and news related to the show business and the lives of famous people. In the second context (that of Thesis 19), while the texts included in the materials belong to a genre which the students might encounter in future academic contexts, they are almost all taken from one single encyclopedia which offers information of generic nature, and not necessarily related to the students’ immediate interests. It is interesting to see how each of the contexts denies something that the other offers. One teacher does not question the globalized pop culture the youth is increasingly immersed in, the other does not question the impossibility of getting a wider choice of reading materials, “modern technological devices for everybody”, and does not transcend the narrow focus of reading comprehension exercises.

It can then be said that this section provides some room for teachers to engage in discussions beyond methodologies, materials and evaluations, and engage in discourses of possibilities, hopes and expectations which they do not know how- or are not able to help to shape.

A Channel for Ideological Decisions

For coping with this task the teacher-designers count on the reading by Askew

and Carnell (1998, chapter 6 “Developing Educational Frameworks), which is made available to all of them in one of the modules of the program. In consequence, a number of writers resort to these authors’ classification of approaches to education into functionalist, client-centered, liberatory, and social justice models (but not all the teachers used this guide to describe their view of education). And yet the tendency is to choose one model or approach to define the aims of education. The impression is that, given the menu of models, defining a perspective on education is about selecting one from it. The following is an example from a thesis where other labels for approaches of education were considered in the ‘menu’.

Let us begin with the presentation of the model of education whose value shall enable the author to locate his practice within a theoretical framework. Models or approaches to education underpin the idea of what we are educating people for. Contrasting models are outlined below:

Socialization / Autonomy

Banking / Construction of knowledge

Information / Formation

Professional training / Human development

Epistemological / Hermeneutic

As a result, approaches have been proposed based on their practical application and the way they serve specific purposes. The rationale for this is that it is necessary for us “to take the lead by creating educational environments which are responsive to the diverse needs of the individuals within them”. (Moss, 1997). As a consequence, the author shall propose a construction of knowledge course design for TEFL at [name of institution].

This way of dealing with the task (opting for *one* of the terms in *one* of the oppositions), whether self-imposed or developed out of necessity (lack of time for in-depth discussion, not a requirement by the tutor), clearly cues the dismissal of alternative aspects of education which the other dichotomies try to underline. The opposing terms

themselves make the choices look black or white or mutually exclusive.

The major tendency across the theses is for the designers to single out and adopt the client-centered approach. This is conceived of as the most adequate perspective of education in theses 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15. This can partly be explained in connection with the individualistic bias favored in the program and associated with the psychological and cognitive perspectives dominating in the learning theories that circulate in the program and which for many of the teachers mean innovation and, consequently, better practice (Chapters 6 and 7 deal with this aspect of the program). The following quotes are part of the discourse of the Client-centered approach as presented by Askew and Carnell (1988):

It is based on the egalitarian ideals of encouraging each child to achieve their maximum potential[...]

The Client-centred model promotes the learning needs of individual children. The teacher provides the experiences that the individual child needs. It attempts to relate knowledge to the young person's everyday life and experiences, and for knowledge to be more meaningful and relevant. It operates on the assumption that young people are rational decision-makers, can be self-directed and learn autonomously. [...]

In this model it is still accepted that young people have different intelligence levels and different talents, interests and skills. [...] Education in this model is based on the principle of 'drawing out', rather than 'putting in'. (p.88)

In general writers represent themselves as comfortable users of the terminology, unconditional

approach described by Askew and Carnell (1998, p.94): View of learner: active negotiator and problem solver; view of relationship between learners: individual achievement is measured in terms of self-development; role of learner: taking responsibility for developing potential; role of teacher: facilitator of relevant experiences. In the section entitled “Approach to Education” she returns to the topic of client-centred approach and gives more details about what it means.

(a) Theoretical bases of client-centred affirm that students learn best not only by receiving knowledge but also by interpreting it and learning through discovery while setting the pace of their own learning. (b) In consequence, with this approach the teachers will coach and mentor students to facilitate their learning, designing experiences through which students acquire new knowledge, modify their attitudes for good, are more responsible and develop new skills.

(c) Furthermore, a client-centred approach implies a process to empowering people to find solutions to their needs by putting them in charge of defining the direction for their goals in life. (d) This is the reason why this approach is a good way of improvement for the target learners. (e) They need orientation and help to figure out where they want to go and how best to get there. (f) This ultimately will lead them to greater inclusion as valued members of both community and society. (T5 Ap Ed:60)

(g) Granted, client-centred works best when the learners are relatively mature and possess significant related knowledge or where there is no particular sequencing of the material to be learned; (h) fortunately, this is the case of my students [...]. (i) They especially need to build some basis to improve their abilities for negotiating, delegating and other identifiable business skills.

The section, in general, is conceived of as a statement of an idealized future and this excerpt is a good example thereof. This passage presents the writer increasingly committed to the approach and its positive effects. This is constructed in the discourse when (a), an attributed statement (“theoretical bases... affirm that...”), is followed by a sentence (b) which is most likely an *averral* -a statement for which the writer is responsible -but not clearly declared as such. Thus, that students “will modify their attitudes for good, are more responsible and develop new skills” in (b), seems inherent

and automatic outcome of the approach rather than the writer's opinion or interpretation of what may happen. The same effect is achieved with the use of modality in (b) ("teachers will coach and mentor students"), which adds personal commitment or certainty to the validity of the role of the teacher in such client-centered enterprise. In the second paragraph, a new facet of the approach (Furthermore, [...] putting them in charge) in (c) is followed by a new result in (d): ("a good way of improvement"), which this time includes positive evaluation without an overt basis.

At this point the writer has voice and is using averrals which express certainty regarding what students will need and achieve. What comes next, however, seems to contradict the previous features of the client-centered approach. In (c) learners would be put in charge of defining the direction for their goals in life, but in (e) they "need orientation and help to figure out where they want to go and how best to get there". This sentence seems disconnected and artificially added in the argument though, because it does not have further elaboration. Additionally, the next sentence (f) refers back to the positive outcomes of the approach – achieving greater inclusion and becoming valued members.

The positive and idealized picture of the client-centered approach is then constructed as coming mainly from the students themselves, from the fact that they are mature and possess significant knowledge, and from the trust in what they are able to do in a non-directive environment.

It must be said that this context is a private University, and the program for which the English course is going to be designed is taught in a campus with modern facilities

located in a middle-class neighborhood. Most of the students are majoring in Finances and International Business or Business Administration and they come from private bilingual schools or schools with emphasis in English. That is, these are not likely to be students of low-income families. The vision of the university is “[to] form a new leading class generated by the students’ own enterprising orientation, combined with consolidating alliances with the production sector in a mutual learning relationship, contributing to the competitive advantages within the businesses” (Rat:11). In this context, it is not difficult to put students in charge of defining their own goals, solving their problems and setting the pace of their own learning. The outcomes of such education can certainly be put in the positive terms read in the Approach to Education above because there are actually a number of circumstances which are conducive to the goal of framing the new leading class.

Something similar can be said about Thesis 15, in which the client-centered approach is endorsed.

This model of education [client-centered model] promotes the learning needs of individual children. The teacher provides the experiences that the individual child needs. The key features include discovery learning, participatory learning, open-ended questioning and discussion. It attempts to relate knowledge to the young persons every day life and experiences, and for knowledge to be more meaningful and relevant.(T15 Ap Ed:47)

The students who attend the school where this writer teaches live in middle-class neighborhoods. The institution “is considered one of the best in [name of the town] and the administration department is trying to invest more money not only in infrastructure but also in teaching training and materials in order to improve academic level and staff development” (T15 Rat:6). For this purposes it has contracted the services of the British

Council to help improve their English curriculum, which includes Math and Science in English. Actually, the English course the teacher designs is for the science classes in 7th grade. In such a context, the students (and their parents) must indeed be treated as clients, whose needs and high expectations must be satisfied. The school has embraced the project of “elite bilingualism” (de Mejía, 2002) and its aim is to become the best bilingual school in town. An English course in science is meant to ensure that students can meet new and higher destinations. But this approach does not always work in the best interest of the students.

The choice of the “client –centered approach” is also defined because of its affinity with the tenets of ESP and the learner-centered approach. This influence can be clearly read in Thesis 6.

The reasons I selected this model of education [client-centered] as the most appropriate for my course design are because its major goal is to promote the learners’ needs of individual people (Askew, S and Carnell, E, 1998: page 88). That is to say, it is the same goal as the ESP course in the teaching of English I am presently teaching. As in this ESP it is needed to design a course which is the result of need analysis that help the students develop their oral competences so that when they face their target job situation they can show a good command of the target language. I would now like to parallel this model of education with the components of my course design with the purpose of making clear enough about the election of this model of education as the most appropriate for my course design.(T6: Ap Ed:24)

After this paragraph the designer presents a 2in which he makes the announced parallel between his model of education and the components of his course design. In it he shows that both in the client-centered approach and in his course design, “the curriculum base is developed by the teacher” and “it is based on the learners needs analysis”. Additionally, in the client-centered approach the goal is “to achieve the learners’ maximum potential” and in his course the goal is “to develop their skills/skill at their most”. Interestingly, he also sees a similarity in the teacher’s role in that in both the

teacher is given a rather directive role: “He transmits knowledge” in the client-centered model, and his role as a teacher is “to determine the content”, “establishes interactional patterns”, and “foster communication”. Here is the relevant part of his parallel:

Table 2: Parallel between a Client-Centered model of education and the course design in Thesis 6

CLIENT-CENTRED MODEL OF EDUCATION	MY COURSE DESIGN
<p>CURRICULUM BASE It is developed by the teacher It is based on the learners needs analysis</p>	<p>CURRICULUM BASE It is also developed by the teacher It is also based on the learners needs</p>
<p>GOAL To achieve the learners maximum potential</p>	<p>GOAL To develop their skills/skill at heir most</p>
<p>VIEW OF LEARNING Based on psychological theories of child development</p>	<p>VIEW OF LEARNING Methods and approaches to language teaching are based on psychological theories of language learning and teaching see(Richards and Rodgers:1986)</p>
<p>TEACHER'S ROLE He transmits knowledge He is intended to develop the learners skill</p>	<p>TEACHER'S ROLE To determine the content To establish interactional pattern To foster communication</p>

In a way, it seems that he makes the model fit his own interpretation of what the role of the teacher should be in a class. Actually, this controlling role was made explicit in two other places in his thesis.

Develop and strengthen the students oral competences by assigning the students interaction activities with native and non-native speakers of the target language (T6 Ped Imp:16)

The teacher's role within this ESP course will not only be the one of being responsible for determining the content what will be taught but also the one of establishing interactional patterns that develop learning language tasks (LLT) between teachers and learners which foster communication in the language classroom. (T6 CD: 29)

The construction of a course design as one responding to a client-centered model of education is based on the supposition that the Needs Analysis allows one to identify the “individual needs” of the students and that the course being designed really can maximize the learners’ potentialities. And yet, in the Needs Analysis chapter it was established that questionnaires in the theses impose a restricted number of choices and biases on the answers of the students and that the decisions for the courses implicate the teacher-researcher’s having to enforce her or his points of view. It is in the name of this client-centered approach, and the assumption that English courses should be ESP courses that the course designed for the students in the context of the writer of Thesis 6 is one of the most constraining among the works reviewed. Students in this course are presented and asked to imitate a number of invented dialogues which can take place in the specific field of offering services to clients at airports, hotels and restaurants (see Appendix N: Sample of materials in thesis 6). In his work the teacher-designer limits the needs of the students to the ones the institution cares for – preparation of professionals in the area of tourism who can offer services to the clients. In fact, his view is one of the most strongly functionalist (following Askew and Carnell, 1998) in the theses reviewed: the capacity of the learners is determined by the social role, the need for a job is what influences learning; the teacher is the expert who provided the models of language students need to learn, and the learners have to take the responsibilities assigned within the confines of the roles allocated to them. Naming his model of education “client-centered” may improve the face validity and the coherence of the course designed with the learner-centered discourses that circulate in the program. It is not a coincidence that the designer of the

course of Thesis 6 is one that expresses strong conviction of the benefits of an ESP approach.

He stated in a written interview:

I have to tell you that the major issues are making the difference between the teaching of English for general purposes and the teaching of English for specific purposes and the effort I have to do to make the principals of the institutions and programs coordinator understand that and of course these have influenced my practice since I have to be totally convinced that my efforts in trying to make the difference between these two issues are good for the academic settings I work for.

This discourse not only strongly construes ESP as a different and better approach in his particular context but it also expresses his strong commitment to the truth of his statement (“the effort I have to do to make ... understand that”, “I have to be totally convinced that my efforts...are good for...”). He does not hold any suspicion regarding the appropriateness of his construct and its implications. And he is willing to help spread the idea of ESP courses. After all, there is a solid theory backing him up.

Non-Conformity with the Role of English

This position contrasts with the one in Thesis 7. This author identifies the functionalist approach as the one followed in his institution and the one his students adhere to, then evaluates it, and recognizes its inevitability in the context. He chooses to express disagreement with this model and hopes for something else, including “social change”, but almost as an underground and subversive personal decision.

This course has been designed keeping in mind the reasons expressed in the Needs Analysis process by the target population of Chemistry program of [name of institution], which claims teachers to give a Functionalistic education in the language area to students, where the primary goal is to teach specific skills and knowledge, and help students develop their abilities and attitudes with the target language through social interaction where they share ideas and infor

The Functionalistic approach is mechanistic, focusing on the cognitive dimension of the education. Teaching and knowledge acquisition is paramount. The predominant view of the curriculum is a body of knowledge. This model is based on the belief that the teacher is an expert in a particular field of knowledge, and they teach using didactic pedagogic strategies; and the students, the main element of the class, they are seen as passive recipients of knowledge. (Askew and Carnell, 1998).

The view of most of the students from the target population, it is that they go to the university; they study and prepare themselves as much as they can and they will be ready for applying and getting a good job. This idea perfectly suits the theory of the functionalistic method, where young people are prepared for the world of work. On the other hand, they participate from research groups, where the critic and autonomy is needed as producers of knowledge. So, in my opinion, they perceive the English language as a tool that they just will use in some cases and it will give them more opportunities for facing tasks in their professional live.

[...] this will be a personal goal for me; it will be important that English teachers from [name of the institution] place the English language in the position it deserves, and show to university population that it is more than a tool for extracting information from a text or writing a summary for a magazine, it gives them the opportunity to be critic and develop commitment with the social change.

Finally, every institution is free and autonomous in creating its own programs. Therefore, this course has been built on the basis of serious research through which the students' learning and target needs have been established. After the analysis of these needs a suitable course has been the final outcome.

This course has been designed to provide the students with valuable set of strategies to approach English texts related to their careers. Therefore, they will have the opportunity to interact with different sources about certain Chemistry topics.

The context of this teacher is a public university with limited resources for language education. Unfortunately, his course is anything but subversive. His last sentence summarizes what his course is about. (See also Needs Analysis chapter on the course and materials of Thesis 7). He designs a reading course around texts in the field of Chemistry with topics students are already familiar with. That is, the students in his course are not meant to widen their knowledge or expand their horizons regarding Chemistry. Instead, they are asked to focus of the language and reading strategies.

Reinforcing Conservative Conceptions.

While in the former example, the teacher did not want to renounce a more transformative approach, the writer of Thesis 9 chose a client-centered model with a social concern, but he emphatically rejected a liberatory model of education.

We consider education must reach two kinds of objectives: A social objective and an individual one.

According to this, education must develop individual's potentiality, encouraging his critical thinking, the analysis of his surroundings and knowledge creation. We totally disagree with the concept of a learner as a simple bank of information. That is why the teacher becomes a guide in the process the student follows to know himself. But, at the same time, we want to educate an individual with social sensitivity who understands the rules that govern his/her community.

The objective consists of developing the individual potentiality but not to make a social critic of him/her. The aim is to make the student understand, support and improve the social dynamics; to make the student, once a professional, find his/her place in the society to become a useful element for development.

For this reason, we are placed under the influence of two different forces which determine our approach to education: the intrinsic knowledge, which aims at knowledge production by the individual and the social regulation, which wants the student to understand his surroundings and to look for his place in it.

We are of course talking about a client-centered approach, where we are looking for a maximal development of each individual's potentiality, but we focus it and we assign values to it in order to build up a society.

There are different perspectives against this approach due to the lack of coherence between the experiences lived inside the classroom and those ones the student will face in his/her daily life. We answer to these comments that every individual deserves, at least once, the chance to know a positive way of perceiving life. This atmosphere experienced in the classroom, will be a permanent reference regarding the different manifestations of inequality and lack of values he will see in his/her society.(T9 Ap Ed:28)

The teaching context of this designer is again a leading private university in the region with students majoring in International Business who have had strong emphasis in English during their high school. It is then understandable that the teacher does not feel he needs "to make a social critic of him/her", and just needs to "find his/her place in the society to become a useful element for development". However, it also seems that it is

his own personal convictions, perhaps reinforced in the context of a privileged institution, that lead him to take this conservative position.

We do not want to make the fashionable and easy way which would suppose the selection of a liberatory model of education because we consider as very serious the fact of neglecting the responsibility teacher has when it is time to show a parameter, a reference. A positive vision of the society in which there will be a manner of succeeding. Personally, I do not agree with the fact of convincing students of the idea that changes become a reality where there are criticism and opposition. I consider it is possible to evolve by discovering the points we have in common, our roles in society and by encouraging cooperation and tolerance.(T9 Ap Ed:31)

It is interesting that he should call the liberatory model “fashionable and easy”.

He may be referring to discourses of freedom and change which are endorsed lightly by many and which may have been fashionable some years ago in certain contexts but with little consequence. At the same time, he suggests a rather conservative role as a teacher who has to be “serious” in order “to show parameter, a reference” and “a positive vision of the society”. He portrays himself as a defender of the established order, who has to contribute to the education of individuals “who understand the rules” and abide to “social regulation”.

None of the teachers discussed chooses either the liberatory or the social-justice models described by Askew and Carnell (1998). That is, they are not concerned with apparently external issues. Their view of their mission is concerned with students as individuals and the institutions and their interests. It is not their function, or at least, part of their written task, to deal with broader societal problems.

Though the Approach to Education section of the thesis is a theoretical part, which can be regarded as one more formal requirement, the choice of approach in most cases has a high correlation with the view implicit in the course and materials designed.

The monographs are “based on perceived needs and ability level of the individual” (Askew and Carnell, 1998) and have an implied confidence in developing the individual cognitive qualities of the learners. Part of this enterprise are the discourses of multiple intelligences, cognitive strategies, autonomy, cognitive approach, etc.

The Client-Centered Approach and Status Quo.

Here I will compare how English is represented as working for the students in different contexts. The following is a fragment from the Approach to Education in Thesis 10, a middle-class institution for pre-school education.

A model that enables children to think and become aware of their own abilities and intellectual curiosity to prove that “it is also misleading to think that children will only learn simple language, such as colors and numbers, nursery rhymes and songs, and talking about themselves of course if that is all they are taught, that will be all that they can learn. But children can always do more than we think they can; they have huge learning potential and the foreign language classroom may do them a great disservice if we do not exploit that potential...”(Cameron, 2001). This is the client centred approach.

This approach “ is based on the egalitarian ideals of encouraging each child to achieve their maximum potential”...” Education in this model is based on the principle of “drawing out’ rather than ‘putting in’. (Askew and Carnell, 1998:88) (T10 Ap Ed:52)

The following rationale for English is presented in Thesis 10

(a) Likewise, the school’s mission and vision name the importance of English for its success, now and in the future [...] (b) The school knows what it wants and where it goes: (c) It hired new bilingual teachers, changed schedules, methodology. (d) It invested in foreign material and the teachers were trained in English Immersion Program by an expert consultant. ...

(e) A school in a global society should decide what is the most relevant skill to be developed and what is the preparation kids need to meet life’s challenges. (f) It means to face problems, have values: accept and respect others, honesty, be able to work cooperatively and have knowledge of the English language, (g) that’s [what] business enterprises are looking for... (T10 Intro:8)

(h) As mentioned above, the education of the new era is mainly oriented towards the

identification on what students need to be prepared for the world where the English language domains communications, studies, books and business, (i) therefore it is indispensable start to encourage this knowledge from the beginning with children [...]

(j) Colombia is interconnected with a world by sound bits which function in an 80% is in the English language and the country sees that the changes should be linked to the role of Technology, which is mainly updated in English [...]

(k) In [name of town] there are many schools that are concerned to prepare students to compete and it has increased the need of teaching English to understand and apply concepts, to solve problems, to create high values and morale and ability to work in teams. (T10 Intro:13- 14)

In this introduction, the education provided by the institution is expected to allow students become what “business enterprises are looking for”, to “be able to compete”, “solve problems”, “work in teams”, “be prepared for the world”, which here is defined in terms of “communications, studies, books and business”. And English, especially if started at an early age, is going to be of great help for all that. When the writer cites the principle of “drawing out” rather than “putting in”, she is ignoring the number of beneficial circumstances that everybody is putting in: the materials, the newly-hired bilingual teachers, the methodology, and also this type of discourse.

The same expectation is not expressed in less favored contexts. The author of Thesis 12 starts her rationale with a lengthy discussion of issues like access to schooling, equality and poverty as framed in the latest meeting of the UNESCO Regional Bureau of Education for Latin America and the Caribbean. Though the text itself may not be her ‘original’ discourse, the fact that the author chose this particular focus and discourses shows what she considers to be relevant and coherent with her context. In this thesis, however, there is no discourse about English being an asset for the school, the students or the country. She first justifies the need to design an English course which responds to the

needs of students, family and society.

Education has not had a social function according to students' needs and family interest and society. Teachers have developed plans of studies on which students neither are interested nor have learned. [...]New education should be integral, participative, where students, family and society are going to be involved. [...]

The major aim of this investigation is to show a theoretical framework about needs analysis and learning needs of students in 4th grade by identifying their actual command of English and the way they would use it in their future lives, as well as their learning strategies, styles, preferences and their interests. Thus, a course which will fulfill the students' real needs can be designed.

In the section devoted to the description of the context of the research, there she identifies some of the constraints in the context: small classrooms with many students, poor students who often go to school without breakfast, no textbooks available but only photocopies provided by the teacher. English classes 1 hour per week, lack of didactic materials and equipment. Then the author presents other aspects of the context which define the 'needs' of English for the context.

[Name of the institution] has as a goal: the development of student's abilities to interact with touristic people. (T12: Rat:13)

90% of the parents work with indirect tourism selling products such as:[...], .They do this together with their children. Therefore, they expect the English teacher to teach how to offer this kind of services.[...] The students show a big interest and expectations to acquire knowledge about vocabulary related to how to offer services to tourists, but they don't receive any cultural and touristic information in their English teaching, hence it has been necessary to design a more suitable material for them. [...] These students need that the course and the materials are implemented according to the social-cultural situation of [name of town] (T11:Rat:14)

One of the main aims of the course becomes to teach students to offer services and products to tourists in the informal market of the town. She does not have a section devoted to make her approach to education explicit. What seems to be forgotten are the discourses at the UNESCO meeting: "education is a public good when all members of society receive education of equal quality, independently of whether it is public or

private “indeed no change is possible without quality education” (Thesis 12 Rat:5-6).

The lack of discussion of long-term goals for the education of the children, the absence of a subversive vision (even if idealized and impossible) together with her adherence to the discourses of the client-centered approach, here disguised in the discourse of the ESP enterprise (“to fulfill the student’s real needs”) positions this teacher as largely dependent on or at the mercy of circumstances, even unable to dream or imagine her students in a role different from street vendors. This vision makes a striking contrast with the one expressed in Thesis 10 and it is an example of how English, ESP and a client-centered model of education can serve as a way to perpetuate established social relations and the status quo.

While students in the beginning semesters at a public university (who have had English during at least six-years of English during secondary school) learn to discriminate reduced sounds and also to leave messages on the telephone (T4, 13), students in other contexts get ready for preparing their CVs and for job interviews in English (T5) and being protagonists in globalized economies. The same differences are evident at elementary school level. While children at a public school will learn to say limited phrases in English to offer services in English to tourists (T12), others will use English to develop reading skills, obtain information about other cultures (T11) with the ultimate aim of solving problems, getting into business, and dealing with technology (T10). In public universities, it is about getting to know the foreign language and being able to do specific things with the language. In the private ones, it becomes a tool to take active part in the capitalist order and conquer the world. So I think the saddest thing

about these theses is the fact that they end up strengthening the same effect English has had on our context –widening the gap between classes, groups, regions, professions. With the complicity of the program and the teacher-students, they ensure that we serve the current distribution of roles in many of our communities.

Teacher Education under Scrutiny

The former analysis leads into the question of the tenets and aims of teacher education in the program. The following is an excerpt of its mission, in which the ultimate goal is stated in terms of the construction of a democratic society.

We are inclined to search knowledge which would constitute a real contribution to the process of construction of an education for democracy, an open society and the harmony between communities and nations.

One of its general objectives stated in the official documents of the program addresses the role of the teachers in their communities. It has to do with changes in their performance as teachers, which should eventually benefit the community.

To provide guidelines for the professional in the teaching of English to continue his/her integral education through the process of study and permanent personal updating, so that he/she becomes an agent promoter of changes and ideas that benefit his/her professional activity and the community in general.

The professional profile of the teachers that go through the program involves an active role in changes in their educational contexts

The graduates from our program are professionals with critical awareness of their educational role, committed to permanent growth and updating of theoretical and practical aspects of education in general, and of the teaching of English in particular, promoters of initiatives, and leaders in the processes of change in their educational contexts. (From the official documents of the program, my emphasis, my translation)

The Pedagogical Approach described in the documents mention the deceptive aspect associated with the “change” enterprise:

Emphasis on creative rather than verbal discovery. The program expects participants to be individuals with critical capacities towards their reality, but not only at the verbal level. The fundamental idea is that learners become able to deal with abstract verbal propositions, relating them with their concrete experience.

Thus, the intention is for the learner not to stay at the verbal levels exclusively, but to become able to act upon their reality. This implies a change in the general model of learning where some teach and others learn. It is not about imparting knowledge, but about presenting possibilities so that the learner becomes interested and able to act upon their reality, defining their own learning experience within the context of the social sciences (From the official documents of the program, my translation).

The impact of the teacher-specialists on their communities is expressed in general terms. They are expected to be able to influence their educational contexts with the application of the knowledge they find relevant for their situation. The main concern, as represented in the professional profile and in the following fragment from the Pedagogical Approach, is circumscribed to educational problems:

Education must always look for intentionality, and ours is that a person committed to the educational problems of his or her region comes out of the program, a person who is able to identify and propose alternatives for their solution, and at the same time, able to plan and/or lead educational projects as a worker of the culture (From the official documents of the program, my translation)

In spite of a stated interest in achieving some impact in the communities where the specialists teach, the postgraduate program portrays its radius of action in the specificity of the abilities of teachers who are respondent to the “needs of the context”, who get “theoretical preparation”, and are able to “design courses appropriate to their situations” as expressed in the specific objectives of the program below.

To prepare teachers who are capable of planning, designing and teaching an English course suitable for the needs of their context.

To offer teachers a theoretical preparation in aspects of applied linguistics that would serve as

orientation for their professional activities.

To provide the basic foundation for a research approach to teaching which privileges the analysis of the needs in the pedagogical context of the specialist, as well as the design of courses appropriate for their situation. (from the official document of the program, my translation)

Besides the sophism of the Needs Analysis enterprise and its goal of meeting the needs of the learners (see Chapter on ESP and Needs Analysis), the program and its objectives are also partially built on the traditional theory-to-practice model (Clandinin, 1995; Wideen, Mayer-Sith, and Moon, 1998, cited in Korthagen, 2001). In this approach, teacher education is about translating theory of good teaching into practice. Universities provide the theory; student teachers go to their institution and put the knowledge into practice.

Underlying this model are three assumptions with which Schön (1983) identified the “technical-rationality model” :

1. Theories help teachers to perform better in their profession
2. These theories must be based on scientific research.
3. Teacher educators should make a choice concerning the theories to be included in teacher education programs (p.23)

And yet in the previous chapters we have seen how the different theories available to the teacher-designers have an ideological component, are uncritically taken up by them and there is no guarantee that they will help teachers perform better.

Following Giroux and McLaren (1987), this theory to practice model privileges the view of the teachers as technologists, technicians or applied scientists and the role of teacher education institution to provide the technical expertise to deal with the

communities of the educational institution. This way of conceptualizing teacher education is probably perceived as neutral, because it does not address political issues.

Beyer and Zeichner (1987) call this perspective “technocratic rationality” (p.314), and it is interested in the application of educational knowledge independent of more transcendental goals and meanings. The focus on psychological outcomes and the apolitical analyses of the roles of schools, the implementation of the achievement model have all been thought of as unproblematic and socially, politically and economically neutral. Following Bowles and Gintis (1976), Beyer & Zeichner remind us of the pernicious complicity of the school in the role of reproducing economic relations by furthering the interests of certain groups and classes and, at the same time, curtailing those of others. In their opinion, all teacher education programs either lead teachers into the reproduction of the social relation patterns (an integrative stance) or to take critical stand in order introduce transformation. That is why teachers need to ask questions regarding whose interests are served by the conceptions of knowledge and practice that are made available in a program. But even committed teachers, as Hargreaves (1995) points out, are often distrustful about educational politics. For him teacher development is not just a moral and personal issue, but has a political side. Being political means being “critically reflective about one’s work, about the social conditions, contexts, and consequences of one’s teaching, as well as about one’s skill, efficiency, or kindness in performing it” (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Liston& Zeichner, 1990 cited in Hargreaves, 1995, p.17). It includes discerning power relations at the micro level in their institutions, for example, discerning how resources are secured and allocated; it also includes being

suspicious about knowledge, skills or techniques that are made available to them with the assumption that they are neutral and universally applicable; it entails also being reflective about the social consequences of the decisions made in the classroom.

As the analysis of the discourses of the teachers above show, adopting a non-political and uncritical stance helps to reproduce the cultural images that each layer of the population has of its social function, thus reproducing given social structures and strengthening hegemonies. It seems then that there is a critical component in the program and its mission that has not been adequately thought of and operationalized. It is not a central issue and has apparently therefore been neglected with negative consequences.

Teacher education should “imagine teachers as transformative intellectuals”, according to Giroux and McLaren (1987, p.269) dedicated to “the fostering of democracy, to the exercise of greater social justice and to the building of a more equitable social order” (p.269-270). They insist that it is not enough to make knowledge problematic and to promote reflective analysis to become critical problem solvers, but instead, teacher education should become a part of a wider political project. The program attempts at neither of these. The analyses in the previous chapters attest to it. That is why the statements about democracy and harmony and openness in the mission of the program have a perfunctory taste. And that is perhaps why a number of the statements that teachers make in their works do not find consistent realization in the materials they design in spite of the few inclusion of discourses that hope for English classes to not just be “a simple subject” (T8 Rat: 18), and becoming “more than a tool for extracting information” (T7 Ped Imp:28).

CHAPTER 6: REPRESENTATION OF THE SPECIALIST'S KNOWLEDGE OF THEORY

Following the framework Richards and Rodgers (2001) developed to understand the concept of method, any course should be based on a number of ‘assumptions or beliefs about language and language learning’ (Anthony, 1963 cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.19). In line with this idea, teacher-designers are asked to explicit the theoretical decisions or the approach(es) regarding language learning that would guide the teaching practice in their designs. The section devoted to this end in the theses is usually titled “Approach to Language Learning”. I will analyze how the teacher writers represented learning in this section of their work. I will analyze other discourses in their theses that also convey their adherence to theories and/or conceptions about language learning. I will thus document some of the conceptions evident in their work and I will demonstrate that in most cases the academic task leads teachers to reify existing theories of learning, acritically reproduce the discourses of established theories, sometimes merely restating what has been available to them in the literature about learning theories, sometimes displaying evidence of confusion and misunderstanding, sometimes showing some personal involvement and appropriation of the theory in spite of the fact that their implementation in the course designs is not consistent with the verbalized choices. I will also give attention to discursive features the writers resort to in order to communicate their views.

Discursive Construction of the Importance of Acquaintance with Existing

Theories.

Some of the theses include a meta-analysis of the task of presenting the theory of learning of their courses. Though the theories in themselves, and also the knowledge of the theories of learning by teachers are justified and positively valued, the use of the language in these sections conveys the teachers' conceptions/ideology about theories.

In designing a course it is advisable the way people learn and how the learning process is developed. Thus, theories of learning help to understand it and give some insights to go deeply into the learning process. Likewise, theories of language and language learning will be facts to be also considered. The following is a brief outline of the different theories of learning that influence the language learning and the teaching process. (T12 Ap Ln:26)

According to Hutchinson and Waters, the starting point for all language teaching should be an understanding of how people learn. But it is too often the case that learning factors are the last to be considered. Therefore we have to support our research on the evaluation of some learning and language theories such as: Behaviourism, Mentalism, cognitive approach, the effective factor and learning acquisition. (T14 Ped Imp:23)

From the language used in Thesis 12 two things are interesting: the singularity of 'way' in "the way people learn", and of "process" in "the learning process", and the representation of theories as "facts" rather than possible and partial explanations of how learning happens .

The first two sentences in the passage from Thesis 14 reproduce almost verbatim Hutchinson and Water's (1987) (H&W) words about the importance of theories of learning. Later, when she writes: "we have to support our research on the evaluation of some learning and language theories such as ...", she lists theories of learning only. The list she provides coincides with the titles of subsections in H& W's Chapter 6 – "Theories of Learning", but she mis-reproduces the last theory of the list: She names it "learning acquisition" but it should correspond to a subsection H&W title " Learning and

acquisition” in which they address Krashen’s difference between acquisition and learning, but she mistakes it for a new theory and names it wrongly. Interestingly, she does not mention as a possible model for learning a model which H & W develop on pages 49-50 of their book in the same chapter, right after the description of the more recognized theories of learning. The implication may be that this model does not qualify as a “theory” upon which teachers can base their course. A comparison between the two excerpts above (from Theses 12 and 14) shows different degrees of distancing from the original source. While in the first passage above (from T12) the theories are “facts” and there appears to be more certainty about what is known about learning, the author-designer of the second example writes about “evaluating” the theories. Yet, this sentence (like the two first two ones in the fragment from Thesis 14) turns out to be just a formality because this thesis writer does not provide further review or evaluation of any of the former theories.

What this analysis shows, is that the need for the review of the theories of learning and the importance attached to these theories is not discursively supported at the micro level of word choices. If the knowledge of these theories was that important, there might have been more accurate wording and paraphrases of the source in their syntheses. What is more worrisome is the fact that this meta-analysis announces the yielding of the researcher’s authority in matters of learning over to psychologists and other theorists. With this act of acknowledgment of the high status of theories, one implication is that they (teachers) are not at that moment in a position to investigate and establish how learning happens in their classrooms and should rather let their work be illuminated by

existing explanations. Actually, none of the teachers in their needs analysis goes into analyzing their teaching and the learning of the students. As shown in the previous chapter, they rely mostly on students' self reports of learning preferences, likes and dislikes.

The analysis that follows will show that the discussion of the theories in the theses does not always help to “understand” and “go deeply” into the learning processes (as proclaimed in Thesis 14.)

Ideological Nature of the Choice of Theory

Part of the academic task in this section consists of providing evidence of acquaintance with existing theories of learning so several of the authors include a brief outline of some theories explaining learning. They present their own choice of approach to learning after at least some minimum consideration/mention of other alternative possibilities. These are theses 2, 7, (8), 9, 11, 12, 16, 20. Theoretically, these could be seen as a move to make the thesis appear more pluralistic or heteroglossic, or it could be interpreted as a way writers attempt to represent themselves as more informed and knowledgeable of theories of learning and also better able to use sound criteria for discarding theories and decide which is best for their own designs. The review of alternative (not chosen/discarded) approaches to learning (with the exception of thesis 20), is often superficial and taken from one only source.

Following is the review provided in Thesis 12, which states that “theories of learning help to understand it and give some insights to go deeply into the learning

process” (p.26).

Behaviorisms: It was the first theory based on the work of Pavlov and Skinner. They said that learning is a mechanical process of habit formation and proceeds by means of the frequency of a stimulus response. (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987 p. 40).

Mentalism: It is based on Chomsky’s work which concluded that “learning is not forming habits but acquiring rules - a process in which individual experiences are used to formulate a hypothesis”. (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987 p. 42)

Cognitive: The learner is seen as an active processor of information, because the way people learn is by thinking about and trying to make sense of what they see, feel and hear. (Hutchinson and Water, 1987 p.43-46). This theory based its technique on solving tasks, and has been a useful tool in ESP courses to teach reading strategies.

The affective factor: Learners are seen as people with likes and dislikes, fear, weakness. “Learning a language is an emotional experience and the feelings will influence the success or failure of learning” (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987: 47) (T12 Ap Ln:26)

This particular summary was all taken from Hutchinson and Waters’ book (Chapter 5 – Theories of Learning), in which these two authors synthesize their interpretation of the four approaches to learning. The writer did not cite any other source in this section of her work. Her account of the theories is a synthesis of a seven-page presentation of the theories. She reproduces the *evoked appreciation* (Thompson, 2004, p. 77) of Hutchinson and Waters’ (1987) account by using the words “mechanical” regarding learning under the behaviorist perspective, and the words “active processor” under the cognitive approach, thus not only conveying negative and positive evaluation respectively, but also reproducing a common misconception of behaviorism.

Additionally, her paraphrases distort the original meaning of her source.

“learning [...] proceeds by means of the frequency of a stimulus response” H & W: “Learning [...] proceeds by means of the frequent reinforcement of a stimulus-response sequence” (p.40)

As can be seen, though the writer of T12 uses most of the words in the original, her syntactic arrangement conveys different meanings. The omission of the word

“reinforcement”, a key notion in this view of learning, can be explained as a lack of attention, or as a lack of understanding of H&W’s (already faulty) version of behaviorism. It seems then that there was been either little attention to the wording of the texts or comprehension problems.

Thesis 20 is the text that includes discussion of the most approaches. Here the subsection devoted to approaches to learning is made up of a multi-page summary of the main features of constructivism, behaviorism, cognitive-constructivism, neuroscience, brain-based learning, learning styles, multiple intelligences, observational-learning, and social cognition. The implication then would be that this particular writer, as the best-informed and the one who reviewed the most literature, is the one with the most comprehensive notion of learning, the one in the best position to make an informed decision about how to propitiate better learning among his students.

Yet, a usual feature in this section of the theses is the adherence to only one approach as the theory that best explains learning, and/or the most suitable for their contexts. That was the case of Thesis 20 and of eight other theses (2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 17, 18).

The author of Thesis 20, after his long discussion of multiple theories, writes:

In my course design the theory of learning that I am going to use is multiple intelligence by Howard Gardner. I think this theory is interesting and useful because it recognizes that people do not learn in the same way. Gardner has described different kinds of intelligences that must be taking into consideration by teachers in the classroom in order to take advantage of the students’ potential. Some students do not react to specific exercises because they do not attract their attention, but if teachers explore and apply a test to discover the kind of intelligence predominant in each of their students they can prepare their lessons considering the fact that they have to cover from time to time all the intelligences their students have. (T20 Ap Ln: 61-72)

From what he writes, allegiance to the theory of multiple-intelligences includes

finding out the kind of intelligence predominant in each student and preparing lessons that meet them at least at some point during a course. However, he did not apply any such test in his own Needs Analysis. Looking closer into his language, it is significant that when he described his choice of theory of learning for the course he will design, he used the first-person pronoun (“the theory I am going to use”), but when explaining what can concretely be done to gain the students’ attention, he switches to the third person: “teachers explore and apply a test”, “they (teachers) can prepare their lessons considering the fact that they have to cover ...” (emphasis mine). A more detailed analysis of how the theory of Multiple Intelligences is discursively represented and applied is presented in Chapter 7.

In general, the mention of the fact that students have a variety of learning styles is not uncommon across theses. See section devoted to the discourses around “learning styles” and their application.

It turns out then that deciding on the approach to learning for a course is usually understood as choosing one theory of learning that appeals to the designer. Even an extensive review of the existing theories does not always seem to raise suspicions about the unstable and unfinished nature of theories. Or, if it does, it is not likely to surface as part of this academic task. Moreover, the authors seem to lose involvement when it comes to depicting the application of a theory.

Besides the tendency to opt for one theory, there is an apparent predisposition to stick to one name, even if it is clear in the language of the designer that the understanding of learning mixes discourses characteristic of other approaches. In the first example

below, the teacher decides she will use the cognitive approach, but her language reproduces some of the discourses of constructivism. In the second example, the cognitive approach allows for the recognition of different intelligences and the use of different learning strategies.

In one side Behaviorism emphasizes external behaviors that re observable and avoids reference to meaning, thought and representations. In theother side Constrctivism takes a more cognitive appraocah. [...]the theory of learning suitable for this course design will be based on a cognitive approach where students are the core of teaching and learning processes and will be conscious in constructing knowledge guided by a teacher who can give them the necessary tools in order to achieve their goal. It also matches with the [name of institution] philosophy where students construct their own knowledge motivated by their own intrinsic desire of learning. A constructivism learning environment is where the emphasis is on process rather than on product, aims for the development of communicative competences, focus on construction not on reproduction, values group work [...] (T11 Ap. Ln:28).

I can summarize that my view of learning for this course design is cognitivist because I may provide my students with tools which contribute to help them develop their mental processes using the appropriate learning strategies according to the intelligences they use. (T16 Ap Ln:43)

Presenting the selection of learning approach as an informed and appropriate decision is partly achieved through the reinstatement of the coherence between the choice made and the data from needs analysis. This is the case of the following two passages from Theses 1 and 15.

After having gathered all the data and analyzed the results in terms of learning needs and target needs in this research study at [name of institution], we can say that the most suitable approaches to learning are the Cognitive and Metacognitive without leaving aside the Social Affective one. (T1 Ap Ln:30)

According to the most relevant aspects described above and according to my need analysis, it can be said that the most appropriate approach to my course design is: the Cognitive approach associated with affective factors because students act as thinking beings but they are also emotional beings with feelings and the learning of a language is particularly an emotional experience and the importance of I (sic) is easily seen if the relationship between cognitive and affective factors is considered. As Hutchinson and Waters defined (1987) [write], “The cognitive theory tells us that learners learn when they actively think about what they are learning, but cognitive factors presuppose the affective factor of motivation”. (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p47) (T15 Ap Ln:51)

I would argue, however, that this relation between data and approach chosen is

not so bottom-up as represented in the excerpts and that making these statements denies the fact that the theoretical options selected is an imposition that comes from the interpretation the designers make based on their prior experience and the discourses they are familiar with. For example, in Thesis 1, the main problem identified in the context is the lack of vocabulary. The teacher-researcher identified this problem during an observation of a class in which learners were asked to write a short text and they kept asking her for help with the translation of words. As discussed in a previous chapter (Needs Analysis) already focusing on the lack of vocabulary is the teacher's personal way of seeing the problem. Later in the "Approach to Learning" section, when she explains her choice of approach and supports it, the author of T1 writes "The cognitive approach will be developed in this ESP course. Students may be exposed to use their memory through a whole display of Business Vocabulary they are going to encounter". This decision to assume that the "cognitive approach" means the use of memory to remember the words encountered and that this will make learning take place (and to ignore that a number of arrangements, strategies and activities may be necessary for that memory to be put to work) is not inscribed in the data, but comes from her understanding of what works with her students and the interpretation of the literature she has read. Something similar seems to be going on in the second example from Thesis 15, only here the influence of the discourses of her readings is more strongly felt. Actually, the language of this example is close to the one Hutchinson and Waters use to convey a very similar position regarding learning. Besides the cited words in the excerpt, H&W write: "[the cognitive code] treats the learners as thinking beings" (p.46), "the learning of a

language is an emotional experience” (p.46-47), “the feelings [...] will have a crucial bearing on the success” (p.47). The similarities are obvious.

Bearing in mind the above considerations, it becomes clear that the clauses “After having gathered all the data and analyzed the results in terms of learning needs and target needs” from T 1, and “According to the most relevant aspects described above and according to my need analysis” do not give a fair picture of the decision-making process, but seem rather perfunctory given their understanding of what discourses the academic task demands from writers.

The review of the argumentation in the “Approaches to Learning” sections across the theses revealed another apparent alignment with existing discourses as a strategy for conveying the idea of sound decision making. The choice of approaches to learning is in a number of works presented in terms of a dichotomy: either behaviorism or the cognitive approach.

Behaviorist and Cognitivist approaches to learning had been used as the basis on which other views of teaching and learning have been built. Behaviorist approach sees learning as a response to stimuli. Cognitive approach sees learning as the use of existing knowledge to construct new insights. (T11 Ap Ln:27)

There are two well-known learning theories that provide information about the learning process: Behaviorism and Cognitivism which have influenced the researches for language learning process. (T13 Ap Ln:28)

There are two main approaches of learning: behaviourist (or connectionist) and cognitivist. The first one assumed that humans learn when there is a stimulus; it means that behaviourist theories consists on the relationship between stimulus (input), response (output) and reinforce (evaluation). The second one, on the contrary, concentrates on the humans’ perceptions about learning, in other words, (p. 91) the emphasis is on adaptability in the use of existing knowledge to form new insights rather than the mechanical repetition of stimulus responses bonds. (T16 Ap Ln:42)

Closely connected with this dichotomized representation of theories is the rejection of behaviourism as a sound explanation of learning or its negative and, in many

cases, incomplete and distorted representation.

Our educational methodology will be then, constructivist, which results in an opposed choice regarding behaviourists' approaches related to audio-lingual methods, where relationships between teacher and student were based on a stimulus-response vision. (T9 Ap ed:31)

Behaviorism led by Watson and Thorndike are concerned with the relationship between stimulus and response. According to them, behavior is acquired or changed when the organism builds up connections between stimulus and response. Nowadays learning is no longer a stimulus- response event. Instead, it requires self-regulation and the building of conceptual structures through reflection. Learning is a process of constructing meaningful representations of making sense of one's experiential world (T11 Ap Ln:27)

[...] Behaviorism emphasizes external behaviors that are observable and avoids reference to meaning, thought and representations. [...]T11 Ap. Ln:28).

The Behaviorist and the Cognitive schools can be mentioned as schools on Learning. The first school mentioned was very used in the 1960s and 1970s and relied primarily on learning by memory, using the stimulus-response method, not letting individuals develop their ability of analysis or critical thinking. (T2 Ap Ln:55)

Sometimes the rejection is less direct, that is, without explicit mention of the term “behaviorism”, but with reliance on an already established metonymic (mis) association between mechanical and behaviorist. In the following example ‘mechanical practice’ seems to make reference to behaviorist theory.

[...] learning activities are consequently selected according to how well they engage the learner in meaningful and authentic language use (rather than merely mechanical practice of language patterns) (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). (T8 Ap Ln:42).

This dichotomist (and simplified) presentation of the theories of learning contrasts with the wider spectrum of theories presented in the “Learning Processes” module (see Appendix A) in the program. In a way, it corresponds to how H&W present language theories. They, after presenting behaviorism, deal with mentalism. And they write: “The first successful assault on the behaviorist theory came from Chomsky (1964).” (p.42) And at the end of this section about rule-governed behavior, they wrote: “The mentalist view of the mind as a rule seeker led naturally to the next important stage – the cognitive

theory of learning” (p.42). Thus, cognitive theory is represented as a more developed stage in the attack against behaviorism. Though it is impossible to assert that teachers necessarily followed the development of theories in precisely H&W’s terms of the struggle of opposites, this is conceivably one of the most widespread summary versions of learning theories. When other approaches are included, they are often contrasted with behaviorism and in many cases made to look similar or related to cognitive theory (for example, constructivism, learning strategies). The negative representation of behaviorism is the established view in the program and a common position conveyed in the literature based partially on the association of behaviorism with mechanical responses, stimulus-response relations, and, for language teachers, with the audiolingual method.

One more strategy employed to convey the idea of a well-informed decision is the way three authors discursively position themselves as critically-minded users of the theories. The three of them acknowledge the lack of conclusiveness offered by the existing theories and they support this standpoint with quotes from the literature. This kind of stance is often associated with higher levels of communicative competence in general and of reading competence in particular (Perez, 1999; Colectivo Comunicación, 2002). Yet, a careful analysis of the discourses could reveal another perspective.

In Thesis 3 the idea of the existing theories of learning being unsatisfactory to explain learning processes is attributed to Hutchinson and Waters (1987). This argument is presented in the thesis as a justification and authorization (see the use of modal ‘may’ in sentence 3) for teachers to choose the approach they feel most inclined to follow

(constructivism in this case). This position dramatically contrasts with former discourses, where the designers avoided direct mention of their decisive role in the choice of an approach to learning. Here is the passage:

Through history several theories have been developed about language acquisition. (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987) summarize the basic principles underlining such theories. These authors concluded that there is still a lot left unknown about learning, instead they suggest that at the moment of implementing a particular approach, we teachers, should have an open mind to choose one based on our particular point of view as teacher. This means that according to my objectives and topics we may choose the constructivism approach to the teaching of speaking of the ESP course for graduate students at [name of institution]. The constructivism, [is] applied both to learning theory and to epistemology, both to how people learn, and to the nature of knowledge. We do not need to succumb to each new fact, but we do need to think about our work in relation to theories of learning and knowledge. So we need to ask: what is constructivism, what does it have to tell us that is new and relevant, and how do we apply it to our work? As far as I can see, there is nothing dramatically new in constructivism: the core ideas expressed by it has been clearly enunciated by John Dewey among others, but there is a new, widespread acceptance of this old set of ideas and new research in cognitive psychology to support it.

(9) The term refers to the idea that learners construct knowledge for themselves each learner individually (and socially) constructs meaning---as he or she learns. (10) Constructing meaning is learning; there is no other kind. (11) We have to focus on the learner in thinking about learning not on the subject or lesson to be taught, there is no knowledge independent of the meaning attributed to experience constructed by the learners. (T3 Ap Ln:51)

I found that this passage has a strong voice in that there are a number of interactive features (evaluative language, interrogatives, negative constructions, use of first person singular and plural, modality) and display of what seemed a relatively original perspective. Yet there are some unclear or underdeveloped ideas. The word combination “we do not need to succumb to each new fact” conveys a high degree of confidence so unusual in these sections of the theses. In contrast the sentences “ We have to focus on the learner in thinking about learning not on the subject or lesson to be taught”, “there is no knowledge independent of the meaning attributed to experience constructed by the learners” demand further support and explanation the thesis did not provide. A quick checking on the internet revealed that the passage was taken verbatim

(and without conventional recognition) from a webpage that explores Constructivist Learning Theory for museums (www.exploratorium.edu/IFI/resources/constructivistlearning.html).

Monoglossic Discourse

Finally, one more way to position themselves as informed researchers and decision makers is through monoglossic/non-dialogic discourse, which conveys certainty about how learning happens, a clear confident writer's stance and an appearance of impersonality and objectivity. Here is one example of that language.

(1) Nowadays learning is no longer a stimulus-response event. (2) Instead, it requires self-regulation and the building of conceptual structures through reflection. (3) Learning is a process of constructing meaningful representations of making sense of one's experiential world.. [...] (3) the theory of learning suitable for this course design will be based on a cognitive approach (4) where students are the core of teaching and learning processes and (5) will be conscious in constructing knowledge (6) guided by a teacher, (8) who can give the necessary tools in order to achieve their goal. (T11, Ap Ln:27)

Certainty is expressed here with the negative polarity of the first clause and the absence of modality and hedging in the underlined clauses. The first clause is a negation to the alternative of learning in behavioral terms which had been made possible in the previous paragraph. Through averrals (Hunston, 2000) the writer represents herself as authoritative enough to disclaim the previously mentioned possibility (learning in behavioral terms) and goes on to countering the disclaimed position in a clause introduced by the adversative 'instead'. The absence of justification for the denial suggests that the statement is either an unquestionable truth or accepted knowledge. The writer does not consider it necessary to attribute any of statements to other recognized

sources.

In terms of dialogicity, the first clause can be seen as heteroglossic, but of the contractive type (Martin & White, 2005, p.117-118). The position of learning from the behavioral perspective is invoked, apparently accepted as truth for the past, but it is discarded as unsustainable in the present. The propositions after the first clause can be considered monoglossic or undialogized (Bakhtin, 1935[1981]:427 cited in White, 2003, p.263; see also Martin, 2005). Though often considered factual and objective, barely asserted propositions construe the textual moment as "dialogistically inert and hence capable of being declared categorically" (Martin, 2005, p.99) because they do not recognize other voices or alternative positions. According to White, bare assertions can be associated with consensual knowledge, and almost considered as fact by the writer and the intended audience. This knowledge is "held to be unproblematic and generally 'known' or 'accepted' (p.263), or as Myers (1990) says, statements of facts and established knowledge. It seems to rely on the assumption that the writer operates with the same knowledge, beliefs and values as the reader/grader.

The description of the process of learning is made up of abstract, metaphorical and metonymical language, which apparently contributes to the authoritativeness of the writer.

- Learning requires self-regulation
- Learning requires the building of conceptual structures through reflection
- Learning is a process of construction of meaningful representations

- In the cognitive approach students are at the core of teaching and learning process
- In the cognitive approach students will be conscious in constructing knowledge.

The abstractness of the description of learning is achieved partly through nominalizations like self-regulation, reflection, construction, and representations, which have become commonly used in the field of education, educational psychology, pedagogy, etc.

Nominalizing a process allows the writer to treat it as a thing, to detach it from time and doer and to discuss complex processes in syntactically simple terms. The nominalizations provided by the writer are used without having first negotiated or established their meaning in the sentences before (see Thompson, 2004, p28) . For example, in ‘learning requires self regulation’ it is not clear what is going to be self-regulated, the circumstances of the regulation or the nature of the process of regulating (whether it is mental, physiological, material, verbal, or all of them). The need for ‘self-regulation’ is practically raised to the status of truth. Since there is no discussion in the text of the processes nominalized, it may be inferred that at least the writer knows what she is writing about, and that she assumes the reader-grader does too. There might be a tacit agreement regarding the need to introduce key words (with complex and profound meanings behind them) as if to make believe they are under control at the verbal level, but no actual need to go deeper into what they mean.

The use of the construction metaphor and nominalizations to characterize learning allows the writer to objectify the process and to speak of it in vague terms. For this sentence to make sense, however, it would be necessary to determine exactly what “conceptual structures” means, how they are “built”, and how ‘reflecting’ leads into that “construction”. Since this metaphor has become naturalized and accepted in the field, it is used freely even in a context where a teacher writer is defining what she understands by ‘learning’.

I will now move to the analysis of the representations of specific approaches to learning.

The Cognitive Approach

The most accepted approach throughout the theses reviewed is the cognitive approach to language learning. That was the exclusive choice in the case of theses 6, 7, 16 and 18. But it was also presented as part of the approach to learning in theses 1, 11, 15, and 17. The characteristic features of the cognitive approach, however, are not uniformly described across the theses.

The following are some of the features of learning under this paradigm as represented by the teachers—authors of the theses. I argue that many of these representations are anything but a clear and understandable account of the cognitive paradigm.

Superficial or unclear accounts

The discussion of the cognitive approach when it is the one selected for the course (just as the review of the approaches not selected (see subsection 1) is superficial. In Thesis 7, where “the cognitive theory is chosen as the basis for this course”, there is a cursory elaboration of (an equally lightweight) description of the approach in the bibliographical source. The writer uses three key words from the original source - active, think, meaningful - and defines the approach in simple terms.

(a) The cognitive theory of language [learning] tells us that learners will learn when they actively think about what they are learning. (b) Learning will take place when the matter to be learnt is meaningful to the learners. (Hutchinson and Waters,1987). (c) That is why using material related to other subjects in the program will make the ESP course meaningful and consequently the learners can be successful (T7 Ap Ln:30)

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) wrote:

[...] the cognitive view takes the learner to be an active processor of information (see e.g. Ausubel et al., 1978). Learning and using a rule require learners to think, that is, to apply their mental powers to distil a workable generative rule from the mass of data presented, and then to analyse the situations where the application of the rule would be useful or appropriate. Learning, then, is a process in which the learner actively tries to make sense of data, and learning can be said to have taken place when the learner has managed to impose some sort of meaningful interpretation or pattern on the data. This may sound complex, but in simple terms what it means is that we learn by thinking about and trying to make sense of what we see, feel and hear (p.43)

[...] It treats the learners as thinking beings and puts them firmly at the centre of the learning process, by stressing that learning will only take place when the matter to be learnt is meaningful to the learners. But in itself a cognitive view is not sufficient. To complete the picture we need an affective view too (p.46 my emphasis).

The writer’s interpretation uses ‘actively’ to modify ‘think’ in the same way Hutchinson and Waters use ‘active’ to modify ‘processor’ and ‘actively’ to modify ‘make sense’. This use of the modifiers would suggest that there is a ‘passive’ way of thinking, processing and making sense which would not be recognized as cognitive learning. This difference, however, is neither explained in the original, nor elaborated by the thesis-

writer.

In sentence (b) the teacher-designer uses the expansion clause “when the matter to be learnt is meaningful to the learners” exactly as in the original source. Hutchinson and Waters explain the idea of something becoming meaningful, or making sense of something, as extraction of a rule or a pattern and then the application of the rule. This perspective is not explicitly retaken by the teacher. His practical interpretation becomes evident in sentence (c): For him using material related to other subjects in the program makes the course meaningful. The assumption here seems to be that using materials related to topics of other courses in the (undergraduate) program guarantees the establishment of the rule/pattern and its application. Certainty is conveyed through a subjective implicit modality (will make the ESP course meaningful) (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p.149, 615; Thompson, 2004, p.71) which, additionally, masks the writer’s direct responsibility for naming ‘the use of materials related to other programs’ ‘meaningful’ and successful.

Here are other examples of discussions where the use of language does not give clear clues as to how to interpret the terminology.

The cognitive approach views language learning as an explicit process where the learners are aware of the learning process, that is to say, they learn explicitly, (Tomlinson1994: page 4). For this approach to language learning the principle of awareness is paramount [...] (T6 Ap Ln:26)

Learning as “explicit process” and to “learn explicitly” are perplexing notions. They may mean that how people learn and what they learn has to be obvious (visibly or audibly) to somebody else through verbal or non-verbal behavior. And yet, cognitive processes are not directly observable. The same applies for the “principle of awareness”.

How can a teacher know if a learner is or is not “aware”? There must be some kind of external sign. Consequently, the learning experience explained in these terms is contradictory and the name “cognitive” is not thoroughly justified. Below is another example:

The cognitive theory of language [learning] tells us that learners will learn when they actively think about what they are learning. Learning will take place when the matter to be learnt is meaningful to the learners. (Hutchinson and Waters,1987). (T7 Ap Ln:30)

The problem with this understanding of learning is that the teacher would have to know when the learners are thinking, and when they are doing it actively rather than passively. And there may be some stereotyped assumptions regarding what is active and what is passive. Something similar applies to the concept of “meaningfulness”. How can a teacher know if “the matter” is meaningful? It would be necessary to establish criteria to decide on meaningfulness and active thinking. As they are presented in the above blurb, active thinking and meaningfulness are just catchy words.

According to the most relevant aspects described above and according to my need analysis, it can be said that the most appropriate approach to my course design is: the Cognitive approach associated with affective factors because students act as thinking beings but they are also emotional beings with feelings (T15 Ap Ln:51)

Taking a cognitive approach is translated as recognizing that learners act as “thinking beings”. The problem is that there can arguably be an infinite number of performances that could be judged as derived from “thinking” or from “not thinking”, so it seems that this type of descriptor for the cognitive approach is not forceful enough.

[...] the theory of learning suitable for this course design will be based on a cognitive approach where students are the core of teaching and learning processes and will be conscious in constructing knowledge guided by a teacher who can give them the necessary tools in order to achieve their goal (T11 Ap Ln:27)

What does “students are at the core of teaching and learning processes” add to the description of an approach? What does it mean? It surely sounds very much in line with the also fashionable learner-centered approach. It is a common metaphor which says little about the strategies a learner or a teacher should undertake, or how the environment should be arranged for learning to happen. Given that under any approach the learner is the one who exhibits competences or skills, all approaches will imagine learners either receiving, producing or interacting. Which is central and which is peripheral? Unless there is a concrete description of what is meant, there does not seem to be a distinctive feature of the cognitive approach here.

Since the notion of “construction of knowledge” in the above excerpt is more clearly associated with constructivist view of learning, it would be the “conscious” part the one that renders the chosen approach really “cognitive”. The assumption is that bees, for example, construct their hives unconsciously, but when it comes to humans, would they construct something unconsciously? What would it look like? Now when it applies specifically to knowledge, the question is even more difficult to answer. What would an unconscious construction of knowledge look like?

What I am saying is not that it is impossible to establish differences between views of learning based on aspects of the processes that become more or less emphasized. What matters here, is that the uncritical repetition of certain discourses or catchy phrases does not allow seeking descriptions of learning that are more operative and convincing, less popular but more personal and revealing of concrete teaching practices.

Discourses of constructivism and compartmentalization

In spite of the attempts at constructing the cognitive paradigm as a distinct and definable approach to learning, a number of descriptions across the theses merge with discourses associated with constructivism, both with what is known as radical constructivism and social constructivism (Reagan and Osborn, 2002, p.60). Here is an example.

As we are highlighting the fact of an ongoing process, the research team has opted for a cognitive approach. This choice lies on the fact that in this process students construct knowledge while they interact and learn from their mistakes. [...] As the learner develops increasing degrees of mastery, he or she engages in a constant process of restructuring to integrate new structures with those previously learned..

As it is seen, the learner is not just expected to receive information from the teacher and eventually offers a response. Instead, this learner receives information; interact with others and the environment; assimilate what has been said; combines his previous knowledge and experience on what has been provided and from this integration new concepts merge. (T18 Ap Ln:38)

The features underlined in the above passage stand close to the principles of learning cited in Reagan and Osborn (2002) lists under constructivism. His list included issues like learning from mistakes, the development of structures, and interaction.

- Disequilibrium facilitates learning. Errors need to be perceived as a result of learners' conceptions and therefore not minimized or avoided... Contradictions, in particular, need to be illuminated, explored, and discussed. [...]
- Dialogue within a community engenders further thinking. The classroom needs to be seen as a "community of discourse engaged in activity, reflection, and conversation".
- Learning proceeds toward the development of structures. As learners struggle to make meaning, progressive structural shifts in perspective are constructed – in a sense, big ideas... These "big ideas" are learner-constructed, central organizing principles that can be generalized across experiences and that often require the undoing or reorganizing of earlier conceptions. (p.59 my emphasis)

Thus the differentiation between a cognitive and a constructivist approach

becomes fuzzy. Actually, it is not by chance that radical constructivism is also called “cognitive constructivism” (Reagan and Osborn, 2002, p.60). Furthermore, if constructivist teaching is characterized by the use of cognitive terminology, as Kaufman and Grennon Brooks (1996, p.235 cited in Reagan and Osborn, 2002, p.61) argue, then the similarities become more accentuated. The passage from Thesis 17, for example, has an accentuated constructivist tint.

Table 3: Comparison between discourses of Cognitive theory and Constructivism

Teacher’s discourse on the cognitive approach to learning	Discourse of constructivism
The cognitive] approach [...] states that people learn by creating relationships between new information and knowledge already stored in memory which are compared, extended or modified; “what children learn about language is determined by what they already know about the world” (Brown, H. Douglas, 1994: 29). As a result people <u>are not passive but active processors of information</u>	“knowledge is not something that is passively received by the learner; it is, quite the contrary, the result of active mental work_on the part of the learner (Reagan and Osborn, 2002, p.60)]
who explore their learning environment <u>interacting with others</u> and construct meaning from learning experiences.	“constructivist teaching typically involves more student centered, active learning experiences, more student-student and student-teacher interaction [...] Students still create their own meanings based on the interaction of their prior knowledge with instruction” Winitzky & Kauchak, 1997, p.62)
Therefore pupils have control over their learning process	“Learners learn better if they feel in control of what the are learning” (one of the ten propositions for the application of constructivist learning theory by Williams and Burden, 1997, p.204-208 in Reagan and Osborn, 2002, p.67)
and they are expected to <u>analyze</u> , summarize, <u>solve problems</u> , and build explanations and definitions. p.61). (T17 Ap Ln:28).	“Constructivist teaching typically involves ... more work with concrete materials and in solving realistic problems” (ibid) “When framing tasks, use cognitive terminology, such as classify, analyze,

predict, create, and so on". (Kaufman and Grennon Brooks, (1996, p.235 cited in Reagan and Osborn, 2002, p.61)

What can be concluded from the previous analysis is that while the teacher designers succeed in demonstrating that they have a theory of learning for their course and that it is part of the accumulated knowledge in the field, they are caught in the intricacies of categorizing and labeling their theories thus contributing to consolidating artificial compartmentalization of knowledge.

Distortion of sources

Finally, it is necessary to document here the cases where in the discussion of the chosen approach there is obvious misinterpretation of readings and/or faulty argumentation. Though this is not the usual case, incorrect interpretation is a fact that should be dealt with in any teacher education program. The following example is taken from Thesis 6. It consists of six paragraphs. The analysis will be presented in stages. Sentences have been numbered for ease of reference.

(1) The cognitive approach views language learning as an explicit process where the learners are aware of the learning process, that is to say, they learn explicitly, (Tomlinson1994: page 4). (2) For this approach to language learning the principle of awareness is paramount (Moss (2005): Graduate course in the teaching of English, Oral presentation about approaches to education.) (3) This approach gives great relevance to language learning based on the interaction student-student, student- materials and finally student- teacher.

Tomlinson (1998) wrote:

Learning is normally considered to be a conscious process which consists of the committing to memory of information relevant to what is being learned. Whilst such direct learning of, for example, spelling rules, conventions of greetings and vocabulary items can be useful to the

language learner, it is arguable that much language learning consists of subconscious development of generalizations to acts of communication. Language learning can be explicit (i.e. the learners are not aware of when and what they are learning) or it can be implicit (i.e. the learners are not aware of when and what they are learning).” (p.4, my underlining).

The re-elaboration by the thesis-writer includes some of Tomlinson’s words (explicit, aware), but there are two problems: a) The thesis-writer seems to assume that the learning process described by Tomlinson is learning from a cognitive perspective, and b) it seems that the concession in Tomlinson’s first sentence was misinterpreted for the point this scholar wanted to make. As a result, the possibility that much learning can be unconscious (as explicitly stated by Tomlinson), is ignored or eliminated. The discarding of this dissenting opinion about learning is further underscored through the reference and adherence to the information delivered in a lecture by one of the instructors during the postgraduate program. According to the instructor, awareness is a principle of learning in the cognitive view. His imposition of meaning to the text suggests that oral communication in class plays a key role in the (mis)interpretation of the written word or that instructors’ voice may prevail over other not so familiar sources. Sentence (3) presents a new feature of the cognitive approach – interaction (later in sentence (12) identified as the interaction principle). This feature is presented in sentence 3 in very general terms as if interacting with others, with materials and with teacher implied explicit learning and awareness, and thus a cognitive view of learning.

(4) The methodology this approach proposes is quite coherent with the roles the teachers, students and learners will have to play among themselves when using the language in the classroom setting. (5) Besides it is also quite coherent with the learners target needs because it, too, matches with the practice activities the students want to do. (6) These activities are focused on the practice of vocabulary and grammar. (7) Both learning grammar and vocabulary are concerned with the explicit way of language learning. (Tomlinson1994: page 4)

The choice of theme in sentence (4) assumes reader and writer agree that there is a methodology for the cognitive approach and it presumably consists of the types of interactions mentioned in the former paragraph. The rheme of the sentence is expressed as bare assertion in that it is not hedged and does not admit other voices. As a consequence, the ‘coherence’ talked about in (4) and later in (5), and also the adequacy of the cognitive approach for this particular course, cannot be rejected in spite of the fact that it is not sustained. This adequacy is further emphasized in (6) and (7). (6) explains that students will be focusing on vocabulary and grammar, and (7) connects these two activities with a cognitive view through the already established ‘truth’ that an explicit way of learning is a characteristic feature of the cognitive approach (sentence (1)). The reference to an authority, though apparently a resource of heteroglossic engagement through attribution, not only precludes dialogue, but it distorts the original source.

(8) As the educational setting where I am presently teaching is a non-natural one, the learning language condition this course will focus on will be the learning one. (9) Moreover this language learning condition is quite coherent with the whole skeleton of this course design (needs analysis results in terms of both learning needs and target needs and the approaches to education and learning).

(10) All those items mentioned above coincide in the fact that the students surveyed at the educational setting need to learn the target language for effective communication purposes. (11) As they in the context, are all teenagers who have to be trained for job situations at tourist settings where they will have to deal with native speakers of the target language, the approach to language learning which fits the best for them to learn the target language is the cognitive one. (12) Moreover, the methodology suggested by this approach facilitates the practice of the principle of awareness and interaction through the relationship between learners-teachers, learners- activities and learners-materials.

(13) Another reason which underpins the decision of taking this approach to language learning is based on the notion of task as a language learning activity (L, L, A), (NUNAN, D: 1989). (14) These will have as teaching end to engage the students in authentic communicative activities, so that the students can interact in the way proposed by this approach methodology (above paragraph) and in this way they can learn the target language because of the production of the spoken language in each assigned task.

(15) For all these reasons I have already stated in the paragraphs above, I consider that the

cognitive approach to language learning is the most appropriate for this course design because this course design will be skill-oriented concerned with the speaking ability for a specific target job situation where the learners will have to be in contact with native speakers of the target language

Paragraphs 3 to 5 (sentences 8-14) are meant to provide more ground for the decision to stick to a cognitive approach to learning for the course this writer is to design. The reasons alluded are: a) the non-natural educational setting, which presumably refers to the fact that students will not be in an environment where English is spoken for daily communication purposes (sentence 8); b) the need to develop competence to interact and provide services to tourists, who the writer conceives as native speakers of English (sentence 10 and 11); the verbalized decision to design communicative tasks to develop speaking abilities (sentences 13 and 14, 15). These reasons, however, are not clearly connected with the need to support a cognitive view of learning.

Constructivism

For the author of Thesis 15, Constructivism is perceived as something new and associated with the improvement of education

The National Ministry of Education, an organization in charge of implementing strategies to improve the educational system, since 2003 has begun an educational revolution with aspirations to align projects and strategies around the country, not only in bilingualism but also in using new methodologies, technology in the classroom and in the assessment of both students and teachers.

It is because of this that the necessity has arisen for teachers to embrace other methodologies and implement the constructivist's point of view which will facilitate the learning and reading processes (T15 Intro:3)

Constructivism is also unevenly portrayed across theses and it is filled with cognitive terminology.

In this school [constructivist] learners actively take knowledge, connect it to previously assimilated knowledge and make it theirs by constructing their own interpretation (Cheek, 1992). [...] The learner will reformulate his/her existing structures only if new information or

experiences are connected to knowledge already in memory. Inferences, elaborations and relationships between old perceptions and new ideas must be personally drawn by the student in order for the new idea to become an integrated, useful part of his/her memory. Memorized facts or information that has not been connected with the learner's prior experiences will be quickly forgotten. In short, the learner must actively construct new information onto his/her existing mental framework for meaningful learning to occur. (Hanley, 1994). [...] Students are human beings able to think critically, take their own decisions, and learn to learn in order to be better and not need the teacher always beside them ... (T2 Ap Ln:55)

Features not necessarily or conventionally associated with constructivism can also be found. For example, the discourse of motivation and critical thinking as in the following excerpt.

It [constructivism] also matches with the[name of institution] philosophy where students construct their own knowledge motivated by their own intrinsic desire of learning. [...] A constructivism learning environment [...] favors the development of critical thinking skills, among others. (T11 Ap Ln:27)

In Thesis 17 constructivism is the Approach to Education and it includes a number of other positive features

In this approach [...] instructors or teachers analyze the strategies that learners use to solve situations or problems. Teachers together with students negotiate instructional goals and objectives.

A valuable characteristic of the approach is the support of collaborative and cooperative learning in order to expose learners to different points of view whenever a problem is presented, and consequently negotiate and generate meanings and solution through shared understanding (T17 Approaches:27)

The discussion of constructivism in thesis 17 (see Appendix B for a complete transcription of the corresponding excerpt) is influenced by the fact that the teacher-designer teaches at a school which has explicitly embraced a constructivist approach to learning, she has apparently been exposed to its discourses longer and has therefore had the chance to elaborate more on them. Interestingly, for this author, constructivism does not seem an appropriate theory of learning. In her design, a cognitive approach was

considered more appropriate. This seems to be another way of compartmentalizing theories.

Strategies/Learner Strategies/Learning Strategies

Strategies in the pragmatic sense

The notion of “strategy” appears in virtually every thesis. Most of the time it is used in the sense of behaviors learners engage in to learn the language (Wenden, 1987, p.6) and teachers classify them according to the skill they want their students to develop. For example, reading strategies in the case of Theses 1, 2, 5, 7, 8; listening strategies in the context of Thesis 4; strategies for speaking Thesis 6. This type of use of the term strategy I call the pragmatic sense.

The discourses sometimes reflect the idea that there are effective and ineffective strategies, good and not so good ones, suitable or non-suitable, and that these are features of the strategies, and not relative concepts depending on a number of circumstances (how they are employed, in what combination of strategies, prior learning history of the learner, texts, task, context, purpose, combination with other strategies, etc.).

As this course is focused in reading comprehension of technical texts, teaching process must include the presentation and explanation of the most remarkable reading strategies known by the teachers which help students to achieve the objectives proposed for this course. (T7 Syll:33)

Likewise a familiarity with differences between effective reading strategies can help the teacher look for the effective reading behaviour in learners, encourage wider use of these strategies and be on the look out for learners using less effective strategies (Richards, 1990). (T8 CD:41)

I am designing this course to keep track of the students’ process, as well as to supply the students with the appropriate strategies to cover their needs and lacks. At the same time, it will intend to get some progress thanks to the effectiveness of the implementation of the material designed for the course and the methodology that is to be applied. (T5 Syll:66)

In consequence, the material will be arranged by topics, increasing level of skill or complexity,

giving always the theory first to proceed with the study of the most suitable strategy and giving some examples to finally look for application. (T5 Syll:68)

Some teachers tend to consider strategies almost exclusively as cognitive behaviors.

This context requires a syllabus that emphasizes on skills and reading strategies that could lead learners to face authentic written texts, which encourage communication. What seems to be involved is the development of cognitive as well as language skills (Robinson, p. 1991). (T8 Syll:42)

In general, the courses and materials that were designed by these teachers who use the strategy notion in a pragmatic way do include explanation, exemplification and practice of the announced strategies.

Strategies in the metacognitive sense

Other theses deal with strategies in the sense of learners' knowledge about their use of strategies or also about other factors that can affect their learning (Wenden 1987, pp.6-7). This type of strategy was implied in the "metacognitive" approach to learning in Thesis 5 and the metacognitive strategies in Thesis 2 and 7.

Thesis 5 employs a discourse with a strong strategy flavor. The objectives of her course combine the pragmatic approach to strategies (e.g. reading comprehension strategies) with the development or training aspect through what she called metacognition.

The graphic indicates that the teacher is a facilitator in a 100%. It is very satisfying to know that all the students cited that the teacher facilitates their process of learning by giving them some orientations and offering some confidence and understanding. It is related then to use of affective strategies which usually work with anxiety reduction, self-encouragement, and self-reward.(T5 Res:27)

The term "metacognitive approach" has been applied to strategy training aimed at teaching EFL students consciously to plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning and to analyze the different

stages of a task in order to choose appropriate problem-solving strategies (see Robbins 2002). (T5 Ap Ln:61)

Objectives

- Students will be more aware of their reading strategies and become independent users of them. (T5 CD:63)
- Students will learn some reading and writing strategies.
- Students will be allowed to select their own strategies to facilitate the learning process. (T5 CD:63)

In the first fragment, the relation between the teachers' "giving them some orientations and offering some confidence and understanding" and the use of affective strategies by the students is not justified. It seems that anxiety reduction, self-encouragement and self-reward would be most needed when the teacher does not provide that much confidence and understanding. What I mean is that this seems to be an excessive and unnecessary display of the terminology of learning strategies.

On the other hand, while the teacher indeed designed a course which does explain and gives instruction regarding the use of reading strategies, there is nothing to support the strategy training in terms of "planning, monitoring and evaluating own learning". (See Appendix C: Sample of materials in Thesis 5).

Thesis 7 also constructs strategies as an important way to bring about learning by the students. Here the writer resorts to the pragmatic view of strategies because his course is essentially a reading course in which students are asked to apply some strategies (recognizing cognates, activating prior knowledge of a topic, skimming, scanning) for coping with the activities proposed.

This course has been designed to provide the students with valuable set of strategies to approach English texts related to their careers. Therefore, they will have the opportunity to interact with

different sources about certain Chemistry topics. (T7 CD:27)

His discussion of the approach to learning, however, is not that clear, with regard how he intends learning to happen. This designer explicates cognitive theory, metacognitive and cognitive strategies and then his choice of approach is cognitive, which, given his discussion, may imply that cognitive, and perhaps metacognitive strategies will be learnt and used by the students. Unlike the author of Thesis 5, he does not write in terms of “metacognitive approach”. He positively values the theories of language learning, because of their contribution to the knowledge about how individuals learn in terms of strategies. Theories allow us to “talk about the learning strategies”. Thus, by theories he actually seems to mean “cognitive theory”. Below is an excerpt of his text.

b) The cognitive theory of language tells us that learners will learn when they actively think about what they are learning. Learning will take place when the matter to be learnt is meaningful to the learners. (Hutchinson and Waters,1987). That is why using material related to other subjects in the program will make the ESP course meaningful and consequently the learners can be successful.

c) The theories of language have facilitated the study of learning strategies that learners use individually. From these theories we can talk about the learning strategies, such as, metacognitive with which the learners analyses the success of their language achievement. The cognitive strategies through which learners repeat, organize, infer, summarize, deduce, imagine, transfer and elaborate information from knowledge given.

f) After having a look at different theories of language, the preferred learning styles and the analysis of learning strategies used by some students who were observed during and outside the classes, the cognitive approach was chosen as a basis of this course.

g)The design of this course was also carried out bearing in mind that the learner is the centre of the class and the teacher’s work will be to provide him/her with necessary tools to meet his/her target and learning needs. (T7 Ap Ln:29)

The construction of this text suggests that the focus on the cognitive aspect of learning strategies is probably influenced by the reading of Hutchinson and Waters and

their own preference. Perhaps lack of access to other sources did not allow the writer to consider non-cognitive strategies.

Other conceptions about strategies

The use of strategies in the pragmatic sense does not always qualify as an approach to learning for some of the designers, even if their course is based on the application of strategies. This may be related to the ambiguity or the elusive nature of the term (Wenden and Rubin, 1987). This finds expression in the theses, where strategies can mean:

A focus within a language-learning view:

The learner needs to develop specific strategies to improve his/her macro skills. So, this would be the principal focus of any language learning view. (T13 Ap Ln:28)

Using strategies is learning:

Learning could also be seen as learning strategies which enable teachers and students to facilitate their learning process [...]. [...]. (T8 Ap Ln:42)

A topic of study within theories

The theories of language [learning] have facilitated the study of learning strategies that learners use individually. From these theories we can talk about the learning strategies (T7 Ap Ln:30)

What defines an approach

The term "metacognitive approach" has been applied to strategy training aimed at teaching EFL students consciously to plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning and to analyze the different stages of a task in order to choose appropriate problem-solving strategies (see Robbins 2002). (T5 Ap Ln:61-62)

Techniques, approaches or actions

Furthermore, it is important to know the concept of learning strategy and what kinds of learning strategies might be employed according to each student condition. (Wenden, 1987. p 71) Learning strategies are techniques, approaches, or actions that students take in order to facilitate the learning (Oxford, 1990) (T16 Ap Ln:42)

Learning strategies are discussed and selected as the approach to learning by the writers of theses 8, 12, and 13. The author of Thesis 13 is radical in his appreciation of the importance of learning strategies. He portrays them as the principal focus of “any” language learning view.

In language teaching, one of the most important aspects is that the learner needs to develop specific strategies to improve his/her macro skills. So, this would be the principal focus of any language learning view. The skills provide the learners with the necessary ability to use target language effectively supported by the application of determined strategies that help them produce and receive the target language. Under this view, language learning attempts to highlight the procedural knowledge, which is the knowledge of how the language is used. That’s why functions are taught together with skills (Tomlinson, 1998) . My learners are asked to apply the procedural knowledge of English to improve micro-skills to be effective users of the English language. (T13 Ap Ln:28).

Yet in his description the role of strategies is somewhat vague in the sense that he does not provide concrete example of strategies. They are meant to “improve ... macro skills”, and to “support” the ability to use and receive the target languages. At the same time the focus is procedural knowledge to improve micro-skills. That would mean that his understanding of language learning strategies would not include metacognitive strategies (Wenden & Rubin, 1987; Chamot and O’Malley, 1994; Anderson, 1999), self-managing strategies (Wenden, 1991); affective strategies (Oxford, 1990), which do not exactly mean procedural knowledge. A look at his materials would reveal that strategies are not really the principal focus in his design and that students develop some declarative knowledge, too (See Appendix D: Sample of Materials in Thesis 13). Here again we see the tendency to take decisions that theoretically exclude alternative forms of learning,

even if there is evidence that there has been some contact with this literature.

In Thesis 12 the writer conveys *voice* only to state the choice of approach, and judging from the definitions of strategies that she provides, these would include the pragmatic sense. However, the information about the strategies is clearly presented as somebody else's discourse. Not surprisingly, her materials do not embody the choice made. (See Appendix E: Partial outline of Materials in Thesis 12).

In this course, I am going to include learning strategies. Some authors have written several concepts about it and they have concluded: Strategies are language learning behaviours which contribute directly to learning and regulate learning indirectly (Wenden, 1987). Strategies is a set of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the students to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval, and use of information (Brown, 1993).

The author of Thesis 8 introduces learning strategies as an addition to his main approach to learning: the three communication principles identified by Richards and Rodgers (2001): real communication, the task principle, and meaningfulness. To introduce those principles he wrote: "This learning is viewed as a process that involves ..." This way contrasts with the introduction of the last paragraph of his approach to learning.

Learning could also be seen as learning strategies which enable teachers and students to facilitate their learning process when reading authentic materials. Likewise a familiarity with differences between effective reading strategies can help the teacher look for the effective reading behaviour in learners, encourage wider use of these strategies and be on the look out for learners using less effective strategies (Richards, 1990). (T8 CD:40)

I have already commented on his basic assumption that there are more effective and less effective reading strategies.

Finally, I must mention Thesis 16. Its author is the one that gives the most extensive account of strategies citing authors like O'Malley, Oxford and Wenden. She

follows Oxford (1990) to distinguish direct strategies (memory, cognitive and compensation and indirect ones (metacognitive, social and affective) and gives examples of each of them. She also discusses Multiple Intelligences (see section on Learning Styles and Multiple Intelligences in Chapter 7). And in the end she writes:

I can summarize that my view of learning for this course design is cognitivist because I may provide my students with tools which contribute to help them develop their mental processes using the appropriate learning strategies according to the intelligences they use.(T16 Ap Ln:71)

She is actually one of the most discursively “eclectic” writers. Yet, it is interesting that she should name her approach “cognitivist” and that she should want to influence the mental processes more than so many other aspects of their learners (interaction, social, communicative, cooperative skills, comfort, intercultural understanding, etc.)

The Approach to Learning in Thesis 1: The Teacher’s Conceptions at Work

The approach to learning in Thesis 1 is represented through the manipulation of terminology derived from the literature about learning strategies and also through ideological/reified use of certain notions that circulate in the second language acquisition and learning literature. The use of the language reveals an effort to comply with the established terminology and categories and to make the writer’s own design fit into given theoretical descriptions. However, the use of the language suggests little understanding of the rationale or the application of the theories in ways that would be beneficial for her students. Additionally, the use of the language conveys other conceptions about language learning.

Language learning as acquiring knowledge

For the complete non-fragmented text of the Approach to Learning section in Thesis 1 see Appendix F. For the sake of analysis, the text is presented here in fragments.

Designing a course to teach a second or foreign language implies on one hand, taking into account the institution curriculum and norms. We should be aware that we are educating people. On the other hand, we need to bear in mind the way these people can acquire the knowledge that textbook writers want to transmit through activities and strategies.

Language learning is represented as acquiring knowledge. Activities and (instructional) strategies transmit knowledge.

After having gathered all the data and analyzed the results in terms of learning needs and target needs in this research study at [name of institution] we can say that the most suitable approaches to learning are the Cognitive and Metacognitive without leaving aside the Social Affective one.

As the target classroom learning styles are different because some learners prefer to work in peers, others individually and a few in groups of three, the designer states that all these characteristics are a proof of the incorporation of the Social Affective strategies through which learners may ask questions, cooperate and empathize with others.

The socio-affective approach and socio-affective strategies

The “social affective” approach in the first fragment above seemingly means the incorporation of “social affective strategies” into the course. Social affective strategies in her view are incorporated in a course when students are prompted into interaction with different number of interlocutors. Socio-affective strategies (i.e. interaction with peers), in her wording, are a means to get students to ask questions, cooperate with others, and empathize with others. These three behaviours are then represented as accomplishments rather than a means or strategies per se and group work is then the (teaching) strategy for

achieving them. Following Oxford (1990), however, asking questions, cooperating with others, and empathizing with others are sets of concrete social strategies. And yet, asking questions can be said to be a concrete strategy or action, cooperating with others can be considered both a strategy and an outcome, and empathizing will need certain steps or concrete tactics or techniques to be achieved (see Oxford, 1999, p. 246-147). In the excerpt these actions may happen as long as people are put to work together. It must also be noted that though the author seems to be using Oxford's terminology, the use shows a discrepancy - affective strategies according to Oxford are a separate set of strategies which involve "lowering anxiety, self encouragement, taking emotional temperature".

The former analysis uncovers an apparently minor feature in the use of the language. It, however, finds correlation in the materials designed for this thesis. Students are asked to work together and "asking questions, cooperating and empathizing" is expected to happen spontaneously since there is no hint in this direction when group work is proposed. This is shown in a reproduction of the instructions for group work in one chapter written in the materials of Thesis 1.

Get in groups of three and answer these questions. Then tell the whole class about the differences between you and your partners.

1. Do you have a house?
2. Is it your house or is it rented?
3. How much do you pay per month?
4. Are houses I (name of town) expensive?
5. How often do prices of houses go up?
6. Is it easy to own a house in your city?

It's time to write (Pair work)

1. Let's suppose you rented a house and on the first walk through your home you notice wrong things. Write a letter to your landlord (A partner) specifying your complaints.
2. You're the landlord. Answer your tenant the letter.

Cognitive and metacognitive approaches

The cognitive approach in the following passage from the same thesis also overlaps with the use of cognitive strategies.

The cognitive approach will be developed in this ESP course. Students may be exposed to use their memory through a whole display of Business Vocabulary they are going to encounter. They will also take notes on main ideas and specific points, as was shown by the target class in the analysis. Similarly, the practice of analyzing and reasoning can be used. Furthermore, the intention is to make students aware of how much they will benefit learning both approaches strategies, the Cognitive and Metacognitive which is pointed out by Anderson, Neil J. (1999) when he says that the use of these strategies ignites one's thinking and can lead to more profound learning and improved performance, especially among learners who are struggling as the target class is.

The cognitive approach means then the incorporation of cognitive strategies in the course. This may be a personal interpretation of the cognitive approach or simply an involuntary merging of the two things. Actually, though parallels between the two theories (cognitive and language learning) have been drawn (see O'Malley and Chamot, 1990), early work on learning strategies is not associated with cognitive theory (for example, Rubin, 1975; Naiman, Fröhlich, Stern, & Todesco, 1978 cited in Rees-Miller, 1994). In order to comment on this excerpt it is necessary to review some of the definitions of learning strategies or learner strategies.

Wenden (1987): a) language learning behaviors learners actually engage in to learn and regulate their learning of a second language (p.6); b) what learners know about the strategies they use, i.e. their strategic knowledge (p.6); c) what learners know about aspects of their language learning other than the strategies they use, e.g. what personal factors facilitate L2 learning; general principles to follow to learn a second language successfully [...] (p.7)

Chamot (1987). Techniques, approaches, or deliberate actions that students take in order to facilitate the learning and recall of both linguistic and content area information (p.71)

Winograd and Hare (1988): "Deliberate actions that learner select and control to achieve desired goals and objectives" (p.123 in Anderson, 1999, p.70).

Wenden (1991): Mental steps or operations that learners use to learn a new language and to regulate their efforts to do so (p.18).

Oxford (1990): “specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situation (p.8)

Most of the above definitions have to do with what learners actually do in order to learn, whether mentally, physically, or socially. It is then possible to argue that in any class, when a teacher asks the students to read a text, answer some questions, study some vocabulary, do a grammar exercise, make a presentation, create a dialogue with a partner, they will be using some kind of strategy, and they are likely to use their memory (i.e. establishing connections between neurocells or using the connections already established) either for storing or retrieving information, even of the social kind. And they may use “analyzing and reasoning”. And still, what exactly would it mean to use an approach where cognitive strategies are applied? Perhaps what she means is that she is certain her students will be using mainly cognitive strategies in doing the tasks she asks them to do. Yet if students are given a text to read and asked to answer some questions, there is no way to know what strategy they will apply, unless there is a specific direction towards a concrete strategy (and even so, they can secretly use their own strategies). Otherwise, they can use “transferring”, “translating”, analyzing contrastively”, “taking notes”, “highlighting (all of them cognitive strategies according to Oxford, 1990), or they can use “guessing intelligently”, “getting help”, “using other clues” (all compensation strategies), or they can resort to social strategies like “cooperating with proficient users”, “asking for correction”, etc. The use of modality in “may be exposed”, “can be used” also indicate the degree of certainty about the use of strategies.

Now, the writer also said she was going to use the metacognitive approach (i.e.

the incorporation of metacognitive strategies) but she did not provide any definition either. A brief review is thus necessary: Metacognition is “thinking about thinking” (Anderson, 1999, p.71). Metacognitive strategies are “actions which go beyond purely cognitive devices, and which provide a way for learners to coordinate their own learning process” (Oxford, 1990, p. 136) and they include “Centering Your Learning, “Arranging and Planning Your Learning, and Evaluating Your Learning”. According to O’Malley and Chamot (1990) they involve “thinking about or knowledge of the learning process, planning for learning, monitoring learning while it is taking place, or self-evaluation of learning after the task has been completed (p.231).

As can be seen the approach is extremely sophisticated and explicit incorporation of these strategies requires an additional effort to make these mental processes or this knowledge overt. The lengthy last sentence of the fragment,

Furthermore, the intention is to make students aware of how much they will benefit learning both approaches strategies, the Cognitive and Metacognitive which is pointed out by Anderson, Neil J. (1999) when he says that the use of these strategies ignites one’s thinking and can lead to more profound learning and improved performance, especially among learners who are struggling as the target class is.

conveys strong commitment to and overt positive evaluation of metacognition especially.

This adherence is expressed through the use of “how much they will benefit”, the authoritative status given to Anderson, and also by making his ideas look especially suitable for her students. At the end of the discussion of the discussion of theoretical approaches she also concludes optimistically:

In conclusion, the strategies and skills that have been chosen to complete this course design are intended to fill in the gaps in students’ knowledge that have been left from not challenging texts (T1 Ap Lg:30)

A more cautious stance, however, is suggested by Rees-Miller (1993): “there is no empirical evidence to show that awareness of strategies is a causal factor in L2 learning success” (p.681).

Moreover, a look at her materials does not reveal a deep concern for the use of metacognitive strategies. Following is an outline of her first lesson in Unit 2 (See Appendix G: Sample of materials in Thesis 1.)

Lesson 1

- 1.1 Types of houses in other countries . (The picture of three mansions can be seen)
- 1.2 Types of houses in my country
Find out about the different types of houses that exist in your country and compare them to the houses in exercise 1.1. Practice comparison with adjectives.
- 1.3 Preparing to read activity
Get in groups of three and answer these questions. Then tell the whole class about the differences between you and your partners.
 1. Do you have a house?
 2. Is it your house or is it rented?
 3. How much do you pay per month?
 4. Are houses in (name of town) expensive?
 5. How often do prices of houses go up?
 6. Is it easy to own a house in your city?
- 1.4 Reading
Scan the following reading. Go over exercise 1.5 (a text entitled “Nationwide Sees house Prices Rise” follows.
- 1.5 Comprehending the text
Answer the following questions based on the article you have already finished reading.
 1. What is the article about?
 2. Do prices accelerate here as they do in England?
 3. What does the author mean with the expression “property maker”?
 4. What does the author say about mortgages in the reading?
- 1.6 Business Vocabulary.
Now it is your turn to find in the article “Nationwide Sees How Prices Rise” the vocabulary that can be used in business. Make a list and write examples.
- 1.7 Rediscovering grammar
Analyzing and Writing
 1. In the first paragraph of the article say what tense is used by the writer and write the sentence.
 2. Where else is the same tense found? Could you please write the sentences?

Actually an excerpt from the Approach to Language section in the same work suggests a naïve assumption about how awareness is going to be raised through strategy

use.

it can be said that the approach to language should be skills-based, which is going to help learners to arise strategy awareness, fluency, vocabulary development and comprehension. (T1 ap Lg:30)

Interaction

Other beliefs/conceptions/ideological use of language surface in the following fragment.

Regarding peer learning, which can be really productive for the students in English 3, many things could be said, especially because this might be an advantage for a low-performance student, who is going to get the support from a more able peer. Furthermore, Van Lier, Leo (1996) states that authentic dialogs are of student-student interaction because while they are interacting they do not focus on accuracy, do not use authoritarian control, and do not seek a display of linguistic skills.

This paragraph is apparently supporting the decision to endorse the social affective approach understood mainly as allowing different types of interaction to happen. But the case is made only for student-student interaction because the more able peer supports the less able one and, as van Lier claims, it produces authentic dialogues. Nothing is said about any specific attributes this interaction should have, about the advantages (or disadvantages) for the more able peer or about those learners who prefer to work individually. It is also implied that when a dialogue takes place, learners do not focus on accuracy or on the display of linguistic skills (though all of this depends on the task, the prior learning history of the learners, the feedback provided by the teacher, etc.) and that there should not be authoritarian control in a dialogue (as if this kind of interaction were not authentic per se, or as if students do not need to learn to interact with people holding and demonstrating authority). The features of the 'authentic' dialogues conducive to learning are not mentioned. See section devoted to the presentation of the

notion of authenticity.

Technology

The following fragment reveals ideologies related to technology.

With the inclusion of the Internet use in this course, students will have the chance to do research, which is the prior goal at the university. As Kramsch, Claire (1993) points out computer technology offers possibilities of teaching context itself in a way that teachers have always dreamed of. By opening up micro worlds to play with, by providing opportunities for autonomous, exploratory learning, for analyzing, synthesizing, interpreting social phenomena, these technologies, born from the spectacular advances made in cognitive science, not only are attractive to use, they also encourage teachers to devise more refined procedures for the organization and presentation of knowledge. This is used in the learner-directed way of learning.

Unlike previous paragraphs, where some degree of hedging is conveyed through the use of modals, the writer expresses here certainty regarding the positive effect of Internet on her course. She assumes a direct and positive correlation between the Internet and research at her institution. This is a common belief that circulates in the Colombian environment and does not really consider the kind of knowledge that is available on the web or the money needed to have access to serious newspapers, data bases, or other resources. It equates research with browsing the web looking for information, an assumption that can lead to writing practices like the one in Thesis 3 described above.

Use of terminology

The language use in the fragment includes explicit positive evaluation: in a way teachers have always dreamed of, spectacular advances, attractive, encourage, refined. Besides, the paragraph relies on a common assumption with the reader about the nature and benefits of a number of concepts. For example, “teaching context”, “autonomous

exploratory learning”, “analyzing, synthesizing, interpreting social phenomena”, and learner-directed way of learning. That is, since none of these are explained, it is assumed the reader knows what they all mean.

As a way of conclusion it can be said that the approach to language learning for this target class is a process in which the students’ learning styles will be relevant and the three approaches mentioned above are indeed going to help learners arrange and plan their language learning in an efficient, effective way.

This conclusion is in tension with the paragraphs above it because learners’ styles are never explored in depth (see Section on Learner Styles in Chapter 7), and are deduced only from verbalized preferences of interaction and the case was made only for peer-learning. “Arranging and planning language learning” was never mentioned as a goal or a strategy to be pursued, though that may have been what was meant with the metacognitive approach. Under metacognitive strategies Oxford (1990) includes a set of strategies called “Arranging and planning your leaning” which includes six concrete strategies. In the fragment, however, this set of strategies is presented as a general goal or an arrival point (“the three approaches [...] help learners arrange and plan their language learning”). And yet, since this is mentioned in the concluding paragraph, it is likely to respond to the need to continue inserting key vocabulary from the language learning strategy literature. And indeed, the arranging and planning is not evident in the materials.

Some conclusions

In general, it can be said that Thesis 1 sets forth an approach to learning supported to a great extent by the terminology used in the tradition of learning strategies (Oxford,

1990; Wenden & Rubin, 1987; O'Malley, 1987). However, the specific terms and categories receive a passing mention, as an occurrence that may happen during the course. The text provides minimal information about the writer's understanding of how the literature has claimed that strategies work for second language learners, almost no definitions for the strategies chosen, no explanation of why they are assumed to be important and need to be learned, how they can be used, how they can help learners achieve their goals or something along the lines of the assumption that successful language learners are reported to use a number of strategies and that strategy training can help learners become familiar and use them. The text is more an inventory of selected non-defined strategies that are expected to happen in the course. The lack of profound discussion coincides with the absence of strategy training in the materials.

The needs analysis in the context is not revealing in terms of strategies students use already. As Oxford herself wrote for those interested in strategy training, it is first necessary to understand how they work, then assess how students learn, and then undertake strategy training. The teacher of Thesis 1 does not mention strategy assessment or training at all. It seems that she expects students to engage in the use of strategies and that is apparently what the approach is about.

Independent of whether the approach to learning based on learning strategies is understood as developed by mainstream theorists, another alarming feature in this thesis (and in general of a number of the works examined) is the fact that since teachers are asked to express their approach to learning, they seem to need to commit to one theory or one paradigm. Acquaintance with literature that raises doubts about the effectiveness of a

given approach would moderate expectations. Feyten, Flaitz, LaRocca wrote “The success of strategy training as measured by researchers, however is not as great as one might suspect (1999, p.16). Rees-Miller (1993, 1994) refers to literature which documents unsuccessful learners who employ a repertoire of strategies which successful learners are said to use (Porte, 1988; Vann & Abraham, 1990; and also the review in O’Malley & Chamot, 1990); also the evidence about what good language behaviors are does not always correlate with gains in communicative competence (Politzer & McGroarty (1985); that not all attempts to teach learning strategies are successful (O’Malley et al., 1985; Wenden, 1987). Rees-Miller (1993) rightly then warns: “the lack of unqualified success reported by proponents of learner training suggests that implementation of learner training in the classroom should be approached with caution” (p.683). Chamot and Rubin (1994) also concede there are a number of variables demonstrated to affect the usefulness of a strategy, and that it is perhaps a repertoire of strategies and the ability to deploy them that would correlate with effectiveness.

In the concrete case of strategy training, while O’Malley (1987) would exhort teachers to include the use of strategies here and there into the curriculum and feel confident that it is possible to do it, the trend, at least for this particular teacher, and for a number of others is to adopt only one approach. If O’Malley wrote: “teachers need not feel that their role is limited to simply providing comprehensible input but can include a variety of learning strategies which can be paired with specific types of language tasks” (1987 p. 143), it would be advisable to think in the opposite terms: teachers should not think they should limit their teaching to strategy training, but they should think of making

input comprehensible, finding or designing materials that give adequate challenge to their students, designing tasks that provides practice for the kinds of situations they will face, to provide opportunities to de-center their positions and prepare them for intercultural encounters, etc.

Dealing with the notion of strategy at the described level of understanding/comprehension does not seem to add much of anything to her teaching besides new terminology. This gain, however, may be of vital importance for graduates of the program, because it is one way to signal belonging to a certain (privileged? superior?) group of informed teachers. The lack of understanding of how the theory has been justified and applied (and also been shown not to work at times) and the absence of a critical stance towards the knowledge made available to them leaves teachers as helpless as ever.

In this chapter I have shown multiple ways in which the discussion of theoretical notions regarding learning turns out to be problematic in the theses. It results in strong adhesions to certain types of theories, sometimes without due clarification of terms and implications, with distortions of the sources read, and with rigid compartmentalization of bodies of knowledge. The design of the research and the nature of the requirement for graduation (a written paper) are likely to prompt the given treatment of theoretical approaches. The designers do not have the opportunity to construct a course on the basis of wider and more detailed information about how learning is happening or not happening in each of the contexts. That is why their course design is actually a hypothesis of what may work. Only the language used does not construe this tentative

and provisional character. In fact, the theoretical discussion is essential for the construction of the identity of a new type of teacher and researcher. Being able to cite and discuss approaches without apparent ambivalences and reserves generates credibility and status.

CHAPTER 7: REPRESENTATION OF POPULAR CONCEPTS IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND EDUCATION

There are a number of notions that are known to be critical today in language teaching and education. Some of these become part of the thesis-writers' discourse and the theoretical assumptions they intend to apply. An analysis of how these are discussed shows that though there are different interpretations across theses, the tendency is to reify these constructs and adhere to absolute positions. In this chapter I will discuss the representation of the notions of Learning styles, multiple intelligences, authenticity, autonomy and motivation.

Learning styles and multiple intelligences

Almost all teachers mention the importance of acknowledging the students' learning styles and taking them into consideration for designing a course and its materials. It is understood as part of the ESP enterprise to meet learners' needs, especially when these are understood from the "broad or process-oriented interpretation" (Brindley, 1989, p.63) or as "learning needs" (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987), both of which are said to take into account subjective aspects of the learners (Duddley-Evans & St. Jones, 1999, p.123). It is, however, one of the terms that are used most liberally and most of the time it does not find direct support either in the Needs Analysis or in the courses designed and their corresponding materials. There are a few teachers who take the notion seriously and do take decisions in their course design that incorporate it. However, as I

will demonstrate, their analysis and the application of the theory are debatable.

Sentences like the following are found repeatedly across theses:

Materials in this course will be designed taking into consideration students' interests, ages and learning styles. (T11 CD:35)

The main aims in this research are: [a list of goals includes the following]

To establish the students learning styles and strategies and to design activities aiming to suit or improve them. (T12 Intro:4)

These sentences are written as if in passing, because they are of no consequence anywhere in the thesis. Even some more emphatic uses of the notion of learning styles in the discourse of the teachers are not actually linked to the introduction of this dimension into the course design and its materials. For example, for the authors of Thesis 3 and 7 it is a vital purpose of the Needs Analysis to find important information about learning styles in order to make decisions regarding syllabus and methodology.

The main reasons that justify a needs analysis at the English program at the [name of institution] are:

- Learning styles have to be considered in the syllabus design.
- The methodology needs to be adapted according to students' learning styles. (T3 Rat:3)

This ESP courses focused on the purposes of using the English language by learners, help teachers in determining learning styles, language needs and also target needs based on a learner – centred curriculum (Nunan, David 1988). (T7 Rat:3)

Before starting the ESP design a Needs Analysis has to be carried out, since this makes teachers aware of the specific student's learning styles, necessities of the language (T7 Rat:4)

The questionnaires (see Appendices H and I for complete questionnaires in these two theses) include each a couple of questions about general preferences, which can hardly give a picture of a learner's learning style. An examination of the Needs Analysis questionnaires that are intended to address the issue of learning styles indicates that they

contain two or three multiple-choice questions like: How do you prefer to study English? What kind of activities do you prefer to do in class? How do you prefer to receive instructions? Which do you prefer: individual, pair or bigger group work?

This is how the writer of Thesis 3 presents the results that are relevant for learning styles:

Learning styles: They also show high preference in learning through conversation with an 83% of the total and a 17% prefers to learn through textbooks.

The way they prefer to work shows 67% with group work and 33% pair work, they did not show any preference with individual work. (T3 Res: 29)

While Thesis 3 does not make any mention later of how this information about learning styles is translated into tangible decisions, Thesis 7 takes some steps into this direction.

After having a look at different theories of language, the preferred learning styles and the analysis of learning strategies used by some students who were observed during and outside the classes, the cognitive approach was chosen as a basis of this course. (T7 Cd:29)

The decision to opt for the cognitive approach to learning after considering the learning styles of the students seems to contradict the very nature of how the application of the theory of learning styles has usually been conceived. Oxford and Anderson (1995), for example, insist that teachers should not focus exclusively on cognitive style elements, but that all sides should be involved (social, affective, behavioral, executive, and physiological). Moreover, students are likely to benefit from trying styles outside their favorite ones, or from ‘stretching’ their styles in order to be able to cope with future learning tasks in other environments.

Following is a fragment from a designer who, at a point in her work, engages in

the discourse of learning styles, intelligence , and difference.

It will be significant for this course to design activities that facilitate training students to use their intelligence in a conscious way and maximize their potential, and that allow them to experience a variety of cognitive activities in order to appeal to different learning styles, taking into account the developmental age of the learners. In words of Dubin and Olshtain (1986) “Course planning which centers around learners and their needs must concern itself with individual differences in learning styles”. (T11 Ap Ln: 11)

The writer combines the phrases “training students”, “use x in a conscious way”, “maximize potential”, “appeal to different learning styles” in what can be said to be the perfect discourse in a learner-centered approach. However, while it seems reasonable to have students experience a variety of (cognitive) activities, there is no way to know if there will be indeed an appeal for different learning styles. Students may approach all the tasks from their usual perspective (globally, intuitively, in a group, etc). That is, in order to achieve this “appeal to different learning styles” more than variety of activities is needed. A look at the materials (see Appendix J: Sample of materials in Thesis 11 (abridged)) confirms that the activities are prevalently cognitive (short texts for reading and answering comprehension questions) and that there is no explicit training for strategies, styles, or intelligences in a conscious way. Moreover, the activities privilege the analytic style because the comprehension questions require attention to details. In an exercise that lets learner listen to the text and where there is the suggestion not to pay attention to unknown words, the activity that follows the text requires them to read and focus on precise elements. Even in a proposed “backward game” students are asked to write events in the story backwards (desserd teg) and have the other decipher what the word is. The game also favors an analytic approach.

A conclusion from this brief analysis is that some teachers either do not know

how to investigate learning styles, or cannot do it in the context of this research work, and yet they have to make some moves that indicate a certain familiarity, preoccupation and/or actual action to address the issue. Even if they do not make a formal investigation of learning styles, they engage in discourses that make them appear informed and in control of the differences but in practice they do not always know what to do or even what to say they would do regarding that diversity.

In other works there seems to be more consistent preoccupation with the investigation and application of the notion of learning styles. Two examples of how the notion of learning style is brought up and retaken throughout the work will be provided next. In both of them the idea of investigating students' learning style is more developed than in the theses from the previous examples (Theses 3, 7 and 11).

Thesis 6 is an illustration of an attempt at justifying, describing and applying the notion of learning styles throughout the thesis. The first reference to styles in this thesis is found in the rationale with an elaboration of the idea that developments in educational psychology helped give rise to ESP. Here the author makes reference to a number of factors that are said to influence the learning processes but he presents them exclusively from a cognitive perspective and his only source is a lecture. No other reference is found.

2.1.8 Cognitive differences in the rise of ESP

2.1.8.1. Perception

This stage is strongly based on the senses and should be included in an ESP course due to the fact that not everybody's learning styles is in agreement to the same sense but sometimes this is considered of two or more. The senses of the perception stage are as follows: Sight, ear, smell, touch, and taste.

2.1.8.4 Learning

As a learning process the learning itself is based on styles. Styles such as cognitive in which we

find certain aspects like: see, think, remember and feel, these are internal features in the human being's condition. Cognitive operations in the learning aspect: The cognitive operations are as follows: Attention, perception, memory, conceptualization, thinking, information process, judgment and making decision (T6 Rat:10)

The connection between the notions can not be clearly discerned partly because the word choice is unusual and the cohesion devices are a bit confusing. For example, the reference to perception as a stage is not justified in the passage because there is no antecedent that clarifies "a stage of what". "Not everybody's learning style is in agreement to the same sense but sometimes this is considered of two or more" may mean that different people rely for their perceptions on different senses, and that there may be more than one sense at play. In 2.1.8.4, the explanation of the relation between learning and styles is presented as absolute ("learning itself is based on styles") (as if it were the only factor to influence it) and there is reference to cognitive style only. A number of other terms are listed but not convincingly linked. The use of the language in this fragment indicates a certain lack of familiarity with, and difficulty in, writing about this topic and manipulating the terms in the discourse in a coherent way. It also conveys a rigid and narrow conception of learning styles.

In the Results section of the same work some conclusions are drawn:

The results also showed the importance of teaching them English according to the different learning styles they possess, such as socio affective, cognitive and audio (p.13)

In the pedagogical implications the author restates his decision:

Assign the students activities that are in agreement with the following learning styles: Auditivo, socio-afectivo, analitico. (T6 Ped Imp: 16)

This conclusion can only make reference to the fact that his students (29%) “think they can learn better” by listening to songs and they prefer to be evaluated orally and in pairs (41%). (See Appendix K for results of Learning Needs Questionnaires in Thesis 6). “The importance of teaching them according to the different learning styles” is not derived from the results. The conclusion about the three styles that students allegedly possess is problematic because: a) it ignores a number of other ways to learn not considered in the questionnaire: (Ehrman & Oxford (1990 cited in Oxford and Anderson, 1995:204) mention that there are at least 20 style dimensions; b) it ignores lower percentages of the students that would prefer other types of activities and evaluations; c) it is relying on verbalized preferences which are not really indicative of how these students learn; d) “cognitive”, “socio affective”, and “audio” styles are terms in an odd classification. According to Willig (1988), Wallace & Oxford (1992), Oxford and Anderson (1995), “cognitive”, “social” and affective” are aspects or components of the learning styles, while “auditory” would be a concrete style. Thus, catering for “cognitive styles” would not distinguish, for example, between global styles (or relational, following Cohen, 1969) and analytic styles (or studial learning according to Ellis, 1989), or between field dependent and field independent because the cognitive component prevails in all these styles. That is, this classification would not allow one to distinguish the types of differences which the theory of learning styles attempts to address.

My thinking, however, is that rather than styles, the author means cognitive and socio affective strategies. Oxford and Anderson (1995) address this difference and they argue that strategies are “specific behaviors or techniques that students use” (p.203) in the

process of learning. Learning styles are “general approaches” (Oxford & Lavine, 1992, p.38), or “the overall pattern” (Cornett, 1983, p.9 in Oxford and Anderson, 1995, p.203) that learners follow to engage in learning behavior. Given the subtle nuances and the variety of terminology within this theory, it is not surprising that the newcomer can get lost in the labyrinth.

Another reference to learning style in the same work is found in the section devoted to situational constraints. I would suggest that the reference to learning styles in the fragment below is a way to make the argument about the lack of equipment sound more sophisticated. After all, songs and movies are some of the things that are easily available out of the classroom in this town if the students have the desire to resort to this type of learning aids.

According to results of the research carried out at [name of institution] the constraints should be solved since they can directly influence in the getting of the learning objectives activities related to learning styles and the development of a good listening skill due to the fact the school is not providing the students with the necessary tools to develop the desired competences for the target job situations. The school does not have a language laboratory where the can practice the listening skill similar to what their target situation is going to be about. Another bad implication of the lack of the language laboratory is that the students won't be able to learn English by listening to songs. On the other hand, the school doesn't either have an audiovisual room where the students can watch movies. (T6 Res:14)

The analysis shows that there is a perceivable effort in this thesis to develop and use the notion of “learning styles” for the benefit of the students. It is also obvious that it is not an easy enterprise either to write about it or to apply it. The reasons may be related to the newness of the notion, the terminology, its logic and its application for this particular teacher; the lack of acquaintance with the literature and with teaching practice that puts the notion into concrete actions; reliance on superficial accounts made almost in passing in secondary sources; the oral discourses that circulate in the program which may

also deal with the notion in a superficial way; lack of criticism of his own interpretation and application of the notion, to mention just a few.

The second example is from Thesis 2. The following are the excerpts where there is direct mention of learning styles.

In teaching an ESP course teachers have to design a syllabus and choose the material to be taught not just following their inner assumptions, but determining the language needs, the target needs and the learning styles of the students. (T2 Intro:1)

Students' learning styles are very varied, which implies that there should be a combination of both product and process activities, and work should be done in order students realize their way of learning. (T2 Ped Imp:35)

Taking into account different learning styles [a parameter for evaluation of materials in use, her underlining]

Most of the different preferred learning styles of the students are taken into account within this textbook. It has sections for almost all kinds of intelligences. The activities are varied and cater for all learning styles: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, experiential, analytic, dependent. The one that does not take into account very much is the independent. It does not foster autonomous learning that much, which is a negative aspect since it is one of the styles that should be most developed. See appendix. (T2 Mat Ev:47)

[In the Role of Materials section]

Thus, based on the above [Cunningsworth, 1984; Tomlinson, 1998] mentioned readings I will mention some characteristics that the material to be used should [...]

- Take into account different learning styles [...] (T2 CD Meth:73-74)

In this thesis the notion of learning styles consistently comes up in key sections of the work though it is not mentioned directly in the Needs Analysis and the Results sections. The variety of learning styles referred to in the Pedagogical Implications section is not supported by the Needs Analysis (see the questionnaire for students in Appendix L) because none of the questions refer to styles in the way the notion is treated in the literature (Jung, 1923; Myers, 1962; McCarthy, 1987; Mamchur, 1996; Silver, Strong, & Perini, 2000; Riding, 1991; Riding & Rayner, 1998; Kolb, 1984; Kolb et al, 2001; Reid, 1995; Ehrman & Leaver, 2003; Oxford, 1993). Actually, no source in the

bibliography makes reference to literature about learning styles, and nowhere in the thesis is the notion discussed besides the excerpts reproduced above.

The most direct account of what is meant by learning styles is given in the Materials Evaluation part, where there is a list of styles catered for in the materials in use before the new design. The parameter for materials evaluation (“taking into consideration different learning styles”) is taken from Tomlinson (1998:17). According to this assessment, the current textbook receives a positive evaluation on the ground that it has sections and activities for “all” intelligences and styles. The same parameter is retaken in the “Role of Materials” section and applied to the new materials. These materials consist of a reading course in which students are taught and given practice in different ways of reading (scanning, skimming, identifying main ideas) and vocabulary study strategies (using cognates, deducing meaning from context) with brief reviews of discrete grammar points. My analysis of the new materials following Tomlinson’s parameter and list of styles shows that the learners that use the booklet will see the language written down (for visual learners), will be explained features of the language, particularly discrete ones (for studial and analytical individuals), and are asked to use the language (for experiential learners). The materials do not cater to kinaesthetic, auditory, or global styles, which would make them inferior to the ones they intend to exceed.

In sum, there is an appearance of serious research work consistently concerned with recognizing learners’ differences through finding out and respecting their learning styles as part of the mission of an ESP approach. However, this is all done at the level of discourse, in which expressions like “take into consideration learning styles”, “recognize

the learning styles”, “take into account learning styles”, “cater for learning styles”, “to determine learning styles”, “to establish learning styles” abound but are not meant seriously. The use of these expressions suggests a rigid notion of learning styles. Assuming that students have a certain style or “preferred modes of learning”, can inadvertently affect the expectation regarding what students want to learn and how they want to learn. Studies have demonstrated that styles are context-dependent, that is, that they vary according to the task characteristics, subject matter content, teaching mode, and also the type of evaluation (Laurillard, 1979, McConkie, 1977, Chi & Glaser, 1983 cited by Cornbleth, 1987). By categorizing whole groups of students according to alleged learning styles, the effect is one of homogenization of students. And by trying to “cater” to certain learning styles, opportunities to learn new approaches to learning tasks are missed. “Instead of assuming that students are ‘this way’ or ‘that way’ as an inevitable consequence of their inherent cognitive or learning style, consider the possibility that they have or have not learned to approach given tasks in particular ways” (Cornbleth, 1987, p.197). This does not mean that the materials or the courses designed are wrong, inappropriate or ineffective. Actually they have a number of outstanding features and are indeed a superb accomplishment. Yet they do not cater to all or a diversity of learning styles in better ways than any other course which follows a written textbook where language is explained and students are asked to use it.

In fact there are a number of scholars in the field of Second Language Acquisition that have expressed scepticism regarding the learning style construct (Skehan, 1989; Skehan, 1998; Dörnyei & Skehan, 2003; Snow, Corno & Jackson, 1996; Riding, 2000a;

2000b). Riding (2000) summarized the problems with learning styles:

Workers in this area have been remiss in that they have: generated a large and bewildering array of labels purporting to being different styles, used ineffective and questionable assessment methods, not made a clear distinction between style and other constructs such as intelligence and personality, and have been slow to demonstrate the practical utility of style (Riding, 2000b, p.368 cited in Dörnyei, 2006, p.121)

The theory of multiple intelligences is also brought up by the teachers in their research work (Theses 9, 14, 16, 18, 20) and often in association with the theory of learning styles. Sometimes reference is made to it rather matter-of-factly as one more cliché:

Equally important it is that materials and activities should take into account different learning styles and intelligences because people learn using different strategies.(T17 Mat Ev:20)

Or with certain pride at being able to talk about and (potentially) apply the theory:

I was not as tolerant as I am now, I can study the students' learning strategies and intelligence types and I am a better listener and I can write in a more academic way I can organize an oral presentation, and also help my students to identify their natural competencies and gifts and cultivate them as Howard Gardner (1986) recommends. (T1 Conc:45)

Or as an enthusiastic follower of the theory pouring all kinds of epithets even though concrete application is not manifest.

Multiple intelligences

We do not intend to go deeper into this wonderful concept that has really transformed education in the last years. We have chosen this particular title for this section because we consider learning strategies definition starts here; and learning strategies constitute another of those basic questions asked to the teacher in the teaching-learning process.

We have already said that the teacher must be an excellent motivating agent, trying to stop considering himself as the owner of knowledge. So, in our opinion, these objectives could be reached in a practical way by taking into account the appropriate learning strategies. It is exactly here where specific knowledge about the different types of intelligence our students have plays a vital role. An accurate and suitable analysis in this sense may give us a clearer idea about how we should act in front of our students and about the type of activities we should introduce in our classes. [...] This topic is really huge and fascinating. In here, we have made reference to it because it is impossible to avoid it, but going deeper into any of its aspects would make us exceed the limits allowed for this essay. (T9 CD:36)

The writers of Thesis 18 apparently intended to use the theory of multiple intelligence as a criterion to evaluate the materials (along with other criteria like impact, flexibility, authenticity, relevance and usefulness of contents, etc.), but they made their assessment in terms of learning styles.

Multiple Intelligences. The activities in the unit favor studial learning where the student benefits from a careful and explicit explanation of theory to write a descriptive composition. An inclination towards the studial way of learning is addressed in the set of material.(T18 Mat Ev: 31)

A similar mix of theories and/or terminology becomes apparent in Thesis 16. This designer included in her Needs Analysis a “test based on multiple intelligences” (See Appendix M: Test on multiple intelligences and its results in Thesis 16), whose purpose was “to identify the kinds of intelligence that students develop in order to find their learning styles, personalities and preferences” (p.10). She made reference to Gardner’s 1993 book. The author set as the learning goal for her course the “development of multiple intelligences (p.43), and two objectives derive from it: “Students should be able to work with activities according to their different skills and learning styles” and “They should be able to acquire oral abilities through the use of their intelligences” (p.44)

The wording of these objectives reveals a mix of terminology. The designer may have found that the theory of Multiple Intelligences is somehow related to that of Learning Styles but this relation is a theoretical elaboration which requires clear understanding of each notion. Gardner warns against the conflation of the two terms (Gardner, 1993, 1995, 2006) and has argued that there is an important difference: Style is the habitual way of approaching a learning task and intelligence refers to the computational power or capacity (Gardner, 2006, p.65) to deal with numbers, language,

social relations, etc. Following Silver, Strong and Perini (2000) intelligences refer to the content of learning, usually classified into eight distinct fields, and style refers to the individualized way each person perceives and processes information. Gardner (1993) argues that a particular individual may have different modes of operations across intelligences, that is, a person may respond differently to different types of content. Thus, it seems that investigating intelligences is different from investigating learning styles. And unless the teacher gives the student the encouragement and opportunity to try different ways of approaching a task or new modes of dealing with specific contents, learners may be then stuck with one approach for everything. In this sense, the objectives set by the designer of Thesis 16 for students to resort to their customary way to do or process the activities proposed and to resort to their existing capacity to develop the speaking competence does not seem a very meritorious objective in terms of the Multiple Intelligences theory. Moreover, the general goal, that is, the expectation that in this way the students' multiple intelligences will be developed, is not likely to be attainable. This application of the theory contradicts the general idea that learners may benefit from resorting to other learning styles and other intelligences (Tomlinson, 1998, p.18) or that they should learn to be flexible and adapt their styles to fit various contexts and tasks (Silver, Strong & Perini, 2000).

An idea that Gardner (1995, 2004) and others (Taylor, 2002) have emphatically opposed is the belief that intelligences can be adequately measured with the help of a de-contextualized pen and paper multiple-choice test. Gardner underscores that, if intelligences need to be assessed, it should be done through a task that puts the

intelligence of the learner at work in a familiar setting, in a way he calls “intelligent-fair”.

The materials in this thesis include a variety of activities, very much like the activities in the textbook in use in her context (Interchange by Jack C. Richards, 2005 Intro level). She adds in her materials the classification of the activities according to her understanding of the literature on multiple intelligences. She indicates the predominant intelligence with an icon to the left of every new activity. Below are examples of the activities proposed and their categorization.

Table 4: Categorization of activities according to Intelligence - Thesis 16

1. Look at the photo and answer the questions (A man and a woman on the beach)	Visual/spatial
2. Use the following expressions to fill in the clouds (Various greetings to be provided as turns for the people on the picture)	Verbal/linguistic
3. Listen and read these conversations	Musical/rhythmic
4. Practice with a partner using your name (using the dialogues read as models for introductions)	Interpersonal
5. Here are some expressions for introducing yourself and others in formal and informal ways	Verbal/linguistic
6. Listen to five introductions. Then number the pictures from 1 to 5 (matching introductions to pictures)	Musical/rhythmic
7. Read the following situations. Should you use formal or informal language? Write F for formal and I for informal	Verbal/linguistic
8. Listen to the rate of speech in each conversation. Decide if it is formal or informal	Musical/rhythmic
9. Select one of the following situations, then write and act out a conversation:	Bodily/kinesthetic

A closer look at the activities and their labels reveals that the classification is not that straightforward. Can the musical/rhythmic intelligence be developed whenever a listening exercise is proposed in this booklet? Exercise 8 seems to rely on this intelligence, and those students who do not have a developed linguistic intelligence,

would benefit from an approach that allows them to resort to their appreciation of rhythm, pitch, etc. That would be the case of a secondary intelligence (linguistic intelligence in this case according to the test) being helped by a predominant intelligence (musical). Exercise 2, however, (and most of the other listening activities) seems focused on the function of language and its forms and not really related to musical intelligence. Similar doubts can be raised regarding other activities. For example, selecting a topic and acting out a conversation (No. 9) does not necessarily mean that learners will develop or rely on their bodily/kinaesthetic intelligences; or the “trivial” use of spatial/visual intelligence in Activity 1 does not seem to rely on “the ability to perceive the visual-spatial world accurately and perform transformations on one’s perceptions” (Smagorinski, 1991, p2). Another quibble in this analysis concerns the decision of including activities that allegedly rely on five intelligences. If the idea is to develop “multiple intelligences”, why were the other two (intrapersonal and logical-mathematical) not included? And even if we accept that most students are gifted musically and interpersonally, why should the course privilege these intelligences to the detriment of the minority of students?

The sequence and the emphasis of the activities is presumably based on the results of her Needs Analysis. According to the results she presented:

students learn mostly by sounds and images, and also prefer to learn by doing group activities in which they can interact with others. [...] It is very important to mention that one of the objectives of this course is that the students should be able to work with activities according to their different skills and learning styles. So that I am going to focus the course on activities related to the kinds of intelligences student use more to learn: the inter-personal and musical intelligences (p.21).

Among the activities designed, a good proportion of them were predominantly

interpersonal and musical/rhythmic respectively (14 and 12 respectively). But if this were to be translated into another terminology, what this means is that 14 activities are meant for students to do with a partner, and 12 of them are listening activities. And this would not come as a surprise, or as an unusual thing to do given that the Target Goal of the course is the development of oral skills. Only now they bear the prestigious seal of the Multiple Intelligences.

In his book *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons* (2006) Howard Gardner acknowledges that he did not write or develop the theory as an educator and that his main interest has been in producing frameworks that educators can adapt according to the specificity of their contexts. There are, however, multiple adoptions of the theory, many of which without any quality control (Kornhaber and Gardner, 2006). Gardner says he is skeptical when educators tell him they have a MI classroom, or an MI school. He would prefer that to hear how the concept of MI has achieved goals previously been set in a context. That is, “the theory should never in itself constitute or guide educational ends”(p.264). Actually, one of the findings of the SUMIT project (Project of Schools Using MI Theory) is that in those schools where MI theory is successfully applied for the benefit of the students, the teachers and administrators are convinced that the idea is to use the theory to open up the curriculum to more learners as a tool to achieve established goals but multiple intelligences is not a goal per se.

The analysis of the adoption of the theory of Multiple Intelligences in Thesis 16 shows how a teacher newcomer to an appealing theory gets caught in the intricacies, contradictions and delicacies of a theory. It is undoubtedly that there is an important

effort to be truthful to the approach and go beyond verbal admiration or passing comments. In the conclusion of her work there is a good degree of confidence in the quality of the research process and a sense of accomplishment in being able to introduce some of the theories into the work.

[I]f we want to study the learning process of a language, it is necessary to focus on the classroom. But how can I do language classroom research? What is it exactly? Where does it come from? What are its main characteristics? Definitely, the research that was carried out answers all the questions above and also lets see learning-teaching from different points of view which allow us to do a better job with the students. Now we are involved with the current teaching-learning theories, strategies and methodologies that contribute to the improvement of our current practice and educational process as teachers.

The investigation is a useful tool to handle the common difficulties found in our everyday classes. Besides it opens teachers' minds because we find different ways to solve our problems reading other teacher-researchers experiences, and creating strategies based on principles, assumptions and given theories. (p.55).

Besides being an acritical evaluation of her own research, this fragment touches upon an important point. The assumption that permeates this text is that getting acquainted with different theories, strategies and methodologies allows teachers to make better job with students. Moreover, it is the "current" theories what makes not only the teaching practice better, but also what makes the teachers' educational process better. This kind of assumption may be what makes it difficult for teachers to take a critical stance towards theories and to be inclined to try some of the superficial aspects of the newer theories. After all, in a piece of writing such as a thesis, it is the fancy intelligence test, the cute icons next to each instruction in the material, and the discourse of intelligences and styles what can be seen and evaluated. Missing in this evaluation of the research is evidence of more preoccupation for the students, the ones who should benefit from the theories. There are questions this designer should be asking: how is the

achievement of the goal “development of multiple intelligences” going to be evaluated”? And regarding the objectives “students should be able to work with activities according to their different skills and learning styles’ and “they should be able to acquire oral abilities through the use of their intelligence”, how will the teacher know if the students are using their intelligences, skills or styles? Is this really what a program would like to achieve? If potential students using the course designed are not demonstrating desired progress in their oral skills, would it be because of how the activities are not balanced in terms of intelligences? Or, more generally, would it be worthwhile looking for these answers inside this theory? Using the discourse of styles and intelligences contribute to “an aura of professional expertise both by providing a language that is incomprehensible to most people outside the profession and by suggesting that professionals have the knowledge and capacity to deal with the problems they have identified’ (Cornbleth, 1987, p.204), which is perhaps relevant in a task like a thesis writing, but of little help when dealing with concrete problems with concrete students who learn at different paces.

Authenticity

In most works authenticity is not defined or discussed, only assumed as an important feature of materials.

Finally, some characteristics of materials will be proposed in order to suit the frame of my English course and provide my students with a material more authentic and closer to their reality. (T7 Mat Ev:34)

However, since my course design is inside the field of ESP, an important issue to bear in mind is authenticity, Robinson (1991). My learners are supposed to improve their language skills and I

believe that the use of authentic materials will help them to advance as language users. (T13 CD Meth:38)

In Thesis 7 above, the rationale for using authentic materials is not discussed either in the fragment reproduced above or anywhere else in the work. It can be assumed that authenticity is considered desirable and beneficial. Thesis 13, instead, makes a direct relation between authenticity and “advance” explicit, and this connection is based on the author’s personal conviction.

The most common understanding of authenticity is the idea that materials are authentic if they are taken from magazines, newspapers and books without simplification of their language.

Materials have to be meaningful and related to the students’ context and the target situation. Most of it will be taken from magazines and newspapers in which the articles are real and authentic. (T1 Ped Imp:25)

Kramersch (1993) when citing Little and Singleton (1988:21), points out that “an authentic text is a text that was created to fulfill some social purpose in the language community in which it was produced”. In the case of this specific course design, since the emphasis is in reading comprehension, each unit of the book contains several reading passages that aim to expose students to authentic published material, specially related to their specialist subject, History. These texts are truly authentic, they have not been adapted or edited in any way for students of English. (T2 CD meth:75-76).

The reference in these two examples is exclusively to the authenticity of the text which is used as input.

For some teachers, authenticity takes a special dimension in an ESP course: Authentic materials and activities are those that suit students’ target needs. That is why materials in use that do not address the specific needs of the group of learners in the

teaching context are negatively evaluated in terms of authenticity.

The book provides much oral practice which is good, but the approach [needed] for this course is reading, moreover technical readings. In this point, the readings shown in the [current] book are not authentic for this context, but they are very handled and achievable. (T7 Mat Ev:27)

The course designed by the writer of Thesis 7 was meant to meet the needs of undergraduate students majoring in Chemistry. As it was pointed out above (see Chapter 4, section Making pedagogical choices) the materials indeed were selected taking into account the students' area of specialty, but the contents of the texts corresponded to topics that the students had already learned, so that students could cope with the texts. Authenticity, then, was reduced to one single aspect: materials related to the field of Chemistry.

An apparently more complex understanding of authenticity is expressed by the author of Thesis 6. He introduces a number of criteria for determining the authenticity of materials. The fragments reproduced below show that this teacher had access to several discourses of authenticity.

Authenticity is concerned with real life materials in the teaching of English. Therefore, this approach to the teaching of English does not mean invented by the teacher but teaching based on real life things. (T6 Rat:10)

[T]he emphasis of this setting is ESP. This course does not fit the program because it does not provide the students with topics, situations, task, reading, speaking, writing and listening activities related to the students' target situations. That is to say the tasks are not authentic because the activities presented in the book are in agreement with the students target needs job situation. (T6 Mat ev:19 his emphasis)

In general terms the units evaluated [...] are not authentic because the content and the interaction activities they offer as communicative purposes do not provide the students with real opportunities to put in practice target job performances. (T6 Mat Ev:23)

Regarding the constituents of the skills, I could say that the tasks regarding them are not authentic. [...] The speaking materials, do not incorporate what we know about the real interaction, therefore the learners miss the visual aspects of communication (gestures and stresses [...] facial

expressions and silences (seminar on evaluation, assessment of oral ability, 2005) That is to say the dialogues are artificial therefore the learner misses the essential features of spontaneous speech.(T6 Mat Ev:22)

In addition these tasks that are going to be designed and included in the materials will have to be in agreement [with] the approaches to language and language learning and be also meaningful by being based on authentic language (vocabulary from the tourist setting).(T6 CD Meth: 31)

He incorporates three ideas of authenticity. One is related to the origin of the text and its original communicative purpose. The second goes into the features of oral interaction and the multiple elements that intervene in face-to-face communication. The third refers to relevance or pertinence for the learner and the context based on the topic and type of activity. For this designer the idea that prevails is that authenticity lies in the match between materials and learners' target needs (understood as content area and purpose). Though he was critical of the materials in use in his context because they did not reflect the features of oral interaction described in the fourth fragment above, his own booklet (See Appendix N: Sample of materials in Thesis 6) contains a number of made up dialogues which lack the very features he misses in the published materials. His booklet, instead, contains a number of conversations meant as (artificial) models to help students handle possible situations that they might encounter in their target job situation.

Other teachers have a more elastic discourse of authenticity. Like the authors of theses 7 and 6, the important point for the designer of Thesis 16 is to have materials related to the students' needs and interests, especially what concerns types of texts and topics. For this teacher, authenticity can mean texts created or adapted for the students. What matters is that the materials respond to the students' verbalized interests (songs and short readings) and include familiar cultural/contextual aspects.

When I say authenticity, I mean texts which can be created or adapted according to the learners' needs and its context "An authentic text for a student, then, could be one which belongs to the appropriate topic for the student's specialism" (Robinson, 1991). I consider that some songs and short readings might be appropriated. Because, I found in the needs analysis, these students like music, and there are many songs meaningful for them, taking into account the influence is having English in our Latin music. On the other hand, short readings can be interesting for the students, if the topics are contextualized. (T16 Mat Ev:39)

She indeed included a song of a famous Colombian pop singer in the US with brief biographical information. Yet she also included a made-up text about the main characters of a popular soap opera at the time. (See Appendix O: Text extracted from the materials in Thesis 16).

As can be seen, most of the theses were concerned with authenticity in the materials, their provenance and authorship (Mishan, 2005) and also the matching of the materials with identified interests and needs. These interests and needs, however, are narrowly understood. One thesis writer developed a relatively original point of view, in that he was the only one to recognize the need for authenticity both in the input and also in the reception of the materials.

In addition, a real communicative approach of the language is implemented due to the fact that students' answers are relevant, that is to say they are taken into account for the development of the lesson. In the same way, a greater meaning is given to the word AUTHENTICITY because it does not only consist of finding material where the information has been expressed using real language but also of using the language with a sort of sense of belonging due to the fact that is originated and appreciated by the class. (T9 CD Meth:43 his emphasis)

There is, however, no evidence of how consistent this teacher is meant to be, because this feature of perception of and attitude to the material (Mishan, 2005) is not reflected in the materials, but is more likely to come up in the use of the materials and the language in class. It will therefore mean a feature that is not stable or inherent in the materials, but fluctuating and contingent to specific groups, particular moods,

arrangements in the class, and other specificities of the instantiation of a task.

From this analysis of some of the representative interpretations of authenticity, it can be seen that this notion is mostly treated as an important concept, which almost all of the teacher-writers mention, but one which does not need to be justified, explicated or problematized. There are mainly absolute truths about it: “These texts are truly authentic, they have not been adapted or edited in any way for students of English.”, “Authenticity is concerned with real life materials [...] does not mean invented by the teacher”, “x [must]be also meaningful by being based on authentic language (vocabulary from the tourist setting)”. The positions of the teacher-designers suggests an understanding of authenticity as an absolute quality, passive acceptance of partial accounts of what has been a controversial construct over the past 30 years and, in some cases, inability to consistently apply their verbal reconstruction of the notion in their materials.

The predominant representation of authenticity is apparently influenced by the idea that it is the context of production, the origin of texts and also the preservation or “intactness” of their original features that makes materials authentic, perhaps an idea close to Widdowson’s (1978) notion of genuineness: “a characteristic of the passage itself and [...] an absolute quality (p.80). This view goes in hand with the criticism that a number of scholars (Swaffar, 1985; Leow, 1993; Yano, Long, & Ross, 1994; Mishan, 2003) have made of the use of simplified or edited texts.

The opposite idea, that there is more than one criterion for authenticity and that it is not an absolute quality, is not new (e.g. Breen, 1985, Lee, 1995), although it has been expanded recently (Mishan, 2005). The emphasis on the linguistic features of the texts

used as input perhaps prevents teachers from addressing other dimensions of authenticity which may be as or more important for acquisition purposes. Swales (1985), for example, would insist on the importance of the relation between pedagogical text and pedagogical tasks. That is, in some contexts using traditional comprehension questions would not be appropriate and teachers may end up “using appropriate texts in inappropriate ways” (Bloor, 1998, p.50). Mishan (2003) also argues that authentic texts are sometimes treated “as artificially as inauthentic ones” (p.240). There has also been a questioning of the attainability of authenticity of materials once a text (in the ample sense) is taken out of its original context and transferred to the classroom (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p.15). Following Widdowson, 1998, p.711-712 cited by Mishan, 2004, p.221) “what makes a text real is that it has been produced as appropriate to a particular set of contextual conditions. But because these conditions cannot be replicated, the reality disappears”.

On the other hand, some scholars would see some value in altering the features of a text (e.g. Allen and Widdowson , 1974; Yano, Long & Ross, 1996) and saving beginner learners some frustration (Ur, 1996, p. 150). Moreover, a research study by Abanomey (2002) showed that the use of inauthentic texts may even be more appropriate to develop both bottom-up and top-down processes for reading comprehension, and in general, he calls for a reexamination of the speculative importance of authentic materials for language teaching.

Given the lack of evidence regarding whether authenticity of materials is indeed so beneficial for learners, and also given the controversies around what constitutes

authenticity, it does not appear to be a reliable criterion either for the evaluation of pedagogical materials or for the design of new ones. It seems that in some cases there is too much emphasis on finding “authentic” (in the sense of “genuine”) texts, and very little on what to do with them. Engaging in discourses of authenticity may divert teacher from the more practical tasks of investigating how a certain text, authentic or not, and the activities designed around it are conducive to the goals proposed in their particular teaching context.

Autonomy

The notion of autonomy is recurrent across the theses reviewed. Fifteen teacher-writers included it in their work but its treatment ranges from mere passing mention as an accepted important students’ feature to those works which discuss its meaning and adopt autonomy as a learning goal for their courses. Below is an analysis of how the notion was represented in some of the theses, and when possible, how the designers represent the way it can be fostered from their courses and materials.

Different degrees of adherence

Autonomy can be a useful term to include in the general discussion of desirable outcomes of learning as in the three examples below. The passage from Thesis 3 is found in a section titled “Ideal materials for the ESP course”. Autonomy is here the first feature this author highlights as essential in the materials for the course he will attempt to design. As he worded it, designing “innovating material and activities” is part of the key to

autonomy. In Theses 13 and 15 it comes next to a number of other desirable (and fancy) features of learners in the description of the Role of Learners in the course they designed. In none of these works is the notion of autonomy taken up again anywhere else. That is, they do not discuss how this desirable feature is to be brought about, or why it is believed to be important. It is empty discourse. Its inclusion is inconsequential in that there is no visible feature in the course and material designed that indicates that students are expected to develop or demonstrate behaviors or discourses associated with autonomous learning. The use of the term is likely to be a move towards alignment with the prevalent discourses in the program.

It is an important purpose then to design a suitable course for a particular context and which can fulfill our students' expectations by providing a great number of innovating materials and activities that have a noticeable effect on students and propitiates autonomous learning. (Tomlinson, 1998). This same author gives some ideas about the process of material design by listing some principles to keep in mind in order to write second language courses. (T3 Mat Ev:76)

Nowadays, the learners are the central party of any course or program. They are the one to receive the input, to use it, and also to evaluate how they perform in the target situation. In the specific case of my course design, learners are supposed to be active language users, negotiators, contributors, participants, and autonomous. (T13 Meth:34)

Therefore the role of the student in a learning situation in science should be: Open minded, explorer, studious, attentive, motivated, humble, cooperative, with solidarity, totally social, spontaneous, autonomous, independent and curious. (T15 Meth:61)

Other designers express more commitment to the notion of autonomy. The writer of Thesis 11 sticks to it quite consistently throughout three sections of her work (in the Pedagogical Implications, Materials Evaluation, and Approach to Education sections). She repeats trendy clichés (“to promote autonomous learning”, “encourage their autonomy”, “provide tools for students' autonomy”, “favor autonomy”) thus constructing a discursive alignment with the notion.

Materials in this course should be attractive to keep students' motivation high. Activities should

be arranged in different ways to fulfill different learning styles and to promote autonomous learning. (T11 Ped Imp:17)

Building up awareness of a variety of useful learning strategies such as using previous knowledge, predicting, identify main ideas and details, draw conclusions, among others, will help students engage in learning in a more meaningful way and will encourage their autonomy (T11 Ped Imp:18)

[Name of textbook] gives importance to learning strategies and thinking skills, which provide tools for students' autonomy and a more meaningful learning. (T11 Mat Ev:22)

According *[name of institution]*'s PEI [Educational Plan of the Institution], the aim of education is not just to accumulate information but to prepare people for life, so that they can think and act two situations that favor the autonomy, independence and the development of thinking. (T11 Ap Ed:54)

Interestingly, after the section of Approaches to Education, the notion of autonomy is not found either as a learning goal, or as a feature to consider in the methodology or in the learners' and teacher's roles. In the materials in use in the context of the writer (See Appendix P: Sample of Materials in use in the context of Thesis 11), at least in the samples she reproduced in her thesis, the "strategies and thinking skills" (see third passage above) that should promote autonomy are not evident. The materials which the author herself designs (See Appendix J: Sample of materials in Thesis 11) do not appear to contain particular features encouraging autonomy. The general learning objective reads: "students should be able to value the importance of reading in English for their performance in related subjects" and the specific objectives are: "to use strategies and thinking skills", "to take risks in front of others", and "to actively seek knowledge through reading". Specifically the idea of autonomy is mentioned in the conclusion of the booklet she designed: "[name of the booklet] has been developed with the belief that learning strategies and thinking skills provide tools for greater student's autonomy and more meaningful learning". Thus though discussion and reiterative

mention of authenticity seems trivial, there is a verbalized “belief” that what was designed is conducive to autonomy because students are given activities to engage with cognitively.

The preoccupation with autonomy in Thesis 14 goes as far as the design of objectives and definition of the roles of the students in the course designed.

We have to design materials that will help them to make a self-autonomous learning without guidance as they are professional teachers and what they need is to improve their oral skills and that is why we have to design material according to students’ needs.(T14 Mat Ev:30)

Learning goal:

- Development of greater autonomy in learning
- General objective:
- To develop oral strategies suited to their cognitive style and the task in hand.
- Competence: Self-monitoring competence

Specific Objectives:

- At the end of the course students should be able to:
- Develop autonomous learning strategies to improve their language preferences.
- Manage their personal abilities to learn a language.

Knowledge:

- Autonomy implies making the right choices according to their needs
- Autonomy is developable
- Learning strategies could help develop autonomy

Skills:

To understand the importance of using learning strategies as a way of increasing autonomy in learning English.

To use strategies according to characteristics of tasks and own needs. (T14 Cont:38)

Role of the learner: According to the humanistic approach, one of the objectives is to foster autonomous learning, the learner will be able to be an active participant, a discoverer, a problem-solver and to become autonomous. (T14 Meth:43)

The learning goals certainly have a strong autonomy flavor, even though the specificities of the objectives are not really given. An examination of the materials (See Appendix Q: Sample of materials in Thesis 14) does not show a trace of explicit instruction towards the development of autonomy. Perhaps, as stated in the “Role of

learners” section, students are just expected “to be able to become autonomous” through the activities proposed.

Not all the theses are consistent in their discourses and explicit application of the notion of autonomy in the courses or materials. In Thesis 11 autonomy is almost a side effect of the ability to use reading strategies. Even though Edge & Wharton (1998) remind us that no materials are “capable of making learners autonomous”(p.302) my analysis of the materials in Thesis 14 suggests that there are no overt hints that indicate how it could be used to foster autonomy.

Discursive construction of autonomy

As said above, Theses 11 and 14 do not define autonomy but it can be inferred that it is an internal feature related to the use of learning strategies and cognitive skills for coping with tasks and learning situations effectively. It is represented as the ability to use these learning strategies. None of them, however, mentions “learner training” or “learner development”, which are some terms associated in the literature with learning strategies when connected with autonomy (Wenden, 1991, 2002), and yet the discourse that both teacher-researchers use values individual skills, capacities, performances “as personal assets_ as ‘tools’, or even ‘weapons’_ in a competitive struggle to adapt and prosper” (Gee, Hull & Lankshear, 1996 cited in Palfreyman ,2003, p.244)

In Thesis 11 the teacher-evaluator identified features in the textbook in use that give importance to “strategies and thinking skills”. And these are believed to serve as tools for the development of autonomy. Consistently, in her Approach to Education section, she

corroborates that autonomy for her is related with, but perhaps not identical to, “independence and the development of thinking”. Here is that fragment again:

According [name of institution]’s PEI [Educational Plan of the Institution], the aim of education is not just to accumulate information but to prepare people for life, so that they can think and act two situations that favor the autonomy, independence and the development of thinking. (T11 Ap Ed:54)

In the Materials Evaluation section of Thesis 14 autonomy is presumed as learning without (external) guidance. The redundancy of the term “self-autonomous” in the Materials Evaluation section and the objectives of the course imply an understanding of autonomy with focus on the individuality of the learner, as in “development of autonomous learning strategies”. This understanding apparently excludes the possibility that the application of social learning strategies could propitiate autonomy. The specific learning goals include the abstract task of “managing personal abilities to learn a language”. Behind the objectives of the course lies the assumption that the students consider autonomy a desirable goal. For example, one of the skills students need to develop is “to understand the importance of using learning strategies as a way of increasing autonomy in learning English”. While students may see the relevance of using strategies for the sake of coping with tasks and eventually to learn English, they may not see autonomy as an intermediate or terminal goal.

In Thesis 2 autonomy is a learning style and the textbook in use is negatively evaluated because “it does not foster autonomous learning”. The absence of “self-investment”, understood almost as self-assessment” is a negative feature regarding the development of autonomy, too.

One of the weak points of the book is this self-investment. The book does have a unit after the first five and the last five units regarding self-assessment. But in each unit, the sections which facilitate students' self discovery are not very many, not to say none. (T2 Mat Ev:43)

Most of the different preferred learning styles of the students are taken into account within this textbook. It has sections for almost all kinds of intelligences. The activities are varied and cater for all learning styles: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, experiential, analytic, dependent. The one that does not take into account very much is the independent. It does not foster autonomous learning that much, which is a negative aspect since it is one of the styles that should be most developed. See appendix. (T2 Mat Ev:45)

Besides being a learning style, is close to (but perhaps not the same as) self-investment and self-discovery (as used in the first fragment above), especially if considering the use of the combinations “self directedness and learner autonomy”, “responsible and autonomous” used in the following excerpts. How these three notions relate to each other, is not stated. For this designer, autonomy does become a learning goal.

Students dedicate very little time to study English by themselves which implies work regarding self directedness and learner autonomy, but when they do, they do it through readings or watching movies as a second option. (T2 Res:29)

A big motivation work should be done by the teacher in order students be even more aware about the importance and utility of learning this foreign language and may foster self directedness and learner autonomy. Students should realize that the teacher is just a facilitator and that target goals will only be achieved if they are responsible and autonomous. (T2 Ped Imp:33)

The issue in this context seems to be the apparent need to have students dedicate more time out of class to studying English and to achieving a certain independence from the teacher. “Self-directedness”, “responsibility” and “autonomy” seem to be the key to this end. More concrete information as to how this is to be achieved is given in the second passage. It states that awareness of the importance and usefulness of English brings about the desired autonomy. It is this autonomy that will help students reach the target (language competence) goals. A schematic representation of this view would be:

Teacher→ motivation and awareness of the importance of English→ learners' self-directedness and autonomy→ target goals. This approach to learning is close to cognitive constructivism, in which the role of the teacher is to help learning happen. A similar approach that goes through motivation and awareness can be deduced from the following excerpt from Thesis 19. Only, awareness here is not of the importance of English, but of the importance of becoming autonomous. In spite of the emphatic assertion (“it is fundamental that they become aware of the necessity of being autonomous”); however, there is nothing concrete in the course design that could be said to help that autonomy happen.

Regarding the necessities identified in the study of the needs analysis of the group and considering the teacher-centered approach followed in the classroom where students do not lead their own progress, it is fundamental that they become aware of the necessity of being autonomous in their process of learning a language such as English because they turn into the main factor that dynamizes their own learning process. Therefore a series of attractive activities that motivate the students' autonomy and leadership in their own learning process should be implemented. (T19 Ped Imp 16)

Also within a constructivist approach to learning, autonomy means students' control over their learning and interactions.

In addition, the English course encourages learner autonomy so they can control their own learning process and learner interaction with the classmates, teacher and other speakers. (T9 Rat:11)

Autonomous learning can imply possession of metacognitive skills, which are the ones in charge of the control of the learning.

Learning as knowledge construction became the dominant metaphor during the 1970's and 1980's. The view of the learner changed from that of a recipient of knowledge to that of a constructor of knowledge, an autonomous learner with metacognitive skills for controlling his or her cognitive processes during learning. Learning involves selecting relevant information and interpreting it through one's existing knowledge. Resnick (1989) claims that “learning occurs not by recording information but by interpreting it.” (T4 Ap Ed:69)

But it can be a socio-affective skill too. Granted, this view is an outlier in the corpus, and autonomy is not taken up again later in the work.

The methodology that will be used for the course is introduced by a project work that is the development of an interest topic for the children during five weeks; it is a way of work that facilitates the integration of socio-affective (responsibility, autonomy, team work), physical, musical, artistic, communicative, thinking, fine and gross motor skills. (T10 Ped Imp:49)

Following van Lier (1996), in Thesis 6 autonomy means choice and responsibility.

Out of this five principles or approaches to the teaching of English three of them are foundational principles: Awareness, autonomy and authenticity, or AAA for short. They allow language education to unfold in a regulated yet creative manner, within a framework of individual and social constraint and resources. Autonomy has two relevant features, choice and responsibility. Choice means that the learner is free to choose what he wants to learn and responsibility means that the learner makes the decision when to learn it and how to do it. (T6 Rat:10)

This variety of representations reflects part of the collection of terms associated with autonomy in the literature and the fact that autonomy is a topic developed not only within Second Language Acquisition studies, but by educators, sociologists and psychologists. According to Wenden (1991), while self-management strategies are associated with cognitive psychology and are known as “metacognitive strategies” (what the writer of Thesis 4 refers to), self-directedness is linked with what in methodological literature is called “self-directed learning” (as in Holec, 1981 cited in Wenden,1991, p.25), which is closer to the terms used in Thesis 2. Autonomy as “choice and responsibility” in Thesis 6 is van Lier’s approach (1996, p.12). The explanation in the fragment above simplifies a more complex elaboration by van Lier, which he bases on motivation and achievement. Following Deci, Vallerand, Peletier, & Ryan (1991, p.327 cited in van Lier, 1996, p.108) “autonomy refers to being self-initiating and self-

regulating of one's own actions" and is closely associated with intrinsic motivation, the gradual change from other-regulation into self-regulation, which is "the true meaning of autonomy" (p.119). The relatively visible part of autonomy in van Lier's account, choice, is not to be seen in the materials of Thesis 6. (See Appendix N: Sample of materials in Thesis 6).

Finally I will reproduce the longest discussion about autonomy found in the works analyzed. In Thesis 5 the discussion is about an "autonomous approach" and it consists basically of favoring cooperative learning, which should in turn be beneficial for a kind of socially sensitive autonomy.

To help the students in their learning process, the course is going to be based on the improvement of reading comprehension and writing skills through:

- Some metacognitive knowledge of English structure, grammar, and syntax.
- Sharing opinions and discussing the topics of the readings in pairs and/or small groups, which involve some cooperative learning.

As it was found in a source from the web³, the above skills might be developed by applying metacognitive approach and autonomous approach. In this connection, we have:

Metacognitive approach:

[...]

Autonomous approach

In order to foster and encourage the autonomous approach, some aspects are going to be addressed: previous learning experience, independent study methods, motivation, workload, time management and reading skills, tutor attitude and practice, feedback, assessment and the peer group. Moreover, confidence and a sufficiently high self perception of competence (belief in academic ability) will be considered for developing the learners' autonomy as they take responsibility for their learning.

³ <http://coe.sdsu.edu/people/jmora/L2MethodsMMdl/sld001.htm>

On the other hand, the autonomous approach will be improved thanks to some cooperative learning, following some theories of Johnson and Johnson (1983). It will be applied in order to help the students self evaluate, as well as it will work as a source of both academic and general support. It means that some cooperative groups will be organized to develop the activities, taking into account some identified common purposes.

Besides, some leadership will be shared so that all students will be responsible for completion of the tasks. All group members will be included; they will be chosen randomly, or selected by the teacher on the basis of gender, ability, interests, behavior, etc. so that the groups will be as heterogeneous as possible. Moreover, in the cooperative groups, social skills will be defined, discussed, observed and processed. Meanwhile, the teacher will encourage group problem-solving and works as a monitor rather than an intervener.

In brief, cooperative learning situations, will promote greater achievement motivation, more intrinsic motivation, more persistence in completing the tasks, and greater continuing motivation to learn. Cooperative learning experiences also will result in higher levels of self-esteem, healthier processes for deriving conclusions about one's self worth, and greater psychological health than do competitive and individualistic learning experiences (Johnson & Johnson, 1983).

Consequently, cooperative learning is a fundamental component in the autonomous approach; besides it corresponds to one of the ways the students suggested in the survey to increase their motivation in the English classes. Then, it will be pertinent and meaningful for the students to be trained to solve these needs which are certainly going to be a challenge for the teacher. (T5 Ap Ln:62-63)

It is perhaps assumed that the concept of autonomy per se does not need discussion because the first paragraph starts with a list of aspects –some of them fairly complex - meant to be considered in the development of autonomy. What they each mean, how they are related to autonomy or how they can be made to work towards autonomy is not explained. The list seems an incomplete inventory of some of the basic things teachers have to take into consideration for teaching a language because they all have influence in learning. It would be more important to know what concrete decisions about assessment, feedback, and group work will be made and implemented; or how information about prior learning experience, “motivation”, independent study skills will be used for the design of the course. As it is, it seems to be empty language.

What comes next in her discussion is mainly about cooperative learning. Her idea

of “improving” the autonomous approach with cooperative learning is most likely derived from the cited article by Johnson & Johnson (1983) which provides an analysis of how a cooperative structure in education is superior to competitive and individualistic ones. In the latter, “a person seeks an outcome that is personally beneficial, ignoring as irrelevant the goal achievement efforts of other participants in the situation” (p.122). It is very likely that this author’s view of learning and autonomy is influenced by the article. Autonomy in that article is presented as a benefit derived from peer relationships and incorporates social responsibility which will come about if cooperative situations are structured. It is “the ability to understand what others expect in any given situation and to be free to choose whether to meet their expectations [...] [A]utonomous people tend to consider both their internal values and the situational requirements and then respond in flexible and appropriate ways” (p.127).

It is not surprising then that she is discursively more aligned with cooperative learning than with autonomous learning. However, the former should promote the latter, possibly in the form of “intrinsic motivation”, “persistence”, “self-esteem”, “psychological health” among other things. Cooperative learning is not defined either. Instead, the author gives hints regarding some features: organization of “cooperative groups”, sharing of leadership, some criteria for the formation of groups, problem solving activities, development of social skills.

This discursively constructed adherence to cooperative learning does not find ratification later when she discusses the methodology of the course she is designing. Additionally, here she unveils her role as a controller (see last sentence in second

passage) of the learning, at least at the stage where her students are.

I find more relevant to do some individual work, which is part of the autonomous approach, for developing writing, listening and some reading activities because they need more concentration, as well as it will be pertinent in the moment of giving personal answers. (T5 Meth:76)

Finally, the teacher will teach strategies to develop the skills that the students need, allowing them to decide which one might be the most appropriate to improve their learning. In consequence, the teacher will know how best to impart the knowledge to the students and how to assess what they are learning. (T15 CD: 76)

It seems then that after all she will let herself guide by her prior learning experience as a teacher.

Promoting autonomy

The analysis of the relevant parts of Thesis 5 indicates that at the discourse level a socially sensitive autonomy is going to be encouraged through cooperative learning. The materials, however, do not unambiguously allow us to conclude that either cooperative learning or autonomy is especially fostered. (See Appendix C: Sample of materials in Thesis 5). Her materials include a predetermined set of objectives that aim at the development of reading strategies: “to predict and infer the purpose of the topic”, “to skim and scan”, “to activate background knowledge”, “to monitor comprehension”, “to support our opinion and give reasons”. The readings (all in the field of specialty of her students) are meant to be done individually as are the comprehension exercises after it. The instruction for the readings in Lesson 1 are: “Read the article. Underline the main ideas”, “Read the article. Search for key words and ideas”. The two first readings are followed by an oral activity in which students are to discuss four proposed questions”. In Lesson 2, there is a new set of objectives. One of them is “to select meaningful texts”.

The concrete activity for this objective asks learners to “use the internet to find out about managers’ responsibilities and to visit three suggested web pages to obtain additional information and evaluate them. Then they have to write a couple of lines about how they liked the web sites they consulted. A Study Skills box reads:

While you research do not look into the encyclopedia and copy out data. Do not go take tons of books out of the library and pick out pieces of each. Do not change the words of your sources into your own words. Research means selecting the main facts from which *you* infer (T5 Mat:7 her emphasis)

The structure of the classes as represented in the materials is not cooperative. Instead it is organized for individuals to cope with the tasks one after the other with very directive instructions and also absolute hints regarding how to deal with them.

An assumption that surfaced a couple of times in the theses was the relation between the internet and autonomy. In Thesis 1 autonomy related to the Internet was either mentioned in passing, as part of the discussion of Kramsch’s (1993) idea, or the author sees the relation as rather unproblematic and taken-for-granted. In her materials she provided three web pages where her students could go and find more information about writing a business letter and then come back to class and share the information with their peers (See Appendix G: Sample of materials in Thesis 1).

With the inclusion of the Internet use in this course, students will have the chance to do research, which is the prior goal at the university. As Kramsch, Claire (1993) points out computer technology offers possibilities of teaching context itself in a way that teachers have always dreamed of. By opening up micro worlds to play with, by providing opportunities for autonomous, exploratory learning, for analyzing, synthesizing, interpreting social phenomena, these technologies, born from the spectacular advances made in cognitive science, not only are attractive to use, they also encourage teachers to devise more refined procedures for the organization and presentation of knowledge. This is used in the learner-directed way of learning. (T1 Ap Ln:30)

Half the students have access to a Library and Internet, so the teacher can use activities using books or Web-pages for the students, to get the course target goal, promoting students’ autonomy. (T2 Ped Im:32).

In Thesis 2 the writer does include specific mention of autonomy in the materials, and it is explicitly mentioned as a concrete objective to reach in each of the units designed. (See appendix R: Sample of materials in Thesis 2). As was seen in some of the fragments above, this writer is interested in developing self regulation, responsibility and autonomy. Though she did not declare autonomy as a learning goal for her course, she included autonomy in the specific objectives to reach in the units she designed.

In Unit One, you will learn how to...

- understand readings in a better way
- recognize words similar to your language and their meanings
- be more responsible and autonomous (T2 CD:67)

In Unit Three you will

- practice being autonomous and responsible (T2 CD:68)

Being responsible and autonomous in her materials presumably means doing the exercises on the web pages indicated and being ready to discuss/share them in class with peers. It is not clear why autonomy and responsibility are associated exclusively with assignments on the internet in her course. In a brief self evaluation section (see it on Appendix R), the question regarding autonomy reads: “Were you autonomous and responsible when performing the activity on the web?” The relation between autonomy and responsibility is left to the interpretation of the learner. The assignments are very precise, and are meant to be discussed in class. So it is not clear why they would be especially conducive to autonomy.

In the teacher’s guide for the materials created by the author of Thesis 4 one exercise is meant to encourage autonomy. This designer does not make explicit any

intention of developing autonomy as a goal in his course, but he obviously considers it a positive feature. In the corresponding section of the booklet, the topic goes around how the words sound as they are pronounced together. Learners are presented with a written text and students have to discuss how the words should be linked when pronounced. Then they listen to a recording of the text and are asked to repeat each phrase paying special attention to the links. After that, learners are told to write sentences or a paragraph from another textbook or a magazine and show the links between words. Finally, in the Do-It-Yourself section, the students are asked to do an exercise meant to “foster autonomy”.

In the teacher’s guide:

This exercise provides opportunities to apply what they have learnt so far. It also fosters creativity and autonomy (T4 Teacher’s guide:171)

In the materials:

Groups. Figure out an exercise for your peers so they have the chance to recognize the links between words.

On the show

1. Present your activity in class. Your peers will pay special attention to:
 - a. Creativity
 - b. how the topic is connected with the activity. (T4 Materials)

Autonomy, in this specific case, is a special bonus and an extra gain from the task.

The assumption here is that what students do/prepare tasks outside the class or not under the direct step-by-step supervision of the teacher is to encourage autonomy. This assumption is more clearly expressed in Theses 17 and 20.

The main constraint that I find is that in students’ book there is a very short instruction of the writing activity. Therefore students depend on teacher’s instructions for every step in the writing process since there is no detail information of what students are supposed to do in order to improve their writing skills. I believe that this aspect doesn’t foster autonomous learning that is one of the main goals that the school expects to develop in their students. Therefore I expect to include in my course design activities that give clear and sufficient instructions to do the writing assignments in a way that the students can work by themselves without the constant intervention of the teacher. (T17 Mat Ev:25)

As regards our learning goals, we find that the material presents activities where strategies to enhance autonomy help students to do most of the work by himself without resorting to the teacher for help. (T18 Mat Ev:33).

Both fragments from Theses 17 and 18 reveal that one way to foster autonomy is by using materials which are self-explanatory and require little intervention by the teacher. In a way, this could be regarded as a shift in dependence from teacher to materials. Indeed, one feature of the materials designed within these two theses, which coincidentally focus on the developing of writing, is that they try to take the students as if by the hand, and explain and illustrate step by step how they should go about writing at their corresponding levels (one course is for students in middle school and another for undergraduates). In the introduction to her materials, the author of Thesis 17 wrote:

I believe that this course book can enhance students' autonomy because the instructions are very clear so learners can work by themselves without depending too much on the teacher. The book intends to enhance self-monitoring skills in learners in order to help them revise their production critically. Additionally, it will provide opportunities to students to share with classmates for the purpose of cooperating and improving their work (T17 Mat: 11)

Autonomy is then facilitated partially thanks to the clarity in the materials and through the writer's checklist provided to revise their drafts. These materials (see Appendix S: Sample of materials in Thesis 17) shows that there is a lot of explicit instruction, but learners may need a lot more guidance and practice, especially given that they are sixth graders and probably do not have much experience with this type of writing process. Additionally, the process of writing is represented in a simplified linear way. It is not surprising then that in her own description of the role of the teacher in the booklet she designed she assigns herself a lot more responsibility for her students' learning than initially thought:

The role of the teacher is very complex because he/she should be able to engage students in the learning process considering that those students are different from each other. The teacher is responsible for the learning process since he/she is the guide of the class giving input about the writing process and the different types of writing that students should handle. [...] He/she should be a motivator for the students because writing can be difficult and they might feel frustrated because of their results. (T17 Mat:42)

The course and materials designed by the writer of Thesis 17 represents a timid approach towards autonomy, one full of the contradictions inherent in trying to appropriate new discourses in education. Without a discussion and definition of the concept of autonomy, it is not sure where students are expected to go. The course may provide a way for individual students to work independently of the teacher, provided they are willing and able to go through the materials by themselves and do the activities proposed. But learners are all meant to go through the same path. There is no space for alternative choices. It is the teacher that makes all decisions. Whether they will want to continue working interacting with the materials rather than with the teacher (apparently the teacher's purpose) is unknown. This will depend on a number of factors, which are not contemplated in the course or materials designed. Perhaps it is too soon to say or to worry about.

The authors of Thesis 18 have a longer discussion of autonomy.

As students have become one of the main actors in education and their role is essential, this research team has opted for an autonomous approach to education. Van Lier (1996) supports this view when he expresses that education is not attainable unless the learners develop a sense of awareness, autonomy and authenticity. This way students are critical evaluators of their own learning process.

As we are dealing with autonomy, one main aim in this study is that the learner could become independent and could use his command in writing not only to attain specific goals now but to use all this information and experience gathered to be used in near future times. This way the learner acquires writing basis to improve in the development of the other subjects he is studying and put into practice these concepts every day.

Concerning this approach to education Widdowson (1990) also comments that it is quite important to promote autonomous learning since pupils have the opportunity to improve his skills and become independent learners who could make progress by their own. All this process will help them to be responsible for their own growth and continuing professional development. (T18 Ap Ed:37)

It is impossible to deduce how van Lier's approach to autonomy is understood. As said previously, it is a rather abstract and complex notion, which is not paid fair tribute with the brief reference in the first paragraph above. In the second paragraph, the authors do not seem to be interested in autonomous learning, but rather in the acquisition of certain competences that could be transferred to other contexts as a means to reach academic and practical goals in their lives. In the third paragraph, the writers cite Widdowson's (1990) book "Aspects of language teaching". In this book this scholar puts together ideas he had developed throughout several years. Autonomy is a limited notion in his opinion: "the learner (*apprenant*) really only exercises autonomy within the limits set by teacher authority. The learner is never really independent, it is the kind of dependency which changes". (p.189) "In the introduction to the book he clearly states his position: "There must always be some points of reference to give direction to the process and it is the teachers' task to provide them. The idea that learners will learn efficiently for themselves if they are left alone is, I believe, misconceived" (p.xiii). In sum, the interpretation in Thesis 18 is superficial, atypical, unexpected or simply misleading.

This is how they worded the learning goals of their course:

- Learning goal: students should be able to...
- Assess their own writing.
- Enhance autonomous learning through writing other than in class contexts.
- Judge strengths and weaknesses in the writing learning process. (T18 CD:39)

Contradictory and confusing as their understanding of autonomy may seem, it must be said that their materials go a step further than the ones designed in Thesis 17, because, besides being designed to be self-explanatory there is more attention to having students reflect on why what they are learning is important or relevant rather than just telling them what to do. There is, however, no way to make sure the students will engage in “writing other than in class contexts”.

The issue of learning outside the classroom is also taken up by the designer of Thesis 20. He also pursued this topic in Needs Analysis, where he asked his students if they practiced English outside the classroom. Other teachers in his institution also corroborated that there is little practice of English outside the class. Consequently, the writer addresses this issue like this:

Interaction among students outside the classroom is an aspect that teachers have to foster somehow; Autonomous learning will be included in the syllabus design in order to encourage students to take the decision to practice English by themselves, providing them more opportunities to practice the language (T20 Res:32)

Definitely the amount of time the students dedicate to practice English outside the classroom has to be increased. Autonomous learning will be one of the approaches included in this syllabus design; it will be reinforced with activities such as conversation clubs and permanent oral assignments to create the habit of practicing English outside the classroom. (T20 Res:38)

His course design includes the learning goal of “awareness of cooperative and autonomous learning” and it has two objectives: “Students should be able to interact with their classmates through different activities in order to build up communication” and “Students should be able to develop autonomy to practice English”. As with other theses, however, his autonomous goal is left adrift.

Discussion

The analysis of the representation of autonomy across the theses strongly suggests that this concept is in high esteem among teachers in the context of the postgraduate program. Other scholars, for example Pamberton (1996) and Little (2000) have also pointed out that the concept of learner autonomy is of high currency and has taken on in many contexts the status of buzzword. The problem, according to Little, is that there is modest evidence that it has led to essential changes in how foreign languages are taught. “It is widely assumed that learner autonomy is a matter only of adding an extra dimension to what is done already- setting a self-access centre, for example, or introducing strategy training” (p.24). What is happening in the context of the research may be partly that, but I think there are some hints as to why such words acquire this character and why they are not fully appropriated by teachers in the periphery. I think the answer lies in how autonomy has been defined, how it has been said it can be promoted, and who says students need to develop autonomy.

There are different views of autonomy and different uses of terminology associated with it. Some scholars would try to establish boundaries between autonomy and related notions, others would accept a variety of terminology as representations of different views. Pamberton (1996) clearly wants to make autonomy different from, among others, self-instruction (learning without the teacher), self-access learning (learning from materials organized to facilitate learning), individualized learning (use of activities meant to address individual learner’s needs) and self directedness, among others. The latter is “the way in which learning is carried out” (p.3) in order to develop

autonomy. He concurs with Holec (1981), one of the scholars who initiated the talk about autonomy in foreign language education, in considering autonomy an ability or a capacity “to take charge of one’s own learning” (Holec, 1981, p.3), or “knowing how to learn” (Pemberton, 1996, p.3). Autonomy, in this sense can be seen as an ideal state or as “an end towards which all teachers and learners ought to work” (Nunan 1996), or “one of the most fundamental needs and purposes of human beings” (Ryan, 1991 cited by Littlewood, 1999, p.74) and that ideal, in Holec’s (1981) terms, implies that the learner is be able to decide on almost everything about learning, including objectives, contents, methods, monitoring and evaluation.

Though it is not impossible that most of the teacher-designers have this idealistic goal in mind, it is clear that their courses, objectives, and materials are by far less ambitious.

There are a number of other interpretations of autonomy. As Oxford (2003) demonstrates terminology is still an unresolved issue. In her “Survey Review: recent publications on autonomy in language learning” Sinclair (1999) identifies at least three ways in which autonomy has been interpreted in different contexts. One is equivalent to the capacity described above which is developed through ‘learner training’ led by a teacher or counselor, for example. Self-directed learning is also autonomy for Sinclair and it can be brought about by providing opportunities for choice, creating self-access learning centers, out of class learner-directed project work or other conditions for allowing students to learn independently. Other scholars associate autonomy with freedom from external constraints (Pennycook, 1997b cited in Littlewood, 1999) and

with defining everything about one's own learning (Little 1991, cited in Esch, 1996). Some scholars stress the social, collaborative, and interdependent aspect of autonomy (Ryan, 1991 cited in Littlewood, 1999; also Johnson and Johnson, 1983), thus overcoming the individualistic tint usually linked with the concept.

Littlewood (1999) distinguishes between proactive and reactive autonomy; the former means that the learner takes the initiative regarding his/her own learning, the latter refers to the ability to be in charge of one's own learning after some direction has been initiated.

The representations of autonomy found across the theses are varied and none of them are developed in depth, only suggested through the combination of key words like independence, self-directedness, responsibility, control, metacognition, thinking skills, which in turn are abstract, complex and relative. Do they mean independence or interdependence? How much control can learners have self-directedness if they are in a classroom with a teacher? Their self-control is likely to have limits. As Widdowson (1990) says, it is a matter of degree. Can we in real life be totally independent or free? Independent of what? In the end, we are always responding to certain types of pressures, controls, rules in the environment. And students are not the exception. All these notions deserve a more careful treatment and definition to be of use.

The notion of self-directed learning is the one more clearly endorsed at the level of discourse in the works examined in the sense that if learners can engage in activities or tasks without direct supervision, or if somehow they are made to use the language outside the classroom, that could be named autonomous learning. And yet, that can be expected

to happen if, at least initially, there is some control inside the classroom. Thus, we would be talking about something similar to the traditional “production” stage (Byrne, 1976) in a language class or the concept of homework.

In terms of how autonomy can be developed, approaches have changed emphasis over time from those that stress the situational aspects, and how the teacher can arrange for independent learning, availability of choices, horizontal relations in the classroom, etc. to rather psychological approaches that stress learner’s responsibility, individual behaviors and choices. Benson (1996) calls it the “shift from situational/social autonomy to psychological/individual autonomy”, or what Schmeck, 2005 calls “psychologization or naturalization” (p.113). For example, Little (2000) maintains that to develop autonomy in the learners it would be necessary to eliminate transmission models and, instead, to develop models, within which there is much more involvement of the learners, use of a wider set of discourse roles, and subversion of traditional power relations in the classroom. Allwright (1988 cited in Benson, 1996) at one point calls for the fundamental transformation of traditional pedagogies. Esch (1996) considers that promoting learning autonomy means “the provision of circumstances and contexts for language learners which will make it more likely that they –at least temporarily- of the whole or part of their language-learning programme and which are more likely to help rather than prevent learners from exercising their autonomy (p.37). On the other end, autonomy has been equated with language learning strategies and autonomy is seen as located within each individual. Wenden (1991) developed a framework that relies on learner strategy training to help learners to become autonomous. For her, autonomous students are those who are

able to use certain skills and knowledge about learning “confidently, flexibly, appropriately and independently of a teacher” (p.15). There has been growing interest in the design of tasks that systematically promote autonomy through learner training (today also referred to as learner development). A number of publications compile ideas for tasks which are to serve as a help for teachers who want to move learners into independent learning.

Benson (1997) and then Oxford (2003) have proposed more comprehensive models of talking about autonomy. Benson initially proposed three perspectives: a technical perspective, which means arranging everything for learning to happen without the teacher’s intervention; a psychological perspective emphasizing capacities, attitudes and abilities for learners to take responsibility for learning; and a political perspective, which takes care of access, control and ideology. Oxford (2003) then, in an attempt at systematizing the model, distinguished one more perspective, the intercultural one, which can have two forms. Both of them rely on mediated learning situated in a particular context, but the first one emphasizes the interaction with the more capable person and the types of support the latter provides before “self-regulation”; the other emphasizes participation in the community of practice and how the relationships in that community support more participation supplying strategies, meaning or artifacts.

Benson (1996) criticizes a psychological version of autonomy which “emphasizes learner’s responsibility for their own successes and failures [and] could easily be used to support political doctrines of non-intervention and self-reliance” (p.30). The shift to the individual “could lend support to doctrines of individualism that lead to social

atomization and disempowerment” (p.31). Additionally, he is critical of the task-oriented approaches that take language and knowledge as a given. The learner training approach, in his opinion, with its attention to questions about how learners should learn, and the current prevalence of task-based approaches is accompanied by a corresponding tendency to de-emphasize fundamental questions about the purposes and content of language learning. Politically, this could be interpreted as a tendency to encourage passive acceptance of dominant ideologies of language learning (p.31).

Schmeck (2005) argues that the psychologization of autonomy leads to the “naturalization or biologization” of the notion, its acceptance as “a universal pre-given biological human potential” and can therefore be removed from its cultural, social and political contexts (p.113). She emphasizes that the notion of autonomy had its origins in the European Enlightenment period and there it was a response to the political situation of absolutism and the striving for the emancipation of the individual; thus she maintains that no form of autonomy is culturally neutral.

The teacher designers of the theses are for the most part far from these discussions. At the discourse level they embrace the kind of autonomy they are acquainted with or the one they think they understand, though it must be said that they get often lost and evidence non-standard interpretations. The authors of Theses 11 and 14 are definitely adherers to the psychological end in the form of learning training. The author of Thesis 5, after a rather convincing argument about the benefits of cooperative learning, finally expressed adherence to individual work for the development of reading, writing and listening as a feature of her “autonomous approach”.

The construction of autonomy in Theses 2, 17, 18 and 20 coincides partly with a combination of the “technical version” (Benson, 1997 cited in Schmenk, 2005, p.10) of autonomy - the aspiration that learning takes place without the intervention of a learner – and the “psychological” version (ibid.p.110) – the capacity to become responsible for one’s own learning. The technical version, however, is expected to happen with minimum physical support.

When it comes down to application, the teachers do what they can. For example, the writer of Thesis 6 is the only one to mention “choice” from van Lier (1996). But choice implies resources, which his institution lacks, and an effort that would go beyond what is needed as a requirement for graduation in the postgraduate program. Consequently, the topic never comes up again. The designer of Thesis 20 is the only one that mentions the creation of opportunities for students to use language outside the classroom – conversation clubs and permanent oral assignments. This is one of the two contexts where this kind of possibility may exist (language institutes within a university). The writers of Theses 11 and 14 will never be sure of how their course will impact their students’ cognitive skills, thus they confine themselves to designing activities with the hope that they “contribute” to autonomy in indirect and non-evident ways.

All the materials revised have the characteristic features which Johnson, Delarache, Marshall, Wurr and Edwards (1998) identify in traditional and popular course books : “Each unit is carefully designed”, “students are meant to progress through the book from the beginning to end in a linear fashion”, “students have no say as to which exercises will or will not be completed, and in what order” (p.3), when making decisions about the

course learners as seen as a group, and discussion is about “what is best for all”, “the teacher retains tight responsibility for planning material, and for pacing and controlling student activities”, “all students are more or less engaged in studying the same thing at the same time” (p.4), “the overall role of the teacher remains the planner and director of orchestrated lock-step learning” (p.74) and in spite of some theoretical discussion on learning styles, learning strategies, “overall the teacher is assumed to be responsible, to a great extent, for the learners’ motivation”(p.5). Thus, the very enterprise of having teachers design a booklet derived from general impressions of what the students’ needs are (see Chapter on ESP and Needs Analysis) seems to contradict the autonomy enterprise. In the design of the postgraduate program the teacher goes to the students, asks a number of questions, privately makes a diagnosis, makes some decisions, prescribes, manufactures and applies the remedy. Opponents of such an “old-fashioned” approach would argue that teachers “should allow the students to design their own programs of study as the managers and directors of their own learning” (ibid. p.10). Is that the way to go? Is that doable? Is that what is needed in the Colombian context?

In dealing with issues of materials design and the promotion of autonomy, Sinclair (1996) raises ideological questions regarding the teachers’ education if they are to embrace the autonomy enterprise and their access to the “limited” literature on the theory and research regarding learner autonomy, learner strategies and learning training. She asks: “How many English teachers around the globe actually have easy access to such handbooks or are even aware of their existence? How much of the expertise in these books can then be passed on in a practical way to the learners? (p.152).

These questions suggest important points: whose idea is it that students need to develop autonomy? Who should determine how this autonomy is to be understood? How should it be encouraged/fostered/developed from each language learning context? How and where should knowledge about autonomy and autonomy development be constructed? Sinclair's questions imply an ideological answer to all these questions. There is, in her opinion, a way to become "influential", especially on "those who do not teach their native language" and to provide a "vital source of information and support" (p.152), and that is through published teaching materials, which, thanks to the competitive world of ELT, have to keep updating themselves by introducing the latest (mainstream western) "thinking". But, since most textbooks in her opinion do a rather poor job, she explicates a number of criteria for assessing how the learning training is presented in these materials.

Most of the courses developed by the teachers reflect preoccupation with autonomous learning. But it is understood and applied in the materials in local ways, which would perhaps be inappropriate, incomplete, superficial, substandard if judged from the point of view of the available theory. But perhaps the preoccupation with autonomous learning is not or should not really be there. Following Pennycook (1997b, p.40 cited in Schmenk, 2005, p111)"globalizing discourses of applied linguistics... tend to suggest that autonomy is a universally 'good thing' for everyone, irrespective of social and cultural context in which it is applied". Indeed, it has been represented as "a goal few would argue against" (Wenden, 1991, p.11), "it should be seen as an essential goal of all learning" (Cotterall, 2000). Should it then become a more genuine concern in the

contexts of the writers of the theses analyzed? The serious adoption of any of the existing versions may imply the (mis)repetition of (chunks) of complicated theoretical elaborations, the search for the application of ideas available either in the “handbooks” or in the published materials and the reading of articles such as Sinclair’s to be enlightened as to what features to look for in these textbooks. Wouldn’t that be against the very principles of autonomy?

This is what is happening. If teachers reject a notion like autonomy or demonstrate lack of interest and decide to work with more tangible and earthly objectives, they may be criticized as behaviorist, outdated, traditional educators. If they get minimally acquainted with the available theory, they may take some key terms, adapt them in their discourses, and continue doing what they did in the past but now with an apparently new twist and new discourses. Or they may really want to try to understand what the new concept is, why it is important, what it entails, and decide to apply it. They will need a lot of support, input and certain dependence from the Center. After all it is *their* idea. As Smith (2003) points out, “for purely practical purposes, teachers may need to be aware that different ‘versions’ of autonomy are in circulation, and learn to identify the biases within them”. (p.255). They may discover that it is complex, sometimes contradictory or confusing, or idealistic, or non-applicable in their contexts. But they should decide if they want to use these discourses, why they want to use them, and if they want to find practical applications suitable in their contexts. Embracing the pursue of autonomy should not be taken lightly. If the end result of a program focused on autonomy is left undefined, anything can be done for the sake of autonomy – including nothing.

Without noticing it, almost all of the educators whose theses I analyzed are discursively subscribing to a homogenized construct of autonomy, which will make teachers and students believe that the success in their learning of English is due to their internal capacities, development of strategies, responsibility, self-directedness, self-investment, self-esteem (and other selves), thus disregarding important features in the context, for example, availability of resources like textbooks, audio and visual material, dictionary, the internet, opportunities to use the language; opportunities to get individual attention; goals of the program and expectations, number of hours per week, pedagogical and linguistic preparedness of the teachers and even whether English was the imposed choice of foreign language. As the Approaches to Education section shows (See Chapter 5) a critical view at the contexts is necessary, so that the decisions made by teachers question and resist the given status quo.

The analysis of the course designs also shows there is a certain trend toward what Schmeck (2005) calls technologization of autonomy. The use of the internet to search for information – a much quicker kind of search if compared with a search through books kept in a library – is believed to be autonomous learning and this is derived from the assumption that autonomy is "working individually, independently, and in isolation". But not only that. By introducing the "technology" factor, students are achieving a more globalized kind of autonomy, one that is shared with other citizens of the world.

I believe that the model of autonomy developed by Oxford (2003) could serve as a general framework for helping learners learn the language and not necessarily or exclusively in terms of autonomy. Teachers need to take care of the 'technical' aspect,

by facilitating all types of resources that can be used for learning and by guiding learners to use them for their own benefit, whether under or without supervision. If the experience and the outcomes are pleasurable and beneficial, they are likely to continue using them and even seeking for opportunities to have access to them. ‘Psychological’ tools, or operations (verbal, social, cognitive, etc.) that learners could use when dealing with tasks or communicative situations must also be taught. Teachers should also think of arranging interactions that are supportive of language learning in the classroom, and also take realistic but not limiting perspectives with regard to the target community of practice in which learners will likely need to use the language. And last, but not least, there needs to be discussion and attempts at finding solutions to oppressive aspects (like lack of resources) in the specific context but also in society in general.

An inspection of the discrepancy between autonomy as constructed in the theoretical part of the theses and the one in the materials should alert designers of the need to question this concept, to redefine it or appropriate it in particular ways for their contexts. It should also imply an evaluation of whether they want to renounce to their own “autonomy” and passively accept the received applied linguistic wisdom about this notion (and other notions as well).

Part of an English teacher training program, especially, but not exclusively, if it is at the postgraduate level, should entail a critical examination of what is happening when knowledge from the Center comes to the Periphery in the form of articles, books, handbooks in the field of applied linguistics and is distributed for pre-service or in-service teachers to learn.

Motivation

Motivation is represented as an important issue for teachers to investigate and to consider when designing a course and its teaching. The term comes up in all the theses and is probably one of the main questions teachers seek answers for in the postgraduate course. This is how one of the teacher-writers expresses this desire.

Through this Diploma course at [name of institution], teachers have posed questions such as: “why are our students not motivated to learn English?”, “how can we get them to talk?”, “how can we help them to learn vocabulary?” These questions are the reason for many of us to register in this course. (T1 Rat:7)

The first question this writer asks presupposes lack of motivation as a common reality many teachers have to face in their contexts. Besides, it seems to be a question that is as important to answer as how to develop language competences.

Motivation is also included as one of the aspects to mention if one is to make a balance of what has been learnt during the year of studies and it is listed together with other traditionally key topics in language teaching like methodology and evaluation.

I have learned more about motivation, different types of teachings, critical thinking, authenticity, and methodologies and evaluation [...] (T1 Conc:45)

For a number of teacher-researchers this becomes a stated key issue in their research. For some it is an ideal status or goal to achieve closely connected to ‘success’.

This work has been done keeping in mind that the main element in the classroom is the student and s/he should be motivated.(T7 Intro:4)

The learner plays an important role in the ESP course, and the success of the course depends on in a big percent of (sic) his/her motivation and attitudes to the target language. (T7 Rat:7)

In other words, the reason why I chose this context is mainly to increase students’ motivation and maximise success in the learning of English at the university. (T5 Intro:1)

Motivation is often mentioned as one of the variables to consider when establishing the needs of a particular group and the features of the course to be designed. Motivation was considered by Hutchinson and Waters (1987) to be an important part of the ‘learning needs’, which complement ‘target needs’ in a Needs Analysis. Hutchinson and Waters’ book “English for Specific Purposes” is an early required reading in the postgraduate program and it is supposed to be an important guideline for the implementation of the Needs Analysis. The examples below contain a paraphrase of what Hutchinson and Waters discuss in the section titled “Learning Needs”, where they include motivation as one of the aspects to investigate. Neither of the writers gives explicit credit to these authors in the particular fragments reproduced below but the similarities are evident. In a way, using Hutchinson and Waters’ conceptualization and categories of Needs Analysis and even their words is perceived as natural in the program. The relevant excerpt from their book is presented thereafter.

Both kinds of needs (Learning and Target) provide different information during the analysis process; learning needs deals with the personal information of the learners, knowledge, learning situation, skills, strategies and also their motivation. [...]In my opinion, needs are demands from the outside world that teachers should help students to meet. In this course of action, students’ learning styles, motivations, cultural background and so on, should be taken into account. (T7 Rat:10)

The target situation is not a reliable indicator of what is needed or useful in the ESP learning situation. It can determine the destination, it can give general direction, but we must choose our route according to the conditions of the learning situation, the learners’ knowledge, skills and strategies and their motivation. (T3 Rat:12-13)

The target situation, in other words, is not a reliable indicator of what is needed or useful in the ESP learning situation. The target situation analysis can determine the destination; it can also act as a compass on the journey to give general direction, but we must choose our route according to the vehicles and guides available (i.e. the conditions of the learning situation), the existing roads within the learner’s mind (i.e. their knowledge, skills and strategies) and the learners’ motivation for traveling. (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987 p.62)

The different faces of motivation

Motivation is represented differently across the theses. One only thesis provides a definition in a glossary at the end of the work.

Motivation noun, motivate verb: motivation is the thoughts and feelings which make us want to do something and help us continue doing it. (T20 Glossary:121)

Thesis 20 is also the only work that provides a reference directly related to the topic: McDonough, Steven. 2003. Motivational strategies in the language classroom. *ELT Journal*, 57: 308-3. These thoughts or feelings, however, are difficult to observe and record.

Motivation as close to other abstract concepts

The term appears in association with other sometimes not-easily definable concepts.

How motivation is used together with them may mean that it is different from these other notions like encouragement, confidence, and attitude.

The task itself, or the teacher should also provide encouragement and motivation for learners throughout (T4 CD:42)

Materials should develop student's motivation and confidence for the use of strategies that can help them to achieve their goals in education. (8 Meth:47)

Furthermore, teachers exert an important role in the students' attitude and motivation which have repercussions when learning a foreign language. (T19 Ped Imp:17)

Motivation as awareness of importance of a foreign language

A big motivation work should be done by the teacher in order students be even more aware about the importance and utility of learning this foreign language [...] (T2 Ped Imp:33)

Attitudinal and motivational factors: It is important to know why the students are learning the language, through the answers of related questions, we will deduce if they are really motivated. Questions such as: Why did you choose this career?, Why this institution?, How do you see

yourself in the future as a professional? And also about language: Do you think English is important for your career? (T9 Rat:13)

Motivation as ‘want’:

These students came to the institution because they want to; [...] That “wants” is a great help for students and for the teacher as well because there is a high level of motivation to get the goal. This motivation can be increased by the teacher and can be also helpful for the teacher at moment of choosing activities for the class. (T3 Res:28)

A standard way to treat a reading text is to spend some time beforehand getting students motivated to read the text. Try to engage their curiosity so that they will want to read. (T2 Meth:75)

Motivation as a stable preexisting reality:

The following example shows how motivation is evaluated as a stable feature important to include in the description of the context together with other more concrete features (frequency of classes, textbook and materials in use, number of teachers, etc.)

English courses in the Chemistry faculty at [name of institution] have some special characteristics, the most important are:

- Four hours a week.
- Students use copies from a textbook demanded by [name of institution]
- The teachers should bring different reading activities for supporting the course and providing practice
- 4 English teachers work in this faculty.
- English is just taught in the first 5 semesters
- Well-conditioned classrooms
- Students are motivated and interested in learning English (T7 Ped Imp:24)

This representation of motivation as a static and objective truth is conveyed in the presentations of results of the Needs Analysis.

After having administered both the learning needs questionnaire and interview the results show that the students are highly motivated to learn English at [name of institution]. (T6 Res:13)

Other writers take a bolder step and make generalizing statements about motivation and depict it as a stable feature across certain institutions or contexts throughout the country.

There is a growing need in our country and in our region to learn and to teach English both in high demands. Learners are motivated by this context of today's world and set themselves high goals in reference to their accuracy and fluency in English because advancement in any field of their life might depend on their good command of English. (T9 Rat:10)

Motivation as a predictor of success (=acquisition?)

In the following examples, motivation is not only seen static and as a more or less permanent and inherent feature of the learner, but also as closely related to acquisition

The teacher may be excellent, but if the students or learners are not motivated or are not working as they should, the results will not be the best. The learner should be totally motivated, he has to be committed to learn, to participate in the learning process. (T2 Meth: 71)

The learner plays an important role in the ESP course, and the success of the course depends on in a big percent of his/her motivation and attitudes to the target language. (T7 Rat:7)

The community supports teachers' job. Students' success is due to their compromise to achieve the school's goals, their motivation for learning and achieve a high performance have deep roots in the family and in the values of the culture. (Gomez, 1998:23). (T20 Rat:4)

Some motivations are better and more real than others.

It means that the students' purpose to study English on a 75%, which is the answer of the majority, is simply because they like it, but also because it is a requisite to graduate from the university, as they cited in their answers. Consequently, their motivation is somehow limited in the presence of the university's demands. (T5 Res:22)

Attitudinal and motivational factors: It is important to know why the students are learning the language, through the answers of related questions, we will deduce if they are really motivated. Questions such as: Why did you choose this career?, Why this institution?, How do you see yourself in the future as a professional? And also about language: Do you think English is important for your career? (T9 Rat:13)

The passages indicate that there is some kind of good and 'real' type of motivation related to verbalized liking of English and thinking of potential long term benefits of English. This may be related to a common assumption derived from the literature, which has tended to favor what has been called 'integrative' over instrumental motivation. However, the notion is variable across the theses and the opposite (i.e. lack

of short term pragmatic motives) can be considered to negatively influence motivation as in the following example:

English is included in the curriculum as a “free” course, given to the students with no economical extra charge, the quality of “free” is one of the reasons some of the students show lack of motivation, because it does not have a numerical grade which will be registered in their final grades profile.(T7 Rat:9)

It seems that teachers long for ideal conditions where students come to their classrooms because they like English, they like learning it, and they need the language for some short-term pragmatic objective. After all, when that happens, teachers have more control over students.

Motivation as indicator of learning

Implicit evaluation takes place during the course, when learners, by their grades, participation, and motivation, give clues to the teacher on how their learning is going on. (T5 Ev:79)

This statement suggests that there is a way of determining motivation which the teachers seldom make explicit, but which seems not uncommon and also a preferred way of evaluation by some students as in the following example.

Students do not like evaluation at all, they prefer to be appraised by their attitude, motivation efforts and dedication towards the English language learning. (T8 Res:28)

Motivation as a set observable behaviors

The following is the only example found where concrete behaviors account for motivation.

It is also important to mention positive aspects in the students; such as, their punctuality, their good attitudes toward the teacher and their classmates and their responsibility with the

assignments. These aspects demonstrate they are not having motivation problems. So, what is the real issue? (T16 Rat:6)

This teacher limits motivation to punctuality and compliance with classroom rules and assignments. It can be more or less safely said that students who arrive on time to class and do their assignments are more likely to learn, than those who don't. So if she decides to call these two behaviours "motivation", she will be in a position to take care of it and achieve higher levels. For example, by designing attractive and doable assignments, by acknowledging compliance with them, by making punctuality especially rewarding, etc.

How motivation works: a previous step before learning

Some teachers do represent motivation as changing and variable according to the particular types of input or activity, and motivation in turn has a beneficial effect on learning outcomes. Below is an example from Thesis 7, in which the role of motivation is represented as a condition for acquisition/learning (provided the objectives are learning ones): teacher → motivation → success (achievement of objectives)

Therefore, teachers must be guide, counselor and friend but at the same time he/she has to be seen as the authority. This sort of treatment towards students works as a motivational aspect and will be translated into learners' progress and achievement of objectives. (T7 CD Meth:34)

It must be said that "this sort of treatment" is ambiguous in that it is impossible to deduce what concrete teachers' behaviors are implied. This, and the impossibility of the teacher to directly influence success, contributes to the mystification of motivation. In other, similar uses of "motivation" there is not the same explicit mention of learning.

In the passage below from Thesis 8, students are assumed to have an existing degree of motivation towards reading. Then they are faced with difficult lengthy texts that have the effect of influencing (decreasing, in this case) their motivation (rather than influencing their understanding, interest, degree of engagement, etc.). Finally, motivation seems to mediate the feeling of joy: (motivation) → activity → motivation₁ → enjoyment.

They argue that the English level for the speaking, listening, reading and writing [in the textbook] is too high for them. For instance, reading texts are extensive and laden with unknown vocabulary that decreases their motivation towards reading. As a result, they do not enjoy the activities proposed by the textbook. (T8 Res:27)

From this discussion, it is not clear if students manage to actually learn from the material because this point is not directly addressed by the writer. Yet the reader, as well as the writer, may be inclined to suppose that motivation equals or leads to acquisition.

In another passage from the Results section, the same writer does not use motivation as a preexisting entity, but as a variable and fluctuating learners' feature that can arise with specific intensity under particular conditions. The author, however, does not include concrete descriptors of the features of "motivated" learners.

Student's motivation is half way between high and medium, depending on the kind of activities they have to perform in classes. Students feel motivated when they do not have to follow the textbook and the class work is developed around workshops regarding topics that appeal to them such as: fashion, music, current events, sports, famous people, etc. (T8 Res:27)

As in the former passage from this same author, it is left to the reader to deduce that when students are "motivated", learning takes place. Activity → Motivation → (learning?)

The author of Thesis 19 also represents motivation as a variable phenomenon

dependent on how circumstances are arranged in the learning environment. He does not discuss learning but rather centers on motivation. A corresponding representation would be: dialogs/conversations/workshops around fashion, music, sports, famous people→motivation/feeling comfortable→ (acquisition?)

Some students show more motivation when they participate in dialogs and conversations and others when they read the material of study. They also feel more comfortable when they work in small groups or in pairs. The students, however, feel motivated when the teacher varies the class activities and uses several resources and materials like CDs, videos and textbooks. (T19 Res:14

In the passage above the writer is actually reporting his findings of the Needs Analysis, and “motivation” or “feeling more comfortable” are his reading of the data. (See section on “How needs analysis determines motivation” below). When he writes “students show more motivation when” or “students feel motivated when” it means students stated that “they prefer” or they said “they learn more when”. This last meaning would imply that the author also tends to equate motivation with learning/acquisition. And this is the view he represented at different points in his work:

Easy and attractive activities → motivation → reading comprehension

The teacher should encourage pupils’ motivation toward reading, having them develop the set of exercises presented in the course and showing that it is possible to enhance reading comprehension in an easy and attractive way achieving these activities.(T19 CD Meth:30)

Appropriate conditions, materials and activities →confidence to learn +
motivation → effective learning.

Learning may be more effective if teachers keep in mind the type of materials to be used in class and the conditions of the students to develop activities that give them confidence to learn and, at the same time activate their motivation.(T19 Ap:26).

Though the teachers whose discourse was reproduced here made motivation a more controllable or moldable variable of learning, they still fail to describe and define it, and they resort to the concept as an (apparently significant) intermediate (and unnecessary) stage which often presupposes acquisition. Resorting to this mediation makes teaching, and possibly learning, more complicated, because some teachers are expecting to modify primarily an intangible entity and then indirectly achieve concrete results in terms of development of language skills.

Teachers are motivators

In spite of the fact that teachers devote lines in their theses to making motivation a problem in their context and a research goal to solve, none of them discusses alternatives to dealing with this issue. Most of the teachers seem to know how motivation can be enhanced. The solutions they put forth are *not attributed*, so it can be deduced that they make up part of the teachers' repertoire, prior experience or knowledge. Most of them refer to the materials and its content, though none of them refer to specific ways these materials should be used in class to obtain the desired motivation.

In order to motivate students towards these strategies, it is of relevance to provide them with stories and articles from newspaper that can bring discussion to class. The activities should include the topics of finance. The financial topic is part of their specialisation in Finances and International Business, so the content should be based on this topic. (T1 Ped Imp:25)

Materials should motivate students with a positive feeling toward the language. This means teachers should select an appropriate source because what it is appropriate and suitable for one group would not be for another. (T3 Mat Ev:74)

The materials should be highly motivating and offer something new in terms of content as well as language. (T4 Rat:4)

“Motivator” is a common role teachers attribute to themselves.

Certainly, improving reading comprehension and writing skills require (sic) a lot of work not only

from students but also from teachers as facilitators and motivators; this is the reason why it is fundamental to identify the students' needs, lacks and wants to initiate a meaningful plan with the most effective strategies for the class (T5 Ped Imp:29)

“Facilitator” in the passage above seems to be different from “motivator” (as the conjunction “and” suggests). It is not clear what role the implementation of “the most effective strategies for the class” is attached to. While it is not difficult to deduce that being a “facilitator” includes making learning easy and possible (probably with “effective strategies”), the relation between “motivator” and the planning of strategies remains fuzzy.

Furthermore, teachers exert an important role in the students' attitude and motivation which have repercussions when learning a foreign language. For this reasons, teachers should become aware of the different aspects that may affect positively or negatively the teaching and learning processes, such as the students' context, needs, lacks and wants, the national policies, and the institution (T19 Ped Imp:17)

In this account, knowledge of the needs and the immediate and larger context of the learners does not translate in concrete actions by the teachers to influence motivation. The passage sounds more like a rhetorical exercise with key terms but no clear relation between them.

Consequently, we will find that students are more motivated once they perceive that their interests are taken into account, that is why it is so important not to put aside psychological and affective dimensions. In addition, their attitude towards participation and active interaction will be positive. (T8 Rat:11)

The key for providing motivation seems to be related here to the “psychological and affective dimension”. These dimensions are not defined in the thesis but from how language was used it may be possible to make the following reading of the excerpt if we put the clauses in what could be regarded as logical chronological order: we (teachers) → (should not) put aside psychological and affective dimensions, which includes taking

students' interest into account → then students are more motivated and, additionally, have a positive attitude towards participation and interaction. The role of the teacher is then to please the students or make them perceive that “their interests are taken into account”. However, while this will result in “participation and active interaction”, it is not clear what will be achieved in terms of motivation since the former behaviors are represented as different from (and “in addition” to) motivation.

The teacher is responsible for the learning process since he/ she is the guide of the class giving input about the writing process and the different types of writing that students should handle. [...] He/ she should be a motivator for the students because writing can be difficult and they might feel frustrated because of their results. (T17: CD Meth:38)

This representation makes “motivator” a role similar to that of cheerleaders during the difficult times of their team.

The task itself, or the teacher should also provide encouragement and motivation for learners throughout the task and should reward sincere efforts at accomplishing it. (T4 CD:42)

Though this writer does not refer specifically to the role of “motivator”, the representation of the role of the teacher is similar to that in the previous passage, in that motivation is used with the meaning people use it in everyday usage. The role of the teacher can be interpreted here as providing incentive, inspiration, enthusiasm, stimulus, impulse, or some other kind of reinforcement for achievement. (Is this the least mythical representation?) It must be said that this teacher's role is unique across the thesis.

The use of the notion of motivation reinforces other conceptions about English teaching

If motivation is established as an important variable to be accounted for in a Needs Analysis, as a key objective for the development of teachers in the postgraduate

program, for the design of specific courses, for learners' success, etc., motivation can then work as warranty of the benefits of other theories. In the following uses of the notion of motivation certain established approaches in language teaching and also individual views become stronger and truer.

Students involved in this process [an ESP course] [...] must be aware of their weaknesses and strengths in particular situations and keep a high motivation through the learning process. (T8 Rat:19)

Finally, this approach (skills-based) can be highly motivating to students of all ages and backgrounds (T7 Ap Lg:29)

Besides that there is a great variety of tasks to do through the class time and this increase[s], of course, the motivation and they feel at ease. (T6 Mat Ev:22)

After evaluating the material and the activities, it could be concluded that in order to keep students interests the activities need to be changed every day in order to increase students' motivation and interest. It is kind of hard to have the same material and activity every day. Therefore, it is necessary to design a lot more material to complete and balance their target needs, considering their learning and human needs also, this way students do not get bored with the same routine every single day. (T2 Mat Ev:76)

In the former excerpts the ESP and the skills-based approaches are represented positively based on the assumptions that they are associated with motivation (and in turn with acquisition given the discursively established relation). The common general assumption about teaching that a variety of activities is key to learning also gets reinforced through the notion of motivation. In their statements the writers of Theses 6 and 2 choose to, first, establish a direct univocal relation between variety and motivation (with the acquisition implication it usually bears), and, second, to represent a simplified teacher's job. The statements ignore the complexity of variables involved in the implementation and in the arrangement of the conditions for learning that need to be accounted for in each setting before claiming concrete results. By summarizing the effect

of the “variety of activities” under the general and undefined outcome of “motivation”, it is difficult to assess either the intervention or its results.

Needs Analysis and students’ motivation

As was discussed in section 2.2 teachers trust their Needs Analysis and its implications. This applies also to the investigation of motivation. The following are examples of how the researchers deduce their students’ level of motivation and the implications.

From Thesis 16:

The author of Thesis 16 included the following question in her “Learning Needs Questionnaire”: Why and what for are you studying English? (¿Por qué y para qué estás estudiando inglés?) In the discussion of results she wrote:

Students are learning English because they like [it], it means they are motivated to learn. (T16 Res:20)

From Thesis 6:

A similar question was included in the questionnaire elaborated by the writer of Thesis 6. He made it a multiple-choice instrument.

1. ¿Por qué esta estudiando Inglés?

Obligación	1	3%
Opcional	19	58%
Necesidad	4	12%
Posición Social	2	6%
Remuneración Económica	7	21%

Comentario: Los estudiantes sienten una gran motivación hacia el curso de inglés.
(Comment: students feel great motivation towards their English course)
(T6 Appendix:39)

For this particular researcher stating that English is studied as an option rather than as an imposition equals “feeling great motivation”.

From Thesis 11:

Most of the students, approximately 80%, are highly motivated towards the English classes. This means it is not necessary for them to be encouraged to enjoy them. In fact, it is important to maintain their motivation high by designing appealing and suitable activities. (see appendix 2, figure 1).(T11 Res:19)

The corresponding questions asked were: “Do you like the English classes?” and “Do you think it is important to learn English?”

From Thesis 8:

Also, it attempts to find out how students learn the language, the different learning styles they use to assimilate better and what motivates them to gain knowledge. (T8 Res:19)

As we have said, 47% chose this academic program because they find it as a “launch platform” to make real business. 76% of the students think that English is important for their academic program, and chose the Institution because of the prestige and the agreements with other Institutions across the world.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS: The students are motivated in learning the language, because they believe that knowing it well will help them when being professionals. (T8 Res:21)

From Thesis 19:

I learn more English when ...
 I listen to someone talk (17%)
 I write words and sentences ((11%)
 I participate in dialogues and or conversations (37%),
 Read study materials (34%);

In class I prefer to study English through activities such as –
 Movies (28%)
 Games (22%)
 Songs (25%)
 all the above (54%).

Some students show more motivation when they participate in dialogs and conversations and others when they read the material of study. They also feel more comfortable when they work in small groups or in pairs. The students, however, feel motivated when the teacher varies the class activities and uses several resources and materials like CDs, videos and textbooks. (T19 Res:14)

Learners' perception or stated perceptions about how they learn 'more' as well as stated preferences for certain types of activities equals motivation.

The samples from the Needs Analysis instruments reveal that motivation was determined based on the assumptions that if students say they like English, or certain activities, or if they say they study English because it is an option and they recognize its pragmatic utility, then they have motivation or are motivated. Through this kind of analysis the researchers seem to be trying to give a scientific status to the students' statements of preferences and likings through the concept of motivation

I have shown how the notion of motivation is presented throughout the theses. It can be said that the term is treated by the teachers as a concept closely related to acquisition and success of a course. It is not surprising then that a number of teachers state that they included it as part of the Needs Analysis in their institutions. The lack of motivation is regarded as an important problem and one that needs to be addressed. The concept, however, is not operationally defined; at times it seems to be associated with awareness of the general importance of English, but it can also be linked to the presence of specific short-term objectives. Though in some works it is depicted as a permanent feature of the context, something teachers cannot fight against, in some other cases it seems a necessary step to include in the designers' accounts of how they represent their interventions in their contexts. That is, instead of representing themselves engaged in concrete activities or strategies towards, say the acquisition of vocabulary, the familiarization with certain types of text, the development of some skills, etc., teachers seem interested primarily in affecting motivation, which in turn is more often than not

assumed to lead to the final goals – language acquisition. Yet, concrete actions or hints regarding how to affect motivation or how to determine the degree of motivation are not always provided. From my reading of the theses whose authors consider they can affect it, motivation 1) can be found in the content of the materials or the type of activity or task chosen, 2) can become a reality if teachers choose to do what learners want, and 3) can be provided by the teacher in the form of enthusiasm or perhaps incentives or rewards while students learn. The problem with 1) is that the teachers that mention it seem to rely on the features of the materials and tasks themselves to provide motivation (they should be interesting and motivating). But it is never certain whether all the students will like a topic or activity, and, additionally, how the topic, activities or tasks are developed in a specific group and taken up by individuals is not always predictable. It would be necessary to establish through close observation more about how these activities or topics can influence learning and whether they indeed do. As regards 2), as much as teachers would like to please students stated wants, this is rarely possible. It seems then that the most sensible thing for teachers to do is to resort to the least specialized intervention but the one that relies on principles of learning (see section below). It is interesting that, in spite of the fact that there is growing body of literature related to motivation and Second Language Acquisition, the teachers opted for ignoring it completely. On the one hand, they resort to this concept, they use it and manipulate the term (teachers as motivators, motivated students, to motivate learners, to enhance/increase motivation, etc) but on the other they do not consider they need to

define it, to see what others have said or done about it, or even question their assumptions about what works towards motivation and what does not.

Today's discussions about motivation reveal a move from the macro perspective to a more situated conception of L2 motivation (Dörnyei, 2003, 2005). The initial social psychological period, associated with Robert Gardner and Wallace Lambert's (1972) view that the learner's attitudes towards the target language, community, its values, etc., played an important role in the learning of a second language, gave way to a simplified understanding of motivation in two dichotomic components: integrative and instrumental motivation. Later researchers took into consideration a fine analysis of the situation-specific factors and other terms came into play: the notions of intrinsic and extrinsic motives and also a number of cognitive approaches like self-determination theory, attribution theory, and goal theories (Dörnyei, 2003). More recently attention has shifted to a more dynamic and changing nature of motivation. It seems that while engaged in a task, a learner may activate different levels or motivations or motives (see Dörnyei, 2002; Dörnyei & Kosmos, 2000) which interact with different aspects of the task itself and the environment. Dörnyei and Ottó (1998) underlined how the motivational process is affected by different motives at different stages of learning, for example, at the onset or the goal setting phase some factors may be at work, while during a concrete activity, there may be a number of other influences.

Dörnyei (2005) recognizes that a number of scholars have questioned the validity and relevance of integrativeness because in many cases when learners do not have contact with L2 speakers, other learning goals like travel, friendship, knowledge, and

instrumental orientation, seem to be more relevant. Besides, in today's globalized world where English is an international language, it seems necessary to think of a fusion of instrumental and intercultural goals. Many learners may experience positive attitudes towards the target language communities and speakers but at the same time they are thinking of concrete goals, such as traveling, studying abroad, singing pop songs, understanding movies, reading Internet pages. Dörnyei visualizes the notion of integrative motivation in terms of identity though there is not a single way to portray it: it can be in the case of English, "a non-parochial, cosmopolitan, globalized world citizen identity" (p.97); or what Yahsima (2000 cited by Dörnyei, 2005) would call "international posture"; what Lamb (2004) denominates 'bicultural culture', or an awareness of own local culture framed in a global one, or even Norton's (2001) notion of "imagined identity" (p.166) which alludes to the type of affiliation that learners imagine for themselves in relation to the virtual or imagined language community.

One interesting final reflection Dörnyei makes is about the relation between L2 motivational studies and L2 acquisition. These are two different research traditions and have tried to answer different questions. Though there is the so called "enabling function of motivation" (Edmondson, 2004), which hypothesizes that in order for acquisition to take place there should be some minimal motivation, there has not been real attention to find out acquisition correlates with levels of motivation.

As can be seen the notion of motivation has been reconsidered and it has been acknowledged that it is not a stable or permanent state or quality, that there can be a number of variables affecting it and that it does not affect groups of individuals

homogeneously. Moreover, it is not clear which is the 'superior' type of motivation' and there is not even agreement regarding what name or what behaviors to associate with motivation, not to mention that the relation between proficiency and motivation has not been clarified.

One likely consequence of the loose use of the term is that by representing it as a plausible (and desirable and valuable) outcome of a number of interventions, it can blur a concrete account of the learning outcomes and lead to the endless reproduction of myths and 'commonsensical' intuitions or unquestioned wisdom from existing theories. Given the expressed urgent need in the country to see more learners able to use the English language for their own purposes and benefit, it does not seem to make much sense to construct new interventions around a notion that is so tenuous. What emerges from the analysis in this section is that the discussion of motivation in the theses does not solve learning problems but contributes to maintain the circulation of the discourses that reify this notion.

Making motivation work

Following are some ways in which the notion of motivation could be of some help.

When establishing the degree of motivation, an operational definition of motivation in terms of behaviors that can be observed and described should be worked out. This is especially the case when motivation is discussed together with notions like awareness, attitude, that have not been operationally defined.

If motivation is to be considered an important learning variable, it is desirable to establish whether there is a certain correlation between the behaviors involved and language acquisition. This relation should be empirically established in the context of the research. For example: if motivation is defined as students' verbalizations about the importance of English, or, perhaps, the likelihood that the learners engage in these verbalizations, and if this so-defined motivation is to become a goal of a course, the teacher should consider prioritizing its relevance for the sake of acquisition. Perhaps, motivation as "doing homework" (or the likelihood of the student's doing the homework) could potentially be more directly contributing to learning than the one mentioned before.

Before the new course (or the new intervention) is designed it is useful to establish how often and under which conditions the motivation indicators (i.e. selected behaviors) are observable, and also how the teacher and other individuals usually arrange the contingencies of reinforcement around these behaviors. This requires direct observation by the teacher or documentation of concrete products of learning rather than reliance on self-reports by students, teachers' memory, prior experience, or theories.

If (a defined) motivation is set as a precondition in achieving specific objectives,

- a number of parameters for its evaluation should be established. For example, if motivation is defined as compliance with assignments, it is important to specify what levels of compliance to expect in terms of frequency, completeness, quality, etc.;

- conditions should be arranged in the context according to the observations made so that the environment is favorable to learning That may require some restructuring of the environment and accommodating individual needs;
- the teacher should determine in which way and how frequently he or she is going to acknowledge in meaningful ways progress in the established objective so as to keep the students' performance in the expected direction and at the expected level;
- it is essential to keep data on how the introduced changes in the setting correlate with the expected motivation. For example, if the use of certain types of materials is expected to bring about motivation (as defined), this needs to be carefully monitored (i.e. whether it correlates with the expected quantity and quality of expected behaviors).

Learners' verbal preferences, likes and interests are not automatically conducive to motivation, or conversely, it is not necessary to discard what learners do not initially consider "interesting" or "motivating". This relation can only be established if after meeting students' stated predilections, the criteria for motivation show a positive pattern (e.g. compliance with homework, attendance, etc.) according to data collected in this respect.

Becoming a "motivator" for a teacher should not be something abstract or different from what should be usually expected from a teacher: being able to restructure the learning environment to facilitate learning (choosing or designing appropriate materials; making noise levels, temperature, length of task, etc. as comfortable as

possible; etc.), setting consistent contingencies of reinforcement for students' engagement in desired performances; providing appropriate models of language; analyzing and grading the tasks so as to make sure that learners can do them and can improve performance to reach desired levels in given periods of time; allowing for individual differences.

It does not seem wise to accept a static notion of motivation. Whether students themselves say at a given moment that they like English, or they verbally acknowledge the importance of English and its potential benefits, there is no guarantee that learners will perform at expected levels unless these behaviors are contingency-managed.

CHAPTER 8: IDENTITIES IN THE MAKING

The whole enterprise of the postgraduate course could be said to consist in shaping, fostering, encouraging, and monitoring a new identity for the teacher-participants in the program – a specialist in the teaching of English with a new professional and academic profile. This new identity can be conveyed and interpreted through a number of semiotic devices, including the teachers' practices in their classrooms, their conversations with the authorities of their institutions, their social activity in their communities, etc. But it should also be transparent in their theses, because this is the official document recognized by the institution granting the new title meant to serve as concrete evidence of their becoming that new identity.

Despite the fact that one might have thought that the teacher-writers would be worried about their status as non-native speakers of English, the academic writing in the theses does not construct them as concerned about their non-nativeness status or a particular desire to be accepted as part of the native-like speaking teachers of English. These issues do not come up explicitly either in the theses, or in the written interviews, in which they were asked to describe their experience of writing a thesis, or in the brief autobiographies that three of them wrote. That can be connected with the nature of the program and the academic task, which do not allow space for such considerations, and the context of the program, which does not require special digging into this particular aspect of the teachers' status. Actually, at the time the program started, around 15 years ago, candidates were required to demonstrate their competence in English as measured by an English proficiency test and several options were accepted (TOEFL, Cambridge First

Certificate exam among others) for that purpose. This requirement was soon eliminated because of the limited locations these exams can be taken, the inconvenience it means for teachers coming from smaller towns, the unproven validity of these tests as a measure of what the teacher-participants are to do in the program. Additionally, the program is conceived as a way to contribute to the development of the teachers in the region, including their language proficiency. Thus, rejecting in-service teachers willing to invest in their education and their improvement in English proficiency would be a disservice to their students. Most teachers undertake the challenge of participating in their courses, reading and writing in English with enthusiasm but without the pressures of being in an environment where some consider themselves the owners of English. They have probably not taken any specific course in English for Academic purposes, so their models are the texts they read, the instructors of the program and their peers. There is a discourse community in the making with a distant model which they may want to emulate but without exaggerated pressures. General guidelines of academic writing are provided. Tutors revise the chapters of the theses throughout the year of the studies and continuously help in editing the drafts. Formal aspects (including conventions of academic writing) of the thesis make up less than ten percent of the final grade. It is not surprising then that the main focus is not in establishing an identity as successful learners of the academic written language in English, even though these educators undoubtedly invest considerable effort in it. Actually, during the year of her studies in the program, one of the teachers wrote and published an article about the importance of studying English in a newsletter that circulates in the university where she teaches. She wrote the

article in Spanish and was planning to write another one for the same magazine. This suggests that, at least right after finishing the postgraduate course, she was not planning to enter the English-speaking (writing) applied linguistics discourse community. Perhaps, as Block (2007) also concludes after analyzing four cases of learners' unsuccessful "move towards TL[target language]-mediated subject positions" (p.136), the identity work in foreign language contexts is not much linked to the target language.

Multiple Identities

Instead, teachers have specific identities to construct as they deal with the different parts of their thesis and these identities are related to the circulating ideologies and conceptions of English and English language teaching in the program. These, in turn, are embedded in a context where there is reverence for English at the society level, and also considerable respect for the international community of applied linguists. The former chapters have shown how different ideological discourses and conceptions the teachers hold, position them, as a group, in unexpected roles perhaps not intentionally fostered by the designers and faculty of the program. For example, in the rationale section they are engaged in demonstrating the importance of English in their immediate contexts, in the country and in the world, but in doing this they can be perceived as defenders and promoters of the leading role of English, English-speaking countries and representatives of English-speaking countries for intercultural communication around the world (see chapter on ideologies of English). In doing these, the writers position themselves as passive observers of a number of social and economic developments

around them (chapter on ideologies of English, section 1.2). Here they also portray themselves as noncritical adherents of the value of the ESP enterprise, its goals and methods.

When engaged in describing the theoretical basis underlying their course designs they adopt a noncritical stance towards the theories developed in English-speaking countries that are producers of most of the literature in the field of applied linguistics (chapter on popular concepts in applied linguistics). They are positioned as consumers of these theories from the moment the institution asks them to first construct a theoretical frame for their designs. That is, they are asked to first get acquainted with theories, preferably newer and presumably more perfect ones, and from that theoretical background, choose the most appealing, understandable, practical or apparently suitable one for the context. The alternative procedure, from practice to theory, is not even considered institutionally, and does not enter as part of the knowledge making possibilities. The design of the program also constructs them as researchers of their students but not of themselves. The research design encouraged in the program positions them as observers of their students' behaviors, as interviewers, questionnaire designers, applicators, analysts, and then, as decision makers and course designers. There is no consideration of themselves as subjects to the same type of attention either by themselves or by others.

Finally, the ideology of the ESP approach, the learner-centered approach and the importance of "meeting the needs" of the students position the teachers as guardians of the status quo (chapter on approaches to education).

Individually, however, and through the ideologies mentioned above, they are concerned with constructing a new identity through their written discourse, that of teacher researcher. In the context of the postgraduate program, to be recognized as such they need to adopt certain stances like knowledgeability and scientificity within the conventions of the locally accepted academic discourse.

Though the lexical and grammatical choices of many of the texts reveal the status of the teachers as learners of English, it is also true that a number of features construct them as members of the discourse community: The global organization follows the moves of research articles, there is a lot of citation of previous work, many of the claims are hedged, there is ample use of the accepted terminology in the field, of extended nominal groups and nominalizations, adoption of impersonal stance, for example. Part of the knowledgeability stance is construed through the literature review and the reference to external sources, all of which would suggest informed decisions regarding their choices of research methods, theories and approaches (but see chapter on the ideological representation of theories of learning). Scientificity is a key element in the construction of the researcher identity. At the macro level it is represented in the fact that teachers follow the norm regarding research methodology: They specify a lack of knowledge through questions or objectives, then they specify an approach or methods to address the question and attempt at filling in the gap and, finally, they organize the results to present them in the thesis. At a finer level, the linguistic choices represent an ideological view of researcher in control of the object of study through almost perfect instruments which can yield unambiguous and complete data that speaks for itself (see section on Needs

Analysis).

Other aspects of the complex identity as teacher-researchers are analyzed below.

Textual Units and the Researcher Identity

An interesting aspect of the researcher identity in some of the monographs is represented in the realization of the textual macrofunction of the language, that is, how the language is “able to build up sequences of discourse, organizing the discursive flow and creating cohesion and continuity as it moves along” (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004, p.30). This function can be realized through ‘textual units’ (Moss et al., 1998) though other scholars have named it metadiscourse (Crismore and Fransworth, 1990 cited in Bunton, 1999) or metatext (Mauranen,1993). Textual units are parts of texts, whose primary function is to guide the reader in constructing the organization of a text and also in establishing interaction with the reader. It can consist of linkers, either previews (indicators of what comes next in the discourse) or reviews (reference to something that was mentioned earlier). It can be found at the beginnings and ends of sections, as well as at transitional points to signal a change of topic, for example. Sometimes they make reference to the world outside the text as in the case of introductions and conclusions. Clauses in a textual unit can contain evaluative or other interactive features like first or second personal pronouns in which case they serve the interpersonal macrofunction of language.

Below are some examples of the realization of this function in the Methodology section of the theses. They are all extracted from the beginning of that section and I claim

that they have two functions. One is the usual function of the textual units – serve as a compass in the text, sometimes with interactive features. The other is to construct the writer’s identity as a researcher, that is, through them the authors signal the fact that they are giving an account of their findings regarding what the process of research is and its conventional procedures, and that they are familiar with these and are following the norms. Through their choices they represent themselves as novices in the community, timidly making themselves a place in it.

Table 5: Analysis of textual units

Textual units	Comments
<p>Research in the classroom has been done for a long time. Modern classroom research began in the 1950s. It is a special event in which teachers have the opportunity to investigate and get the response to problems that occur in classrooms. Problems that sometimes can not be perceived, but teachers know they are existing and it is not easy to find the means to solve them.</p> <p><u>Teachers as researchers must know that</u> to start a classroom research you need to be well informed on the issue <u>you</u> want to investigate. Typically <u>you</u> need to collect data and do needs analysis. (T1 Meth:15)</p>	<p>After a general justification of research, the writer signals in her textual unit that what follows is about data collection and doing the needs analysis.</p> <p>The use of “teachers as researches must know that” and the use of “you” may refer to herself and her awareness of what she is expected to do to become a teacher researcher. It may be interpreted as her giving recommendations to other potential teacher researchers, but given the limited readership of her paper, she is more likely to refer to herself as member of that particular community.</p>
<p>For carrying out a needs analysis <u>it is absolutely necessary</u> to collect some information from people who participate in the learning teaching process directly or indirectly. Research is <u>absolutely necessary</u> in order to be able to get all the necessary information for a course design.</p> <p>Data collection instruments [...] (T2 Meth:15)</p>	<p>In the first sentence the writer is reinstating the idea of collecting information for a Needs Analysis, a point discussed in the previous section in her work. Then she goes on to justify research doing, which seems an unnecessary point to make but perhaps desirable in terms of her non expert status. The use of “absolutely necessary” signals a high degree of external obligation. The subtitle “Data collection instruments” signals directly that is the issue to be described next.</p>
<p>This chapter will describe the different procedures to carry out the research.</p>	<p>The writer is not only indexing the organization of the following stretch of</p>

<p><u>The first step is</u> to define what instruments are going to be appropriate to collect the information in order to answer the question research [...] <u>First of all, it is necessary to</u> clarify that this is classroom research, which could be defined as an investigation centred on classroom events that basically, try to answer questions or solve problems emerged from the process itself. (Allwright, and Bailey, 1991). (T16 Meth:7)</p>	<p>discourse, but reconstructing a research procedure, how things should be done. This is represented by the choice of present tense (“the first step is”) instead of future or past. The use of the relational attributive clause (“it is necessary to clarify”) can be seen a move to remind the reader that she is complying with the expected norm.</p>
<p>Research is defined as a systematic approach in order to find answers to questions and to interpret findings (Holmes, 1986). Classroom research intends to investigate what really happens in the classroom, for example: interaction of students and teacher, feelings of students and teachers, how errors are corrected, and so on. Teachers do research because they want to be better teachers and to understand their students better.</p> <p><u>To start research it is recommended to read and get informed</u> about what has been done previously, and after that the researcher designs how data will be collected and makes the analyses afterwards. (T17 Meth:10)</p>	<p>Unlike the previous passage, where the writer justifies that she goes into defining what is research (“first of all, it is necessary to clarify that...[...] which could be defined as...”) the author here provides a definition of research without preamble. And yet she then positions herself as a novice by justifying what she is going to present next (how data will be collected and analyzed) as observance of the recommendations by experts.</p> <p>In this example as in the two previous ones, the necessity or recommendation regarding what to do as a researcher is preceded by the impersonal “it”. This feature farther detaches the writer from the more experienced membership in the field.</p>

Other writers use textual units in the Methodology section that differ considerably from the ones analyzed above. These authors construe a more “professional” identity as researchers. Again, the samples are all the initial part of the Methodology section.

This chapter attempts to give a description of all the steps followed during the research process, and of the data collection instruments used, including the number of questions, to whom they were applied, how many subjects, the type of information collected, the advantages and disadvantages during the application of such instruments are taken into account in this passage about Methodology. Finally, we will be dealing with reflections of the tutorial work, the role as researcher, constraints during the process, disappointments, interesting facts, and regrets, as well. (T4 Meth:6)

The methodology purposed for this research is based on a qualitative, descriptive and interpretative design. In parallel with this, some variables and indicators are going to be applied. The data has been obtained from the analysis and description of the data collection instruments like some class observations and previous focus group discussions with the students, among others. (T5 Meth:14)

The author of Thesis 4 clearly signals the purpose of the chapters but does not

mention any external pressure to do so. The writer of Thesis 5 does not use such clear markers as “we will be dealing with” or “this chapter attempts to”, but the reader may deduce that the following section includes variables and indicators used in the research, as indeed can be found in the text thereafter. These two authors do not construct themselves as attending to “what they have to do” or “what is necessary to do” but use the language strictly to fulfill the textual function.

The introduction to the Methodology chapter by the writer of Thesis 9 achieves both goals: it realizes the textual function and addresses the status of the author as researcher. By separating the two functions and by adopting an authoritative stance he manages to position himself almost as an expert rather than an apprentice who follows given norms.

Table 6: Textual function in Thesis 9

<p>Once the population which will be the object of study has been defined and delimited, the stage of data collection arrives. This process requires a high degree of accuracy, clarity and especially a lot of objectivity.</p> <p>Objectivity is more than an intention or an impartial perspective. In this case, we conceive objectivity as the capacity the designed instruments have to measure and calculate real events with very low error probabilities.</p>	<p>The first sentence points to a previous section in his thesis, but he refers to it as a stage in the research process. He also introduces the general content of the following section in terms of the following step in the process. He then discusses the features of the data collection stage with authorial emphasis (“we conceive objectivity as”)</p>

<p>During this process three very clearly structured stages are developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Selection and development of data collection instrument types. Instruments should be valid and reliable, otherwise we could not base our analysis on the results obtained. b) Application of measurement instruments. In this particular case it consists of carrying out observations and the collection of the relevant data regarding the objectives of our research. c) Data organization and labelling. It refers to the classification of the information gathered in order to develop an appropriate analysis. 	<p>He describes the standard stages in the process through extended nominal groups, which contribute to the perceived objectivity.</p>
<p>We will now describe the details related to the execution of each one of these steps in the present research. (T9 Meth:11)</p>	<p>He announces what he will do next in the text.</p>

It can be said then that the language students use in the construction of textual units significantly contributes, within the conventions of academic writing, to positioning them as more or less expert members of the community of researchers. The language resources that are available to each of them, however, can affect their self-representation.

Teacher Identities

In a subsection of the Course Design part of their thesis the designers describe the roles of the teachers in their ideal courses. This would be a place where they could present themselves as a new type of teacher, with wider roles and responsibilities. In a way they should construct here a vision of themselves teaching in their real classrooms after completion of the program. However, that representation is ideological and by no

means uniform or consistent. For some designers, this section is an academic exercise rather than a place for portraying themselves. They seldom portray themselves as the teachers for their courses and they discuss these roles in the abstract. Sometimes this subsection is a quite perfunctory; perhaps a mere filling of the requirement, like the excerpt from Thesis 13, whose writer is the owner of the course, but not necessarily its teacher.

Together with the learner, the teacher represents the necessary input, practice, time, and feedback through which learners become active language users.

In my course design, the teacher has to be a facilitator, a monitor, a provider, a guide. He/ she must lead students to improve their language skills, learning strategies, and human values so that learners can go beyond language structures. (T13 CD Meth:37)

Informed and updated in current trends

A common move is to first discard the roles that have negative status in applied linguistics.

Years ago, the role of the Teachers was the controller and the king of all knowledge. They did not take into account student's opinions or knowledge. They were also the core of the teaching learning process inside the classroom and the classes were based on them.(Chiappe,C. & Montaña, F. 1999)

Nowadays, it has changed a lot. Teachers must be: a researcher, a facilitator, open minded and transformator. They must be an active part of the learning teaching process. Teachers are in charge of guiding the activities and appropriateness of the content of texts and topics. (T15 CD Meth: 57)

A further step is to acknowledge that teachers usually engage in a variety of roles. This implies endorsing the roles that have been disseminated in the literature available to them and following the prescription of a selected methodology or approach. In Thesis 16, for example, the author chose to present that teacher as prescribed by the skills-centered syllabus; the writers of Thesis 18 adhere to the range of roles described in Communicative Language Teaching (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.167).

To establish the role of the teacher in a course design, it is necessary to base on the principles of the syllabus focus and methodological approach which were selected. According to the skill-centred syllabus the teacher is a provider of knowledge who gives students the tools to facilitate their learning process. Likewise, for the communicative approach, the teacher provides situations likely to promote communication in the classroom. Following those principles, in this course design the teacher is going to be a provider of information and creator of tasks in which the students can use the language appropriately. (T16 CD Meth:48)

As this is a course that gets rid of the behaviorist approach, where the learner receives stimulus and then gives a reaction, (Brown 1986) the teacher here is not merely the provider of all the information. Instead, the teacher becomes a guide in the whole writing process. This guide provides the tools and shows students the way, acting as a facilitator in this learning process. As Nunan (1988) expresses, teachers should act as facilitators in the classroom, the ones that provide help where needed and give the learner the opportunity to share his ideas in the classroom.

Also this teacher is an advisor who suggests ideas to learners in order to enhance their writing. These ideas are mainly related to the points to be strengthened in the learner's writing and in the course. Strategies and self – study is also promoted in this role as an advisor. (T18 Cd Meth:50)

In the last excerpt the negative evaluation of the “provider of information”, wrongly associated with the connotations attached to behaviorism, constructs the writers as updated with modern educational and methodological trends. Their description contains some of the key words found in this section across the theses: advisor/counselor, guide, and facilitator. This subsection in general seems to aim at further constructing the teachers' identities as knowledgeable teachers. The following passage from the Roles of the Teacher section in Thesis 20 conveys some of that pressure:

The roles teachers play in the classroom are a key aspect in the foreign language learning process. Nowadays teachers have to assume different roles in order to succeed in the classroom and to be updated on the current teaching trends. (T20 CD Meth:79).

He displays here an ideology discussed elsewhere (see Table 1 and also Chapter 7) about new being perceived as better. What should be kept in mind is that this particular writer is the one that makes the lengthiest review of approaches to education, learning and language in all the theses. The following comes after the previously presented fragment (see Appendix T with the transcription of the whole section).

Here we can see that this writer - designer describes the following roles:

Enthusiast, monitor/assessor, organizer planner and researcher. Among these, “enthusiastic” is “perhaps the main role a teacher has to play these days” because “it is day by day more difficult for the teacher to get students’ attention”. This role is based on the conception that most students today are easily distracted and that enthusiasm, whatever that means, is going to solve that problem.

He gives special attention to the monitor/assessor role, the one “that will consume most of the teachers’ time in the classroom”(p.79) and the one that takes up most of the space in this section. Following Harmer (1991, p.23) he describes ways in which the assessing can take place and ways to record students’ performance. This whole section is presented, as a number of other throughout the theses, and especially in this one, as an exercise in listing. I interpret it as a means to construct the identity as an informed and updated teacher.

Non representation of self

Looking at the previous Role of the Teacher section in Thesis 20, it is necessary to point out that the author represents himself involved only in the role of researcher: research “may give *us* answers to many questions that arise during our everyday and help us improve our methodology and in that way we will be able to obtain better results”. His representation as researcher is influenced by his personal conception that research is about finding answers which almost automatically result in better results (see use of modal in “we will be able to obtain results”), and these results will help *us*=teachers .The impression is that he is investing more in presenting himself as knowledgeable about the

latest theories and to underline his researcher identity rather than that of becoming a new teacher. I will come back to this notion.

Gender markers to signal (dis)engagement

In the following fragment, the teacher writer is a woman. Like other writers, she also dismisses a traditional role –that of the owner of knowledge – and aligns herself with the more contemporary notion of the four pillars of education (Delors, 1996), which she explains in her Approach to Education, and which she, as she puts it here, is going to “teach”.

Regarding the role of the teacher, I agree with Richards, J (2001) definition when citing Breen and Candlin, who describe the teacher roles in the following terms:[...]

As a facilitator: He should help students in the communication process between them and the materials and between the participants in the classroom. The teacher *is going to* guide students, but he or she *is not going to* be the participant *who is going to do* everything, the owner of knowledge. The teacher *is going to guide* the students in their learning process and *is going to* facilitate things for them, teaching them to learn, to be, to do and to live together.

As an organizer. The teacher organizes the resources in the classroom and he himself is a very important resource for the students. In the classroom *there are going to be not* only target goals, but also human and learning goals and the teacher plays an important role in the achievement of those.

As a researcher and a needs analyst. The teacher *should never stop* researching. He has much to give in terms of abilities, knowledge, experience and the more he observes and takes notes about the acquired experience, the more he will be helpful not only for the students, but for himself and other colleagues, if the results of this research are let known. The teacher *has also to analyze* his students’ needs and reprogram the syllabus if necessary. This usually happens when the syllabus is inherited and it has not been a result of a course design that arose from a needs analysis.

As a counselor. Most people in the classroom are students, usually there is only one teacher in the classroom,. They are human beings, with problems and many times these problems are obstacles in their learning process. The teacher *should act* as a counselor, helping them in their human aspect or at least guiding them to the person or place they should go in order to get help.(T2 CD Mth: 71)

She uses the first person singular pronoun once, in the first sentence, possibly to state her explicit alignment with the roles that Breen and Candlin (1980) attach to

teachers in Communicative Language Teaching and apparently to the plurality of roles that Richards and Rodgers (the reference is actually to Richards and Rodgers 2001, pages 167 and 168) assign to teachers within this method: “several roles are assumed for teachers in Communicative Language Teaching. [...] Breen and Candlin describe teacher roles in the following terms:” However, when she synthesizes the different roles of the teachers, she does not show that explicit engagement in the roles she describes. This disengagement is partly conveyed by the reference to the teacher mostly in terms of “he”.

The whole fragment is not a copy or a mere rephrasing of the original; she regrouped the roles presented by Richards and Rogers, and redefined them in her own ways. In her roles as “organizer” and “counselor” she is consistent with her Approach to Education, in which she sees her students as human beings in need of a lot of support from an enlightened and compassionate teacher to become good persons and citizens. Yet, in the sentence: “The teacher organizes the resources in the classroom and he himself is a very important resource for the students” she seems influenced by the original in Richards and Rodgers: “[...] as an organizer of resources and as a resource himself” (Breen and Candlin, 1980, p.99). Otherwise, the discussion in Richards and Rogers is not gender marked.

The fact that she chose once to use “he or she” when describing the role of ‘facilitator’, indicates that this writer is aware of gender biases in language and of ways to avoid them. By using “he or she” once, she also signals that she is not actually referring to herself in particular, but in general, to teachers within the communicative approach. Her preference for the choice of the gender marked pronouns “he” and “himself” strongly

signals her detachment from these roles of teachers. This same writer had referred to herself in the introduction as “she” while in all the other cases where there is room for indexing gender, she uses “he or she”.

There will also be conclusions expressing the reflections on how this entire learning process has helped the learner and what can be put into practice to improve her current teaching practice and educational processes as a whole (T2 Intro:3)

Her rejection of being an incarnation of the roles described as part of her methodology contrasts with her voice in the description of her approach to education, where she has a different participation and a stronger engagement, partly through the use of “my”, “our”, “we”, but also through the use of evaluative vocabulary, the repetitive problem-solution pattern (Hoey, 2001) which has an interactive and persuasive effect.

Table 7: Approach to Education in Thesis 2

Education is essential in order to develop the person and society, consequently in a more harmonic way. So, one of the things this world needs in order to have a better future is education.	General preview
Thinking in <u>our</u> context, Colombia is a country with plenty of problems: guerrilla, civil war, injustice, etc. It is <u>my</u> belief that education can make a big contribution in order to get peace and justice for all.	Problem Solution
<u>We</u> , as teachers are in constant contact with the new generations, and considering they will take over <u>our</u> places, it is <u>our</u> opportunity not only to teach them academic matters, but also to inculcate good principles of a living in harmony. They should learn to be respectful with others, to be responsible to have a good relationship with the other human beings, understand that <u>we</u> human beings are all the same, making no distinction among races or different beliefs and therefore between nations.	Opportunity Take n
Most people these days believe that economical growth and academic development is everything and that is what the youth that is currently being raised is learning.	Problem
<u>We</u> have the opportunity to change that belief. <u>We</u> can also help them understand that the world <u>we</u> live in is our responsibility, and <u>we</u> need to take	Solution

care of the environment. Also, it is <u>my</u> belief, that in order to live in harmony in the society <u>we</u> have to love ourselves first without forgetting the respect for each other.	Details of the solution
Education can also help develop the talents and creativity each person has, which is the first step for having a good self-esteem, become complete as a human being and reach <u>our</u> personal goals.	Positive evaluation of the solution

Functional disengagement

The context of Thesis 2 is a public university, where the learners are majoring in History, and the course the teacher designs is centered on reading comprehension and the teaching of reading strategies. The writer of Thesis 7, who works in a similar context, but with students majoring in Chemistry, also designed a course around reading comprehension and reading strategies too. In defining the role of the teacher in his course, he does not provide quotes or reference to establish the roles of teachers, he presents himself at one point as part of a group of teachers with pragmatic, and some would argue, traditional roles. Unlike the excerpt from Thesis 2 above, here the description of the role is more directly connected with particular features of the context. For example, he mentions the poor condition of the classrooms, the need for the teacher to have knowledge of Chemistry, and certainty about what motivates the students. All these features portray the potential teacher as a more active participant in his teaching situation, more involved with a particular group of students. The roles, however, are constructed as obligation through the use of ‘must’ and “have to” in italics. This contrasts with Thesis 2, where the verb forms indicate future (is/are going to) and advice (should), with only one use of modularity of obligation (the teacher has to analyze).

In the learning-teaching process, the teacher is a person with knowledge, an evaluator, a manager

and also a provider. It is important to settle the role of us since the beginning of the course. Students' performance during this course is related to the teachers' teaching style; therefore, tutors *have to revise* their methodology and approaches to the process, taking into account that this course demands certain knowledge about Chemistry and as well as the contents and activities.

As this course is focused in reading comprehension of technical texts, teaching process *must include* the presentation and explanation of the most remarkable reading strategies known by the teachers which help students to achieve the objectives proposed for this course. Reading process applied to chemistry texts is extremely motivating for these students and will facilitate the teachers' job.

In the on-going course, the teacher *has to evaluate students*. This activity can be informal where teacher observes general progress and give advice to students about how to improve the language use, or formal which is requested by the institution and it contains the numerical performance of the students.

Regarding one of the goals with the teachers' role, they *have to promote the interaction in class* through group task and a variety of activities which encourage students to work together.

Teachers are providers of language in two ways. Firstly, modeling the use of the language with materials, and finally with their own use of the language input. Also teachers are providers of materials that will support the textbook, this is the booklet presented forward.

Summarizing, teachers *must be aware* of their tutor role and try not to leave aside any details even the little ones, like lack of materials or poor classroom conditions. (T7 CD Meth:33-34)

It is important to remember here that in the Approach to Education section, this teacher recognizes how the setting imposes a functionalist approach to learning, but even so he sets himself a hidden agenda to “place the English language in the position it deserves, and show to university population that it is more than a tool for extracting information” (p.27). The role of the teacher he depicts here is congruent with this functional view in that he views the teacher as fulfilling the normal duties a teacher has to do – present, explain, model, evaluate, provide materials, be better prepared, and practically be in control of every thing “since the beginning” because “students performance... is related to the teachers' teaching style”. His hidden agenda timidly surfaces here too in that he mentions the negative contextual factors affecting learning, but these come last and are greatly diminished in importance, just as “little details”. His

role with respect to these consists of “trying not to leave aside”.

The two teachers are arguably going to be doing comparable jobs given the similarity of objectives and contexts. Yet one of them represents his ideal teacher as one engaged in everyday classroom situations where he has to deal with functional tasks and respond to situations according to the circumstances; the other portrays that teacher with more broadly educational concerns and more in compliance with the roles discursively constructed by current methodologies. The two portraits of roles of teachers share an important feature though. The roles of the teachers are definitive and uncontestable, definable and perfect, and therefore static and non-reflexive. This becomes more obvious with the analysis of selected excerpts from a rather lengthy description of the roles of teachers and learners in Thesis 9. His discourse reflects what White (2003) calls dialogic expansion, which is a mode of heteroglossic engagement. I have inserted my comments to the right to highlight his positionings and the discourse features.

Table 8 Analysis of heteroglossic discourse in Thesis 9

TO THE TEACHER’S EAR

It is very interesting for the person who has accepted the huge responsibility of guiding human beings through any learning process, to stop for a moment and start analysing how much it is possible to learn while teaching. An old proverb belonging to ancient Greece comes to my mind.[...] “The best way of learning is teaching”. In my opinion, this perspective gives the teacher a new approach, a different view of his task, of his daily routine, a new way of conceiving his own life.

New approaches are particularly focused on students, aiming at discovering their needs in order to develop a course design that can fulfil them in the best way. But where does teacher’s responsibility finish? Is it enough to observe students

He uses his own title rather than “The roles of the teacher”

This part is about reflexivity and himself as a teacher. It is “his mind” at work. Engaging in reflexion “is very interesting” but not the only thing to do.

He creates an authorial identity by making himself visible.

He displays familiarity with established practice in ESP - discovering and fulfilling needs - but he

systematically to discover their needs? Is there any sense in discovering students' needs at a particular moment if they change so fast, sometimes even before the new strategies have been put into practice?

problematizes it with questions thus opening up space for alternative positions and at the same time defeating an absolute and easy positive answer to the last question.

CREATING KNOWLEDGE

[...] Knowledge is not hidden at any particular place waiting to be found. Knowledge is created. Knowledge is a human creation and this condition makes it incredibly subjective, ephemeral, endless. Heraclites used to say: "We can not take a bath in the same river twice", stating in this way that reality changes constantly and it changes because the ones who see it also change their perceptions at every moment. Perpetuity and continuity sensations we attribute to reality are based on the fact that in our memories there is a certain degree of tolerance regarding the subtle changes which constantly affect the world. This was called "The principle of Uncertainty" by Heisenberg. And it consists of not being able to describe any event with absolute certainty; so, it is necessary to accept a certain degree of tolerance.

He constructs a philosophical argument about the unstable and dynamic nature of knowledge and certainty, possibly a discourse he had access to before entering the program, but perhaps reinforced in it.

This particular approach to knowledge is not a simple and cold theory, it is a fundamental aspect for the teacher due to the fact that it leads to base this task on two new perspectives:

Interacting with a sceptical reader, he denies suspicions that his former arguments are merely rhetorical.

1. The teacher stops considering himself as the owner of knowledge, because it is impossible to be the owner of something that is constantly born and constantly dies, and starts perceiving himself as a guide, a motivating agent, a facilitator.

Based on his former argument he adheres to the roles of the teacher in Communicative Language Teaching in a novel way. It is not clear, however, why motivating agent and facilitator is incompatible with being "the owner of knowledge".

2. The student stops being a simple receptor of concepts to turn into the builder of his own knowledge.

He adheres here to the discourse of constructivism, and in a way he retreats from the ephemeral, changeable notion of knowledge by resorting to the building metaphor.

[...]

WEAKNESSES OF THE TEACHER'S ROLE

For a teacher there are certain obstacles it is necessary to identify, and the fact of not taking them into account can easily make him fail regarding his role as a guide in the process of creation carried out by the students. The first difficulty he has to face is his condition as a teacher, his condition as the symbol of knowledge, the fact of being the physical representation of what is considered to be right and wrong. [...] This situation can not be eliminated but it is possible to deal with it in order to support the process.

The process of handling we refer to makes part of the real challenges of the new teacher, because he has to be adventurous and be able to create in the middle of a class, to create knowledge with his students, and in the end this leads us back to the beginning: the best way of learning is teaching.

The second difficulty, in this “apparently balanced” process of creation, is that the teacher continues being responsible for the direction it is chosen. This task is unavoidable, but it should also be imperceptible. [...] It could sound easy to be a teacher, but it is extremely complicated to be a guide, to be a real educator. [...]

Both teacher and students go to the classroom with a certain amount of information as well as a rainbow of intentions and expectations they hope they can solve inside the classroom. This is a dynamic process which starts at the moment of planning the lesson. The teacher must select the topics to be developed and in addition, he has to take decisions on the way he is going to transmit these topics, that is, the method. Even the teacher goes to the class with a paradigm of “ideal ambiance” he will try to develop inside the classroom.

This already planned situation meets the attitude expectations and previous knowledge of the students in what is known as Classroom Interaction. Thanks to this process of interaction, the classroom turns into a space that offers

He is here presenting at least three positions regarding the difficulties the teacher is faced with: 1. Being a symbol of knowledge inherent in her being a teacher; 2. Eliminating this role; 3. Not eliminating but dealing with it, a third position he adheres to.

Here he depicts two roles of the teacher (the invariable use of “he” may include himself): one is the prescriber of the teacher’s role: he has to be adventurous, be able to create,; and the other role is the teacher as learner. The use of “us” suggests he includes himself as such. But one role does not preclude the other

Here he represents himself as engaged in a dialogue:

A: The teacher bears the main responsibility

B: But this role does not have to be perceptible.

A: It is easy to be a teacher

B: You are wrong. It is complicated. Especially if you want to be a ‘real’ educator.

Here he changes his stance. The discourses is dialogically contracted through the use of modality (must, has to, will). At a point he becomes the prescriber again. He even contradicts his former position about knowledge, and he represents is as transmittable.

In his representation of Classroom Interaction

opportunities for practising the language, receiving information and developing receptivity. (T9 CD Meth: 34-37).

besides practicing the language, what he chooses to underline is reception of information and receptivity, again contradicting his previous statements about ownership of knowledge

This type of discourse constitutes a more dynamic process of representing the role of the teacher and a higher form of appropriation of the complexity of the identity of the teacher. It is less clean, less definite, but more reflexive and perhaps more credible. And this is achieved by subverting the rigid format of listing the potential roles of the teacher, by not avoiding the personal style, by allowing the author to hold an unfinished status, by using contradictory discourses, by not fully believing in theoretical descriptions of the roles of a teacher.

The fact that the majority of teachers construct the roles of teachers as closely based on abstract descriptions from textbooks shows the risks of superficiality attached to the task of describing the methodology of a course in words, because it attempts at freezing and capturing a process that is by nature more fluid, changing, contingency-based and not without contradictions.

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION

Ideology was treated in this study as closely related to language. Although it is recognized that ideologies may correspond to cognitive structures inside the mind of individuals or groups of individuals, I consider that we have so far little access to these internal processes of the brain. That is why language use is conceived here as a more viable way to reconstruct ideologies. It is also assumed that the use of language, including its ideological workings, constitute the users in special ways.

We attach ideological significance to specific discourse by resorting to the meaning potential embodied in the linguistic choices, but also because the text is not isolated but immersed in a context. For the present analysis, I deliberately chose this context to be the immediate conditions of production and consumption of 20 theses in the field of English language teaching, and also more general relations in the society. The analysis of ideology was undertaken from a functional perspective, resorting to a variety of categories according to the salience of the features of the text.

Though this study had two separated objectives, one addressing issues of ideologies and another referring to those of identity, they are easier to divide in theoretical terms than in practice. In practice, I as an analyst can't help but read identities when I read ideologies. Writers adopt stances influenced by their (conscious or unconscious) 'calculations' of what at any particular moment is more beneficial to write, say or do. This 'calculation', or weighing of the circumstances and the outcome of the decision, is in turn influenced by an individual's prior history, trajectory, experiences, background, (the name is unimportant) that has affected her in the past. An apparent

convenient, harmless or even appraisable positioning at a particular moment can, viewed from another perspective (e.g., the analyst's), be proved to not be in the best interest of the individual, her community or the group she intends to serve. That is, ideological discourse works not only per se through reproduction and hegemony but also because it construes its users in certain ways. Language ideologies, as Woolard (1998) points out, are not just about language, but they point to the social groups, their institutions, their epistemology, and morality. It is important then to analyze the discursive construction of these ideologies and how it positions its users. The ideologies of language are conceived in this study as closely linked to the conceptions about teaching and learning language, and to the research in language teaching and learning, because these conceptions tend to solidify the general working of a language ideology in the society.

Language Ideology

In terms of language ideology the analysis showed that a number of the writers justify the learning of English because they see it as the only possible language for intercultural communication and international cooperation. The tendency is to homogenize all the cultures around the world as English-speaking ones, to homogenize English language speakers, and sometimes to represent native English language speakers as the ideal and prototypical interlocutor.

Today's significance of English is presented in innocent terms as a fact that came about almost naturally as a result of a non-problematic agreement between peoples of the world, in a stance that Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas (1996) call English triumphalism.

Additionally, writers mystify the workings of English by assuming that it brings about considerable qualitative changes in the learners' cognitive and professional performance and that it can bring about the needed social and economic transformations for the country.

The ideological representation of the workings of English for pragmatic individual and societal accomplishments stands in tension with the cultural goals of language teaching, which are considerably diminished in the texts. Intercultural goals are often assumed to be either achieved automatically with an English course, sometimes almost as a side-effect, or not as a valid or relevant goal to pursue in the modern world. Relations with other cultures (i.e. the English-speaking world) are thought of as a matter of gaining 'access', which suggests a unidirectional initiative to something valuable and well guarded.

Inconsistencies in the treatment of culture, that is, the recognition of the central role of culture in language teaching but at the same time its relegation to the bottom of priorities at the time of deciding the objectives of a course, are propitiated and reinforced by the same discrepancies between rationalizations about culture in the national curriculum guidelines for foreign language teaching and the design of the different standardized examinations administered by the state to assess language proficiency.

The understanding of other cultures is a serious goal to pursuit only in the contexts where the learner is imagined as actively involved in business relations with individuals from other cultures. The idea is not to look for mutual understanding, displacement from one's comfort zones and accept disequilibrium while searching for

new identities, but to adapt, assimilate and enter the competition race for better jobs abroad. The representation of the relation between Colombians and other cultures (especially English-speaking cultures) in these terms is not likely to lead to new types of relations among cultures in the world and it reinforces a western-centered, and often an American-centered view of the world. In this type of rationalizations there is never a consideration about who are the ultimate beneficiaries of intensive instruction in English conceived in these terms.

Tensions between discourses about what should be the aim of an English course are also evident in the theses. On the one hand the authors always take care to express the importance of learning a second language and its culture but without losing respect for and appreciation of one's own culture. There is also a certain degree of worship of technologies and knowledge coming from the English-speaking world; and yet there is general criticism of the use of textbooks that reflect foreign realities without apparent relation to the context of the Colombian country. And yet there is no problematization of the flow of the popular cultural icons promoted by the entertainment industry, and there is minimal exemplification of English as the advertised tool for the acquisition of the much needed technology and knowledge that should serve economic and academic development of the communities.

Teaching

Part of the tension between discourses of intercultural aims and actual decisions for the course design can be explained through the general orientation of the postgraduate

program to embrace an English for Specific Purposes approach. This approach to teaching English is proclaimed as effective and superior to any other applied in the Colombian context. The idea of “meeting students’ true needs” betrays itself in that writers feel forced to first comply with narrow institutional and pragmatic priorities which do not coincide with students’ verbalized preferences, with the objectives and the nature of the positively proclaimed globalization era, or sometimes with their own abstract educational discourses. The narrow pragmatic perspective of ESP courses proves to be an efficient tool to reinforce a functionalist model of education, according to which students must be trained to fulfill the roles ‘assigned’ to them. It achieves passive consent to established roles and dynamics in Colombian society and suppresses aspirations for change.

Research

Since the research experience that the program provides is closely connected with the ESP approach in the form of Needs Analysis, research is conceptualized in the positivistic paradigm. Research produces unquestionable and objective truths which the writers assume to lead to concrete applications in the classroom. Few writers express reserves regarding the completeness, the stable and objective nature of their data. With one exception they did not see the interpretative character of their analysis and decision making processes regarding pedagogical implications. In this way the Needs Analysis is instrumental in reinforcing the validity of the ESP approach, which in turn subverts the cultural objectives of English Language learning to the interests of institutions and the

maintenance of established social structures.

The analysis of the courses designed after the needs analysis and the intended goals reveals how the ideologies of English, the pragmatic approach of ESP, the trust in Needs Analysis conspire against both equality and equity in schools. That is, students are denied a “level playing field”, or equal opportunities to achieve success independent of the institution where they are (Henze, 2005). Moreover, the recognition of the differences in contexts not only fails to result in extra efforts to remove predictabilities regarding their places in society, but leads to the definition of alarmingly narrow goals which favor the students’ remaining in the roles traditionally assigned to them in their communities. Likewise, students in privileged context are likely to benefit from English programs which enable them to get the better jobs and successfully deal with changing situations.

Language Learning

The structure of the text that the writer-designers use to define their course design suggests a particular form of conceiving how theories can shape the way learning is made to happen. Theories are understood as a menu of possibilities from which the teachers choose to tailor a course. Theories are often represented as complete and separate compartments, each of which providing complete answers as to how learning takes place. Teachers seldom take an openly critical stance towards existing theories except to discard behaviorism, and yet, this criticism seems an inertial reaction to the discourses they are exposed to. Their discourses are heavily influenced by the sources they consult, which in

most cases are evidently insufficient to understand existing theories and how they can relate to each other. The limited time for the whole project of the course design is without doubt a constraint to encourage a more complex understanding of learning. The muddle of terminology in some of the existing theories and approaches, in some cases the limited second language reading experience, the fact that the writers often use secondary sources, which inevitably convey evaluations and are partial accounts of the theories, conceivably affect the designers' theoretical elaboration and possibilities of application of these theories. Actually, the materials designed by the authors usually do not exemplify the theoretical descriptions in the main body of their monographs. The use of catchy terms and phrases, many times without explanations or definitions may be the only way to deal with theoretical issues at that particular point of their professional development, and a necessary move towards adopting a credible identity as informed teacher researchers.

The preference for cognitive and metacognitive approaches to learning is evident. Cognitive theory is often presented as superior to everything else, and used as an umbrella term, even if their descriptions of the specific activities meant to be implemented in their courses do not clearly support the label (unless their reference is to the fact that the brain seems to be involved in whatever behaviors we engage in). The cognitive emphasis of the program and of the literature reviewed is also reflected in the insufficient discussions and rather superficial applications of concepts like learning strategies, learning styles, multiple intelligences, motivation and autonomy. The acritical adherence to approaches that emphasize internal attitudes and capacities to learn with

minimal external control because learning is an individual process everybody should take responsibility for, can be detrimental for learners who need longer supportive environments or explicit instruction or who perform better when working with others. It assumes that learning is an individual process that can be best performed by those born with the right predisposition. The discourses about more modern and non-directive roles of the teacher propagated partially through Communicative Language Teaching would then only add more possibilities of negative outcomes especially in non-privileged contexts with few resources.

According to my reading of the theses, there is a considerable discursive effort by the teachers to make the literature on topics like autonomy, cognitive code, learning strategies and styles work for their students. Their discourses at times reveal strong adherence to, and even reverence of, some of the theories and their constructs, many of which have been problematized and put under questioning.

Teachers and Researchers

Throughout their texts, the writers construe themselves as a new type of professionals – teacher-researchers. As said above this identity is ideologically influenced in different places of their texts. In establishing the niche for their research a number of writers position themselves as defenders and propellers of the dominant role of English and English-speaking cultures in the world. They also portray themselves and their students at the receptive end of the flow of technologies, knowledge and information originating in the English-speaking world. They appear as thoughtful critics of the use of

foreign textbooks in their contexts, but they often emerge as unconditional followers and consumers of the theories of foreign origin they read in the literature that circulates in the program. As educators, they are constructors of a new generation of human beings through the power of education, they are critics of wrongdoings of educational policies, dreamers of new intercultural relations, but through their adherence to the functionalist and client-centered approach, they become custodians of the interests of their institutions and of the status quo in society. Through their use of the literature they are knowledgeable teachers with a wider perspective of their profession, but then they also have to be anti-behaviorists, and rather cognitivists who endorse the idea that one approach (usually a newer one) means better and more appropriate practice.

Knowledge Making

By reconstructing the research and course design processes in the program, the writers validate their teacher-research status. They are careful to represent their compliance with the knowledge making activities specific for the discipline as constructed in the local community and also with its writing practices. They approach the study of the target context with the well-defined focus of identifying a gap between what an existing English course offers and the needs of the community of students. In spite of an apparent wide choice of methods to investigate their contexts, they invariably opt for questionnaires and interviews, and rarely, one or two classroom observations. As said above, the knowledge produced by these instruments is thought to be complete and objective. After the information is collected, a diagnosis is made without attempting to

make generalizations. Instead, in line with the philosophy of ESP, each researcher treats its context as unique and in need of a specific response to overcome the problematic situation. The linearity of the task, time pressure and the text they have to write does not allow them to revisit the process and attempt to obtain more insightful interpretations of what is happening in their classrooms and in their contexts. In the design of a course that meets the needs of the students, knowledge about what to do is derived from theory, which should lead to a new type of practice. That is, the writers' new teaching knowledge comes not from a reflection and gradual transformation of their practices or from a more interactive relation between theory and practice, but from theoretical descriptions. The organization of the text –from approaches to classroom activities – diagrammatically represents the teachers' knowledge construction process. This top-down approach partially explains the discrepancy between the theoretical decisions regarding the new course and the materials, which should embody these decisions.

Intertextuality

The analysis of how the writers of the theses elaborate on the theoretical approaches and important concepts in the field of applied linguistics suggests that the type of intertextuality used by a writer signals the level of appropriation. The less desirable level is plagiarism, that is, the copying of large chunks of text and pasting them in a text as if it were one's own. Chandrasoma, Thompson, & Pennycook (2004) prefer to call it "transgressive intertextuality" to try to move away from the culture of textual policing and to approach it from a developmental perspective (Angélil-Carter, 2000,

Currie, 1998 cited in Chandrasoma, Thompson & Pennycook, 2004). I prefer this interpretation because in the context of the theses, this type of textual borrowing is saying something about the difficulty of the task of writing a theoretical discussion, of making sense of a literature that is extensive, contradictory, and often unclear, and of the weight teachers in practical terms attach to abstract discussions (as opposed, for example, to more practical ones related to designing materials, activities, evaluations). Though we cannot speak in terms of ‘original’, ‘authentic’, or ‘personal’ discourses, or of discourses that “truly reflect what the writer thinks’, it is hoped that within the established conventions, the novice writers learn to recognize and make the more immediate origins of their texts explicit. The fact that this kind of intertextuality was identified in the theses also reveals the limitations of this genre to elicit more polyphonic texts or texts that more interestingly combine discourses and reconstruct the unstable, swinging, contradictory, or even erratic nature of their learning process.

Another type of intertextuality refers to the use of key words, including buzz words, almost as an everyday word, as a given point of common agreement between the reader and the writer, that is, with the assumption that the word is so common there is no need to explain or define it. Sometimes more than one of these terms come together and make up a complex discussion that has the appearance of being important, profound and a sign of knowledge. As with the use of transgressive intertextuality, this use of the language is useful in the construction of the new identity. The negative side of this use of language is that it renders practical application of the notion discussed more difficult, and it diminishes the possibility of being critical of theories and also of one’s own work.

Additionally, this liberal use of terminology can be used to unfairly denominate a range of interesting, novel and ingenious practices that happen at the local level, further mystifying the given terminology.

Theses with discourses which allowed the representation of multiple voices, or heteroglossic discourses, were indicative of strong authorial stance which conveyed critical positions.

It is evident that there is a need to problematize the written theses as the final product that condenses the trajectory and the gains achieved by their writers in the program. I do not deny the value of this requirement as a useful exercise in academic writing, which is obviously an important step in their becoming active participants in the international community of teachers of English. However, as this dissertation has suggested, the established conventions for academic writing turn out to be an obstacle to a reflexive praxis and to a more critical stance of the teachers in search of more authentic ways of being educators in their contexts. Attention should be increased inside the program on aspects of language use. There should be a reflexive dialogue about the ideological discourses that find their way into the written and oral texts and how these position the teachers and their roles.

Somehow, we should try to reconcile the interests of both the local discursive communities and the established and prestigious international community of researchers and academics in the field. Unfortunately, this is not a state of affairs that can be changed by the local communities of teachers alone. There are number of factors conspiring against changes: the assumed primacy of theory over practice, the multimillion-dollar

business of publishers who benefit from the flow of literature and textbooks to the periphery, and also ideological stances both in the center and in the periphery. In the center there is pressure on university professors and researchers to publish not only for personal accomplishment and promotion, but also to get the business going. The more followers, the stronger the theory, the more books and articles sold, and the more urgent the need to let others know what is the latest. This knowledge often comes in the form of acclaimed theories, usually books, or of distorted or simplified applications in textbooks. Criticism, controversies and on-going debates are reserved for the intellectuals in the most prestigious journals. In the periphery the receptive positioning is strengthened by the absence of solid theory-producing communities, and lack of economic resources to have quick access to the more dynamic and well-protected body of knowledge, with the aim of becoming part of the dialogue. Researchers and applied linguists in the Center should take note of the ways the teachers in the periphery understand, discuss and apply the ideas that are generated from the center out. Why these distorted, biased, absolutist or naïve versions of their theories take place to the detriment of their users, should also be part of their research agenda. Just ignoring or discarding the practices and theoretical elaborations generated in the periphery would further contribute to the already strong division between insiders and outsiders, producers and consumers. If the answers do not lie in the theories themselves, they should look at the wider picture and see how structural relations in the world shape maintain and reinforce these ideological views and conceptions.

Further Research

This study has identified the theses produced at the end of a postgraduate program in the Teaching of English in a South American country as a context where a number of ideologies about the English language and its teaching and learning are constructed and reproduced. Since it is impossible to know what teachers ‘really’ think about the issues that have been discussed here, it is important to investigate the discourses and the practices that have stayed with them. It would be interesting to make an in-depth investigation into their new identities through other genres which permit more spontaneous and less constrained uses of the language, where there were no heavy pressures to produce a finished product or the urgency of obtaining a decent passing grade. Oral narratives about the experience of writing the theses, written autobiographies which includes the year of studies, informal interviews to clarify their understanding of the theory and their uses of the language could yield new perspectives. And yet, the question remains: Do their ideologies and stances get represented in their teaching practice? If so, how? It would be necessary to use data produced over time and follow the development of these teachers. Actually, some of the teachers who finish the Diploma course continue one more year and obtain a Master’s degree in education. Viewed from that perspective, the theses with their ideological load are but an initial developmental stage, which could always serve as a reference regarding their growth as educators. The hope is that their discourses change over time.

Given the wide circulation of many or some of the ideologies of English in Colombian society, it is important to ask if these ideologies can be challenged at least

inside the program. Would a different approach in the program (without the ESP focus) encourage more transformatory educational approaches? Would a more bottom-up approach to the construction and reconstruction of theory change its current acritical and passive acceptance? I feel that there is a moral obligation to start finding ways to answer these questions.

APPENDIX A: EXCERPTS FROM SYLLABUS OF THE LEARNING PROCESSES MODULE

2. DESCRIPTION

This course contains a balance of theoretical and practical issues aimed at making participants aware of the multiple factors which influence the actions of teachers and learners in the English classroom. The exploration of these factors will contribute to refining course-takers' abilities as researchers of classroom events. Theoretical issues comprise theories of learning; the nature of learning; categorizations for the analysis of classroom behaviour; different descriptions for intelligence; cognitive, metacognitive, affective and social variables affecting learning and teaching. Diploma takers will be involved in practical tasks including observation and analysis of teachers' and students' strategies; sharing insights with peers; comparing and contrasting information, making inferences and writing an academic paper.

[...]

4. OBJETIVES:

On completion of this course, the students should be aware of the complexity of factors influencing classroom behaviour. They should also be able to relate theoretical input to data collected in classroom observation, thus developing a strong positive feeling towards classroom research.

Specific objectives include:

1. Explore the Whats, Whys and Hows of observation as a technique for studying classroom events.
2. Reflect on own suppositions about learning and participate in the permanent debate on their job as educators and teachers of English.
3. Get familiar with terminology (metalanguage) related to learning processes.
4. Become increasingly aware of the cognitive, metacognitive, affective and social variables affecting learning and teaching within a given classroom.
5. Experience dimensions of cognitive, Metacognitive, social and emotional learning.

APPENDIX B: APPROACH TO EDUCATION, LANGUAGE, AND LANGUAGE LEARNING IN THESIS 17.

Constructivism is the approach to education for the course design. One of the reasons to consider this approach is that the education of students at [name of institution] is based on Social Constructivism Framework. Therefore I think that there must be an agreement between the course design approach and the school approach to education.

Constructivism is an approach to education that emphasizes the construction of knowledge in individual context and through the interaction with other people, social negotiation, collaboration and experience on the purpose to be exposed to different points of view. Previous knowledge, attitudes, and experiences take important part in the knowledge construction process. This paradigm also encourages learners to investigate in order to seek knowledge and draw conclusions through reflection of the information received.

In this approach teachers are guides, monitors and facilitators while learners play the most important role since they are the ones that control their own learning. Instructors or teachers analyze the strategies that learners use to solve situations or problems. Teachers together with students negotiate instructional goals and objectives.

Content, activities, tasks, skills and learning situations must be authentic and represent situations of the real world. Activities should emphasize problem-solving, higher thinking skills and deep understanding, as well as strategies and tools to enhance self-reflection. Analysis and errors are part of the learning process because students have the opportunity to reflect on what they have done in order to make adjustments.

A valuable characteristic of the approach is the support of collaborative and cooperative learning in order to expose learners to different points of view whenever a problem is presented, and consequently negotiate and generate meanings and solution through shared understanding.

In terms of language learning, I consider that the Communicative Approach is the appropriate framework for the course design. First, I would like to mention that the English Department of [name of institution] follows the communicative approach which consists of a set of principles where the focus is on meaningful communication within a social context, use of language and the ability to apply knowledge acquired. (Larsen, 1986)

The approach emphasizes the use of authentic materials, for instance newspaper columns, advertisements, catalogues, etc., in order to reflect real life situations. Use of visual resources stimulates and focuses pupil's attention. It is very important that students

have opportunities to develop strategies for interpreting language as it is actually used by native speakers.

In the Communicative Approach skills are integrated, even though there is an emphasis on oral and listening skills in the classroom. Nevertheless reading and writing need to be developed to promote learners' confidence in all four skill areas.

Classes are more student-centered and they should have chances to express their opinions which lead to an active class. Therefore students are more responsible managers of their own learning.

On the other hand the role of the teacher is advisor or facilitator of communication and errors are tolerated to a certain extent because they are a natural part of learning language and the development of communication skills. The teacher needs to avoid constant correction to let students express themselves and gain confidence. Equally important is group work to encourage cooperative relationships among learners and negotiate meaning.

Finally the approach to learning is Cognitive. This approach studies information processes of perception, attention, language, memory and thinking, and their influence on thoughts, feelings and behaviors. It states that people learn by creating relationships between new information and knowledge already stored in memory which are compared, extended or modified; "what children learn about language is determined by what they already know about the world" (Brown, H. Douglas, 1994: 29). As a result people are not passive but active processors of information who explore their learning environment interacting with others and construct meaning from learning experiences. Therefore pupils have control over their learning process and they are expected to analyze, summarize, solve problems, and build explanations and definitions.

The role of the teacher is facilitator of learning. He /she should create a learning environment to help students expand their knowledge by using learning strategies and providing activities that promote discovery learning, problem solving, and discussions sharing and working in groups.

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE OF MATERIALS IN THESIS 5

MODULE 2

Unit 1: Management

Lesson 1

Lesson 1: Is Management for me?

Objectives

- To predict and infer the purpose of the topic
- To skim and scan
- To activate background knowledge
- To monitor comprehension while reading and when the reading task is completed.
- To support your opinion and give reasons

Pre-reading activities

- What does the title of the unit tell you?
- What do you understand by Management?
- Is Management really for you? Why?



Study skills

Predicting and **Inferring** are reading strategies that involve more than trying to figure out what happens next. To predict and infer you require using clues from what is around you, and what you already know, to make intelligent guesses about something you don't know.

Reading



Read the article. Underline the main ideas.

Is Management For Me?

From [F. John Reh](#)



Examine The Pros and Cons of taking a management path in your career. Are you wondering whether you want to be a manager, deciding if a management path is right for your career? Maybe the company has suggested a supervisory position for you.

Maybe someone in your life is pushing you to "make more out of your life." Or are you trying to decide whether to get your Masters degree in your technical specialty or go for an MBA instead. Whatever the reason you are considering a management career, this article will help you decide whether or not management is for you.

(1) The Upside of Being a Manager

There are many positives to being a manager. Managers generally are paid more than others in the company. They appear to have more power. And the power and pay differences tend to give the position more status or prestige.

Lesson 1

Many first time supervisors, promoted from within the group to supervise it, are amazed at how quickly former friends become cold and distant. Even an experienced manager, brought in from outside, finds the employees more aloof than they are with each other.

Suggested Reading

[Top Ten Clues You Are Management Material](#)

[Management 101](#)

[Getting A First Management Job](#)

[How To Be A Better Manager](#)

[Who Wants To Be A Manager?](#)

Taken from: <http://management.about.com/cs/yourself/a/ManagementForMe>

Study skills

For reading effectively, *skim* and *scan*. It means looking through a text very quickly to understand the main topics and arguments (skim), and then look for details and key words to answer questions that you have (scan). Besides, read the introduction, headings, first and last sentence of each paragraph, and the conclusion. This will help you read and find information faster.

Select the answer you think is correct:

The main idea of paragraph one is:

- Being a manager is a positive thing.
- Managers get better salaries.
- Power and pay differences tend to give more status or prestige.



The main idea of paragraph two is:

- Managers below CEO are always paid more.
- People should be paid based on their value to the company.
- Managers deserve to earn more money than anyone else in the company.

The main idea of paragraph three is:

- You are only powerful as you are capable of making your group more successful.
- Managers have all the power in the company.
- The ability to lead gives managers the power.

Lesson 1

The main idea of paragraph four is:

- In our society people value titles.
- Titles impress people.
- The best job you do, the most incomes you get

The main idea of paragraph five is:

- If your goal is to be a CEO you probably should start a management career.
- You need a management track to become President of your country.
- If you measure success by friendships, a management career can give you that, but so can many others.

The main idea of paragraph six is:

- You're the person who always has to make the decision, right or wrong, and somebody is always out for your job.
- Nobody likes the boss and it's lonely at the top.
- To avoid feeling lonely be subjective while making the hard decisions.

Reading



Read the article. Search for key words and ideas.

“Management Standard Questions”

From [F. John Reh](#)



What is management? What do managers do? How do I manage?

These are standard questions that most of us in the management profession have been asked more than once. And questions we asked once in our careers too.

Art and Science

Management is both art and science. It is the art of making people more effective than they would have been without you. The science is in how you do that. There are four basic pillars: plan, organize, direct, and monitor.

Make Them More Effective

Four workers can make 6 units in an eight-hour shift without a manager. If I hire you to manage them and they still make 6 units a day, what is the benefit to my business of having hired you? On the other hand, if they now make 8 units per day, you, the manager, have value. The same analogy applies to service, or retail, or teaching, or any other kind of work.

Plan

Management starts with planning. And proper prior planning prevents ... well, you know the rest of that one. Without a plan you will never succeed.

Lesson 1

First, figure out what your goal is (or listen when your boss tells you). Then figure out the best way to get there. What resources do you have? What can you get? Compare strengths and weaknesses of individuals and other resources. Will putting four workers on a task that takes 14 hours cost less than renting a machine that can do the same task with one worker in 6 hours? If you change the first shift from an 8 AM start to a 10 AM start, can they handle the early evening rush so you don't have to hire an extra person for the second shift?

Look at all the probable scenarios. Plan for them. Figure out the worst possible scenario and plan for that too. Evaluate your different plans and develop what, in your best judgements, will work the best and what you will do if it doesn't.

Organize

Is everything ready ahead of your group so the right stuff will get to your group at the right time? Is your group prepared to do its part of the plan? Is the downstream organization ready for what your group will deliver and when it will arrive? Are the workers trained? Are they motivated? Do they have the equipment they need? Are there spare parts available for the equipment? Has purchasing ordered the material? Is it the right stuff? Will it get here on the appropriate schedule? Do the legwork to make sure everything needed to execute the plan is ready to go, or will be when it is needed. Check back to make sure that everyone understands their role and the importance of their role to the overall success.

Direct

Now flip the "ON" switch. Tell people what they need to do. I like to think of this part like conducting an orchestra. They know which section is playing which piece and when. They know when to come in, what to play, and when to stop again. You've given all your workers the plan. You have the right number of workers in each department, and you've organized the work. Now you need only to tap the podium lightly with your baton to get their attention and give the downbeat.

Monitor

Now that you have everything moving, you have to keep an eye on things. Make sure everything is going according to the plan. When it isn't going according to plan, you need to step in and adjust the plan. Problems will come up. Someone will get sick. A part won't be delivered on time. That is why you developed a contingency plan in the first place. You, as the manager, have to be always aware of what's going on so you can make the adjustments required.

Is It Worth It

Managing people is not easy. However, it can be done successfully. And it can be a very rewarding experience. Remember that management, like any other skill, is something that you can improve at with study and practice.

Lesson 1

Select the answer you think is correct:

1. How many basic pillars does Management have?
 - a. 5
 - b. 4
 - c. 3
2. To success with your planning you need:
 - a. A goal, resources, strengths, the best scenario
 - b. To worry about weaknesses
 - c. Any scenario
3. Organizing involves:
 - a. Having things on the schedule
 - b. People with a role
 - c. A trained group of workers, equipment, material
4. Directing means:
 - a. Having a number of workers
 - b. Telling people what, when and how to do things
 - c. Conducting an orchestra
5. If you find problems:
 - a. Make the adjustments required at the time they appear.
 - b. Change the stuff
 - c. Design a contingency plan



Discuss



1. What can be positive of being a manager?
2. What disadvantages may a manager have?
3. What skills should a manager have?
4. Does the reading make you have second thoughts about your career? Why?



APPENDIX D: SAMPLE OF MATERIALS IN THESIS 13

PHONICS: reductions

In spoken language, words that are not stressed are often shorten or reduced. For example: “could you tell me where Campbell Hall is?” changes to “cudja tell me where Campbell Hall is?” Listen to the differences:

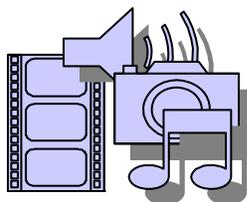
Long: could you

Short: cudja (not acceptable in written language)

Pay attention to the following reduced forms

LONG	SHORT
Oh, you mean Campbell Hill?	oh, y'mean Campbell Hill?
How about you?	How aboutchu?
I'm one of the English teachers here.	I'm one o' the English teachers here.
What's your name?	Whatcher name?
My family used to come here every summer	My family yoosta come here every summer
Now I want to go to college here.	Now I wanna gota college here
Will you have to take the TOFEL?	Willja hafta take the TOFEL?

Listen in



Listen to the reductions in the following conversation between a foreign student and a school secretary. Write the long form in the blanks.

A: _____ help me? | _____ be
 _____ the students here. | _____
 _____ get an application for the TOFEL test.

B: _____ the one in November? Let's see.
 The applications _____ be on this shelf. It looks like
 they're all gone. You'll probably _____ wait until next
 week.

A: _____ sending me one when they come in?

B: sure. _____ name and address.



Role play

Make conversation with a partner where you can use the reductions from the table..

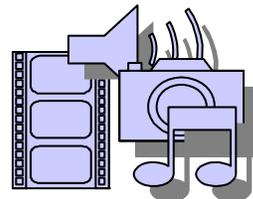
Leaving a telephone message

Previous knowledge



Get a partner. Decide what you would do in case you have to leave a telephone message. What details would you focus on? Why? Write your conclusions.

Listening



You will hear three telephone conversations. Analyze how the messages are left.

Role play



Imagine you need to talk to three different people. Call them and leave a message for each one because they are out.

Doing presentations

Previous knowledge.

What do you usually do when you have to do a presentation about a topic?
Write it down.





Group work

A. Get together with a classmate. Choose a topic from the list.

Smoking habits

Realities

Globalization

Friends with benefits

Bilingualism

Marketing

B. Decide the outline of the presentation, what source you are going to use, what type of prompts will be used, time and division of the topic.

C. Do the presentation for next class. Get well prepared.

APPENDIX E: PARTIAL OUTLINE OF MATERIALS IN THESIS 12

A number of exercises are not transcribed to protect the identity of the author.

Lesson 3

Are you on vacation? [Title]

Look at these places: [seven pictures of different places in the town]

A. Put the number in the correct picture [a list of six names is provided to match the pictures above]

B. Read the following conversation:

Boy: Hello, Jane, are you on vacation?

Girl: Yes, I am on vacation.

Boy: Do you know some touristic places here in [name of town]?

Girl: Oh yes. For example: [names of places]. But I don't know where [name of specific place] is.

Boy: Would you like to know [name of place]?

Girl: Yes, I'd like to.

C. Listen and repeat the conversation.

D. Practice with a partner and finally ...

E. Dramatize the conversation

Lesson 4

Tourist Places [Title]

A. Match the following tourist place with the correct word in column B. (Three pictures of three different places in the town and three names randomly arranged in front of them)

Song: Beach

I love going to the beach in summer
 I love swimming and diving in the ocean,
 Jumping the waves, sailing in a boat.
 The beach, the beach,
 The beach is for me, yeah!

I love going to the beach in summer (etc.)

B. Label the pictures [eight pictures with the scrambled letters of the relevant word on it: kite, ocean, diving, etc.]

Lesson 5

At the Supermarket [Title]

- A. Read what Andrea does every Saturday [A text about stores and what Andrea buys there is followed by statements to check as true or false].
- B. What things can you do at the supermarket. Use the following verbs (buy – eat-see-play-drink) [Statements to check as true or false follow].
- C. Place the words in the appropriate column (a number of pictures of clothing items surround two columns with the headings: “sports clothes and implements” and “everyday clothes”).
- D. Cut and glue different clothes that you wear in [name of town]

APPENDIX F: APPROACH TO LEARNING IN THESIS 1

5.1.3 Approach to Learning. Designing a course to teach a second or foreign language implies on one hand, taking into account the institution curriculum and norms. We should be aware that we are educating people. On the other hand, we need to bear in mind the way these people can acquire the knowledge that textbook writers want to transmit through activities and strategies.

After having gathered all the data and analyzed the results in terms of learning needs and target needs in this research study at Universidad Tecnológica de Bolívar, we can say that the most suitable approaches to learning are the Cognitive and Metacognitive without leaving aside the Social Affective one.

As the target classroom learning styles are different because some learners prefer to work in peers, others individually and a few in groups of three, the designer states that all these characteristics are a proof of the incorporation of the Social Affective strategies through which learners may ask questions, cooperate and empathize with others.

Regarding peer learning, which can be really productive for the students in English 3, many things could be said, especially because this might be an advantage for a low-performance student, who is going to get the support from a more able peer. Furthermore, Van Lier, Leo (1996) states that authentic dialogs are of student-student interaction because while they are interacting they do not focus on accuracy, do not use authoritarian control, and do not seek a display of linguistic skills.

The cognitive approach will be developed in this ESP course. Students may be exposed to use their memory through a whole display of Business Vocabulary they are going to encounter. They will also take notes on main ideas and specific points, as was shown by the target class in the analysis. Similarly, the practice of analyzing and reasoning can be used. Furthermore, the intention is to make students aware of how much they will benefit learning both approaches strategies, the Cognitive and Metacognitive, which is pointed out by Anderson, Neil J. (1999) when he says that the use of these strategies ignites one's thinking and can lead to more profound learning and improved performance, especially among learners who are struggling as the target class is.

With the inclusion of the Internet use in this course, students will have the chance to do research, which is the prior goal at the university. As Kramsch, Claire (1993) points out computer technology offers possibilities of teaching context itself in a way that teachers have always dreamed of. By opening up micro worlds to play with, by providing opportunities for autonomous, exploratory learning, for analyzing, synthesizing, interpreting social phenomena, these technologies, born from the spectacular advances made in cognitive science, not only are attractive to use, they also encourage teachers to devise more refined procedures for the organization and presentation of knowledge. This

is used in the learner-directed way of learning.

As a way of conclusion it can be said that the approach to language learning for this target class is a process in which the students' learning styles will be relevant and the three approaches mentioned above are in deed going to help learners arrange and plan their language learning in an efficient, effective way.

APPENDIX G: SAMPLE OF MATERIALS IN THESIS 1

UNIT 1 1

WHAT'S ORIGINAL?

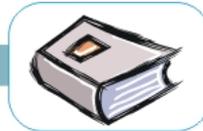
OBJECTIVES:

1. SKIM THE READING
2. RECOGNIZE MAIN IDEAS FROM TEXTS
3. MAKE DISCUSSIONS ON A TOPIC
4. WRITE A TEXT BASED ON THE TOPIC ABOUT PIRACY IN COLOMBIA
5. EXPRESS OWN OPINION



LESSON 1

1.1 PREPARING TO READ ACTIVITY



1. What's the difference between an original CD / DVD and a copy?
2. Can you name the advantages and disadvantages of owning copy music / film?
3. Do you ever buy original music or films? Why? Why not?

1.2 READING



SKIM THE READING AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS IN EXERCISE 1.3 AND 1.4.

HOLLYWOOD UNIONS TACKLE PIRACY

HOLLYWOOD UNIONS TACKLE PIRACY

Three of Hollywood's major unions are teaming up in the fight against film and music piracy.

The Entertainment Industry Coalition for Free Trade is attempting to persuade policy-makers to get tough on copyright laws.

It is also targeting foreign countries with poor records on protecting copyrighted material.

The coalition is made up of the Directors Guild of America, Writers Guild of America and the International Association of Theatrical Employees.

The group will hold a launch in event in Los Angeles on Thursday.

Motion Picture Association of America (MPA) chief executive Jack Valenti is due to appear at the seminar.

He has been outspoken about the effects of digital piracy – downloading music and film from the internet – is having on the industry.

'Menace of piracy'

He sees the problem as one of the biggest facing the business, quoting figures of 400,000 to 600,000 films being illegally downloaded a day.

Mr Valenti has been trying to raise public awareness of the "menace" of film piracy.

His concern is that the film industry will suffer the same fate as the music industry which has blamed falling profits on illegal music swap websites.

The coalition is also seeking to use trade negotiations to lay the groundwork for strong copyright laws across the world.

The MPA is already working with Indian film studios to stem the flood of pirate DVDs flooding the market there.

Thailand has confiscated and destroyed millions of illegal DVDs but it continues to struggle against those determined to sell cheap music and films.



Stolen DVDs are destroyed in Thailand

Taken from BBC NEWS UK EDITION

1.3 COMPREHENDING THE TEXT

1. What's the main idea of the article?

2. How does the writer support the main idea?

3. What does the author imply when he says that the Entertainment Industry is also targeting foreign countries with poor records on protecting copyrighted material?

4. How does the author see the problem of piracy? Do you agree with him? Why? Why not?

5. What has been done to control piracy throughout the world?

1.4 LET'S DISCUSS THE TOPIC



Talk to your partner about the following questions. Tell the whole class about your conclusions.

1. As has been said in the article some countries are struggling against piracy, is Colombia doing the same?

2. What is Colombia doing to stop piracy?

1.5 DO YOU KNOW HOW TO EXTRACT MAIN IDEAS FROM TEXTS?

TIPS:

The **main idea** is the primary point the author wants to make about the topic. Main ideas help readers remember important information. To prove or argue the main idea, a writer must supply support by using details, facts, examples, reasons, events, or comparisons.

✿ **EXAMPLE:**

THE ROLE OF MASS CULTURE

In centuries past, the **influence** of the family and teachers was the dominant, and sometimes the only, **influence** on children. Today, however, the **influence** exerted by mass culture (the broadcast media, newspapers, magazines, and popular music) is often greater.

What is the main idea regarding the topic?

The main idea is that *the dominant influence on children has changed over time from family and teachers to the influence exerted by mass culture.*

How does the writer support the main idea?

Notice that the first sentence discusses *the dominant influence of the past*; the second sentence suggests that *in contrast, today's dominant influence on children is often mass culture*. The last two sentences support the main idea by contrasting *the number of hours in the classroom and study against the number of hours watching television and being influenced by commercials*.

✿ **ANOTHER WAY**

To extract the main idea in a paragraph is by highlighting the words that are repeated, which are called key words. In the case of the example paragraph the words that are most repeated are influence.

✿ **MORE EXAMPLES**

What's the main idea in the following paragraphs? Circle it from the three options that follow each paragraph.

1) The rain forest is home to many creatures. Monkeys, toucans and macaws live in

- a) Sloths and tapirs are other creatures that live in the rain forest.
- b) The rain forest is home to many creatures.
- c) Monkeys, toucans and macaws live in the rain forest.

2) Soccer players learn many skills when playing soccer. Soccer players learn how to dribble and pass the ball. They also learn how to control the ball so they can

- a) They also learn how to control the ball so they can eventually score.
- b) Soccer players learn how to dribble.
- c) Soccer players learn many skills when playing soccer

3) There are many fun things to do at the beach. Swimming is one thing that can be done at the beach. Snorkeling is another thing that can be enjoyed. Playing beach

- a) There are many fun things to do at the beach.
- b) It is also fun to look for shells.
- c) Some people simply like to sunbathe

TAKEN FROM READING COMPREHENSION (OCT. 2000) www.rhlschool.com

1.6 BUSINESS VOCABULARY



Which of the following words taken from the article HOLLYWOOD UNIONS TACKLE PIRACY are used in Business? Search for a similar word to each one. If you want to get farther help go to this web site:

www.wordreference.com. Please try to make sentences with the words.

launch	_____
unions	_____
trade	_____
industry	_____
music	_____
confiscate	_____
destroy	_____
coalition	_____
swap	_____
copyright	_____
laws	_____
negotiation	_____
market	_____
illegal	_____
sell	_____
cheap	_____

1.7 REDISCOVERING GRAMMAR



✿ ANALIZING AND WRITING

1. In the first paragraph of the article, say what tense is used by the writer and write the sentence.

2. Where else is the same tense found? Could you please write the sentences?

3. Give your own examples

1.8 IT'S TIME TO WRITE!



After everything that has been said and discussed about piracy. What is your own opinion about this topic? How is it practiced in Colombia?

Could you please write as much as you can based on these questions?

APPENDIX H: NEEDS ANALYSIS QUESTIONNAIRE IN THESIS 3

Course: _____ Hour: _____

Please give us your personal opinion by marking (X) according to the information below.

1. How old are you?
 15 - 20 _____ 21 - 25 _____ 25 - 30 _____ 30 up _____
 Sex: Male _____ Female _____
2. Why did you decide to study English?
 Because I wanted to _____ Because I had to _____ Because I needed to _____
 Because it is useful _____ Because it is necessary _____ Other reason _____
3. How do you feel about your English level?
 Bad _____ Fair _____ Good _____ Very Good _____ Excellent _____
4. Where did you study English?
 School _____ Institute _____ By yourself _____ [institution] _____ Nowhere _____
5. Where do you expect to use your English? In U.S.A _____ Work _____
 Chat _____ Other _____ What? _____
6. How do you prefer to study English?
 Using a text book _____ Through Conversations _____
 Through games _____ Other _____ Specify _____
7. Who will you use the language with?
 Native speaker _____ Non-native speaker _____ Friends (Native speaker) _____
 Friends (Non-native) _____ Colleagues _____ Other _____
8. When will you use English?
 During this course _____ After this course _____
9. How often do you practice your English?
 Frequently _____ Sometimes _____ Seldom _____ Never _____
10. What resources do you have available to practice your English?
 a. Internet _____ b. CD Player _____ c. TV _____ d. Library _____ e. Other _____
11. During your English classes, you are used to thinking in:
 a. English only _____ b. Spanish only _____ c. Translate into English _____
 d. Translate into Spanish _____ e. 50 and 50 _____

12. How do you find reading? Boring _____ Interesting _____ Fun _____
Other _____ Specify _____
13. What kind of activities do you prefer to do in class?
a. Reading and Writing _____ Listening and Speaking _____
Writing and Speaking _____ Speaking and Reading _____ Other _____
b. Group work _____ Pair work _____ Individual _____ Other _____
14. How do you want your English classes? _____
a. More Spanish than English _____
b. More English than Spanish _____
c. Equal combination _____
d. English only _____
e. Other _____
15. How do you find your English classes?
a. Useful _____ b. Relevant _____ c. Interesting _____ d. Boring _____
e. Important _____ f. Helpful _____ g. Necessary _____ h. Other _____
16. How did you find the text book used in your studies at the [name of institution]?
b. Useful _____ b. Relevant _____ c. Interesting _____ d. Boring _____
e. Important _____ f. Helpful _____ g. Fun _____ h. Other _____

**APPENDIX I: STUDENTS' ANSWERS TO QUESTIONNAIRE IN
THESIS 7**

1. ¿A usted le gusta leer artículos en inglés sobre su carrera?	
Si.....	100%
No.....	0%
2. ¿En su carrera, Qué habilidad del idioma Inglés cree que necesite más?	
Leer	60%
Hablar.....	20%
Escribir.....	20%
Escuchar.....	0%
3. ¿Consulta usted textos en inglés para realizar trabajos de asignaturas propias de su carrera?	
Si.....	100%
No.....	0%
4. ¿Leer y escribir en inglés le ayudaría en su carrera?	
Si.....	100%
No.....	0%
5. ¿Usted en clase de Inglés prefiere leer y escribir con?	
Textos Técnicos.....	70%
Cultura general.....	20%
Indiferente.....	10%
6. ¿En los ejercicios de comprensión de lectura, te gustaría que la comprobación de los ejercicios se hiciera de forma?	
Oral.....	40%
Escrita.....	60%
7. ¿Cómo le gustaría recibir las instrucciones para trabajar en un texto?	
Oral.....	30%
Escrita.....	70%
8. ¿Considera usted que el manejo del idioma Inglés es fundamental y/o prioritario para su desarrollo personal?	
Si.....	80%
No.....	20%

9. La lectura de textos en inglés te ayudaría a:
- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Mejorar tu rendimiento..... | 10% |
| Avanzar en tu carrera..... | 20% |
| Investigar..... | 70% |
10. ¿Qué aspectos se deben trabajar más en el curso?
- | | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Vocabulario..... | 30% |
| Gramática..... | 0% |
| Comprensión de Textos..... | 70% |
11. ¿En su opinión el curso debe desarrollarse?
- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| Solo con un texto guía..... | 20% |
| Un texto guía y material extra..... | 80% |
| Solo material extra..... | 0% |
12. ¿Para desarrollar un ejercicio de comprensión de lectura, usted prefiere?
- | | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Trabajar solo..... | 20% |
| Trabajar en parejas..... | 70% |
| Con mas de dos personas..... | 10% |
13. ¿En su opinión, durante un ejercicio de comprensión de lectura, el profesor debe?
- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Desarrollar el ejercicio con los estudiantes..... | 10% |
| Dar las instrucciones y dejar a los estudiantes trabajar solos..... | 60% |
| Asignar un monitor para que despeje dudas..... | 30% |
14. ¿Cuándo no sabes el significado en Español de una palabra inglesa en una lectura, usted?
- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Usa un diccionario..... | 50% |
| Analizo el contexto para deducir el significado..... | 20% |
| Pregunto al profesor o un compañero..... | 30% |
15. ¿En su opinión, los profesores de Inglés?
- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Deben tener conocimientos relacionados a la carrera donde actualmente están enseñando..... | 100% |
| No deben tener conocimientos relacionados a la carrera donde actualmente están enseñando..... | 0% |
| Le es indiferente que sepan o no sobre su carrera..... | 0% |
16. ¿Por Qué tomó usted este curso?
- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Mejorar mi rendimiento académico..... | 10% |
| Me gusta el inglés..... | 70% |
| La universidad lo exige..... | 20% |

17. ¿En su próximo curso de inglés, usted sugeriría?

Que aumenten el número de horas/semana.....	10%
Más ejercicios de comprensión de lectura.....	50%
Más ayudas audio-visuales.....	40%
Más Gramática.....	0%

APPENDIX J: SAMPLE OF MATERIALS IN THESIS 11

 Write what you usually do in the morning before you go to school. 
Draw the pictures.

Read the paragraphs and write the events in order:



Kathy eats lunch at 12:00. She rides her bike in the afternoon. She makes her bed the first thing after she gets up. She cleans her room before she does her other works. She reads a book right after she eats lunch. She washes the dishes in the morning. What does Kathy do after she gets up?

1. _____

6. _____

Read and circle the correct answer. Share the answers with your classmates.



Hi, I'm Gabriel, and my brother's name is Miguel. I get up at 6:45. Miguel gets up at 7:00. I take a shower at 7:10, but Miguel doesn't. He takes a shower at 7:25. I play soccer at 4:30. Miguel plays soccer at 4:45. I do my homework at 6:30, but Miguel doesn't. He does his homework at 8:00.

Circle the correct answer 

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| 1. Gabriel gets up before Miguel. | Yes | No |
| 2. Miguel takes a shower before Gabriel. | Yes | No |
| 3. Gabriel plays soccer after Miguel. | Yes | No |
| 4. Miguel does his homework after Gabriel. | Yes | No |

Betty Backwards reads her mom a story. She reads from the end to the beginning. She goes to sleep after her mom does.

(Betty does everything backwards. She isn't like you and me. Betty does things differently!!)

- Answer the questions :



What does Betty do at 10:00 at night?

When does she get dressed in her pajamas?

When does Betty go to school?

What does she do before she goes to school?

What does Betty do before she goes to sleep?



Think about what will happen in your life if you start to do things backwards. Share your thoughts with a friend.

GAME

- In pairs play the backwards game. Write one of the events of the story backwards; for example *desserd teg*. Tell your partner to guess the words. You can allow him/her to look in the book for help.



- To identify main idea and details
- To use previous knowledge
- To deduce meaning from context
- To make judgments

Listen and read the story about Playing Sports. Then do the comprehension activities.



Richard and Amy love sports. When they exercise, they feel healthy and happy. How do they do it? Let's take a look.

Amy plays baseball and is on swim team at her school. So, she needs to take care of herself. Amy says you can do many things to take care of yourself. When you play baseball, you should stretch before every game. Amy says you shouldn't drink too much water right before a game. When she did, she got a stomachache.



- Write do or don't in each sentence

_____ Stretch before you play or swim.

_____ Drink a lot of water before a game.

_____ Wear a helmet when you go to hit a ball.

_____ Eat healthy food.

- Write about your favorite sport and how you take care of yourself to practice it.

APPENDIX K: RESULTS OF LEARNING NEEDS QUESTIONNAIRE IN THESIS 6

QUESTION NUMBER ONE

1. ¿Por qué esta estudiando Inglés?

Obligación	1	3%
Opcional	19	58%
Necesidad	4	12%
Posición Social	2	6%
Remuneración Económica	7	21%

Comentario: Los estudiantes sienten una gran motivación hacia el curso de inglés.

QUESTION NUMBER TWO

2. ¿Su actitud hacia el curso de Inglés es?

Positiva	30	100%
Negativa	0	0%

Comentario: Los estudiantes sienten una gran motivación hacia el curso de inglés.

QUESTION NUMBER FOUR

4. ¿Cómo cree usted que puede aprender mejor?

Practicando en clase	0	0%
Esc. Expl. Prof. Pract. Casa	0	0%
Ambas formas	21	28%

Comentario: La mayoría de los estudiantes aprenden el idioma inglés cuando lo practican con los compañeros y cuando lo escriben. Existe un número menos importantes que lo aprende al hablarlo en voz alta y al escucharlo.

Viendo películas	20	26%
Escuchando canciones	22	29%
Libro de trabajo	13	17%

QUESTION NUMBER FIVE

5. ¿Cuál es tu tipo de evaluación favorita?

a. Oral individual	8	22%
b. Escrita	14	38%
c. Oral en parejas	14	41%

Comentario: La gran mayoría de los estudiantes coinciden que el tipo de evaluación que prefieren es la oral en parejas, seguida de la escritura

QUESTION NUMBER SIX

6. ¿Cuál de estas actividades le gustaría usted realizar en clases para aprender mejor?

a. Escuchar música y ver películas.	11	38%
b. Actividades de pronunciación.	1	3%
c. Juegos.	6	21%
d. Leer y escribir.	5	17%
e. Practicar en parejas.	2	7%
f. Actividades con énfasis en el vocabulario.	1	3%
g. Presentaciones orales.	1	3%
h. Entrevistas.	1	3%
i. Ejercicios de pronunciación.	1	3%

Comentario: A pesar de que los resultados de la encuesta muestran una mayor tendencia a las actividades basadas en ver películas y escuchar canciones,

QUESTION NUMBER SEVEN

7. ¿Según su opinión personal cual cree usted que debe ser el papel que deberían jugar los materiales en la clase de inglés?

a. Profundizar en los temas estudiados.	13	24%
b. Repasar lo aprendido en clase.	10	18%
c. Practicar la gramática.	18	33%
d. Practicar el uso del vocabulario.	14	25%

Comentario: A los estudiantes les gusta mucho trabajar en parejas

QUESTION NUMBER EIGHT

8. ¿Con qué clase de materiales le gustaría trabajar en la clase de inglés?

a. Workbooks	20	54%
b. Lecturas de obras literarias aptas para su nivel	17	46%

Comentario: Los estudiantes prefieren que los materiales diseñados les ayuden a remplazar la gramática y el vocabulario.

QUESTION NUMBER NINE

9. ¿Además de hablar, que otras actividades le gustaría hacer usted en la clase de inglés?

a. Leer	15	34%
b. Escribir	5	11%
c. Escuchar y cantar canciones	24	55%

Comentario: A los estudiantes les gusta trabajar con Workbooks y lecturas que estén apropiadas a su nivel.

**APPENDIX L: NEEDS ANALYSIS QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS
IN THESIS 2**

CUESTIONARIO

Por favor marque con una X su opinión personal en lo concerniente a las preguntas a continuación. Puede marcar más de una opción donde aplique. Esta información será de gran ayuda para el diseño de su curso de inglés.

- 1.Cuál es tu
edad: menos de 20 21 – 25 25 – 30 más de 30
sexo: masculino femenino
2. Por qué estudias Inglés?
Porque me gusta Porque es un requisito
3. Cómo consideras tu nivel de inglés?
Básico Intermedio Avanzado Nulo
4. Dónde estudiaste Inglés anteriormente?
Escuela Instituto Por ti mismo Ninguna parte
5. En qué especialidad o campo académico esperas utilizar el Inglés?

6. Qué habilidad será más necesaria para tí? Numera de 1 a 4. Siendo 1 el máximo y 4 la mínima puntuación. Aplica solo para esta pregunta.
Habla Escucha Lectura Escritura
7. En qué piensas utilizar el Inglés?
Estudio Trabajo Diversión
8. Cómo prefieres estudiar Inglés?
Lectura Música Conversaciones Virtualmente
Siguiendo un texto Otra Especifique _____
9. Con quién utilizara el idioma inglés?
Personas de Habla Hispana Personas de Habla Inglesa
Amigos Chat
10. Cuándo usará el inglés?
Durante este curso Después de este curso

11. Con cuánta frecuencia lo usará?
 Frecuentemente A veces Rara vez Nunca
12. A qué recursos tienes acceso?
 Internet Grabadora TV Biblioteca
 Ninguno
13. Cómo practicas inglés?
 Con amigos Leyendo Viendo películas Oyendo música
 Otro: _____
14. Qué actividades prefieres realizar en la clase?
 Escuchar Leer Escribir Hablar
 Otra: _____
15. Cómo prefieres trabajar en clase?
 En parejas En grupo Individualmente
16. Cómo te gusta la clase de Inglés?
 En Español En Inglés Mas Inglés que Español
 Más Español que Inglés Por partes iguales
 Otro _____
17. Cuánto tiempo a la semana utilizas para estudiar Inglés de forma personal fuera de la clase?
 1 hora 2 horas 4 horas Otro _____
18. Qué horario consideras apropiado para la clase de Inglés?

19. Cómo consideras al Inglés?
 Útil Interesante Importante Aburrido
 Otro _____

GRACIAS POR TU AYUDA

APPENDIX M: TEST ON MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES IN T 16

- 1. What do you like to study?**
- Words
- Numbers
- Images
- Sounds
- 2. What kind of sports do you prefer?**
- I don't like sports
- Golf or hiking
- Swimming
- Football or volleyball
- 3. What do you do in your free time?**
- To dance
- To visit friends
- To listen to music
- To be alone
- 6. How do you study?**
- Working in groups or with another person.
- Building a model
- Drawing or visualizing
- Quantifying and placing the things in a logical order
- 7. What kind of profession do you like?**
- Accountant
- Music therapist
- Psychologist
- Journalist
- 8. Sometimes have you ever tried to...?**
- Write your own book
- Know the number of dogs that your city has
- Listen to the whole music you have in one morning
- Looking images and pictures in clouds.

4. I'm sensitive to...

 Music

 Color

 Feelings

 Movement

5. What is the most important?

 My accounts

 My friends

 My books

 My CDs

9. You are good at ...

 forming mental images of yourself

 Finding analogies

 Playing sports or dancing

 Speaking or arguing

10. In my childhood...

 I made friends easily

 I loved being outdoors

 I enjoy drawing or painting

 I spent a lot of time thinking to myself and my future.

APPENDIX N: SAMPLE OF MATERIALS IN THESIS 6

MY SPECIF JOB

ASKING ABOUT SOMEONE`S OCCUPATION

SOME EXPRESSIONS

WHAT DO YOU DO? WHAT IS YOUR JOB? WHAT IS YOUR OCCUPATION? HOW DO YOU MAKE YOUR LIVING?

SOME JOBS



Pilot



Driver



Flight Attendant



Security Officer



Receptionist



Boss



Secretary



Beelboy



Hotel Manager



Waiter



Waitress



Barman



Taxi Drive

THIS IS MS GOLF TALKING TO HER NEW NEIGHBOR MR KLING

MS GOLF: Hi, how are you?

MR KLING: Fine thanks and you?

MS GOLF: Pretty good

MS GOLF: By the way, what do you do?

MR KING: I am a pilot for Avianca Airlines

MS GOLF: Oh cool! And you?

MR KING: I am a flight

attendant for American Airlines

MR KING: Oh I see



ACTIVITY 1: Practice the conversation with a partner



ACTIVITY 2: Practice the conversation with a partner. Use either what is your occupation? Or how do you make your living

TALKING POSITIVELY ABOUT JOBS

SOME JOBS



Receptionist



Secretary



Waiter



Waitress

POSITIVE EXPRESSIONS ABOUT JOBS

IT WAS GREAT-IT WAS NICE- IT WAS VERY GOOD-IT WAS

THIS IS MS GOMEZ AND MR SAMM TALKING ABOUT MS GOMEZ'S WORK DAY TODAY

MR SAMM: Hi Kelly, how are you?

MS GOMEZ: Fine thanks and you?

MR SAMM: By the way how was work today?

MS GOMEZ: Oh it was great.

MR SAMM: Oh Cool!



ACTIVITY: Practice this conversation with your partner



TALKING NEGATIVELY ABOUT JOBS

SOME NEGATIVE ADJECTIVES ABOUT JOBS



Busy



Exhausting



Stressing

TO SELL AIR PLANE TICKETS
 TO CONFIRM FLIGHTARRIVALS/DEPARTURE-
 TOASSIGN SEATS TO THE PASSANGERS IN THE FLIGHT-
 TO CHECK THE FLIGHT INFORMATION IN THE SYSTEM-
 TO SELL TOURIST PACKAGES-
 TO GET THE PASSANGERS AT THE AIRPORT

MONICA IS BEING INTRODUCED TO A TRAVEL AGENCY MANAGER AT A TRAVEL AGENCY CONVENTION IN CARTAGENA

CONVERSATION

MR GLENN: Hi Monica how are you

MONICA: Fine thanks and you?

MR GLENN: By the way, where do you work at?

MONICA: At a travel agency.

MR GLENN: And what is your job I

MONICA: It is very busy and stressing. I have to fill in many papers everyday

MR GLENN: Oh I see



ACTIVITY: Practice the conversation with your partner. Use some adjectives and expression from the boxes above.



APPLICATION ACTIVITY

AT WORK

You work at the international flight section. A foreigner approaches your counter for flight information. Use the vocabulary provided to start a conversation.

Greetings- expressions to offer help -vocabulary related to general flight information such as: depart- kind of tickets (round /one way) – Travelers (adult –senior- youth –child- infant in lap -infant in seat)- time.

3 ACTIVITY: You work for a travel agency. You feel happy there. Tell your partner about your responsibilities at work. Use the vocabulary provided.

Non –stop flights -destinations-taxes payment-fees-vacation packages-self introductions-age- time.

**APPENDIX O: TEXT EXTRACTED FROM THE MATERIALS IN
THESIS 16**

Read the following text

The Reyes



A very popular family you can see every night on T.V.



Edilberto Reyes, the father, has two jobs. He sells fruits and vegetables in the market, and works as president of a big company called "Grupo Ger.". He is heavy, tall and very humble. Mr. Reyes is widow and has two daughters and two sons.



Leonardo is the oldest, he's 20 years old, he is a very good mechanic and also sings reggeaton. He lives with his girlfriend Pilar, they are so different because she is a very pretty and serious girl and he is funny and not good looking.

Maria and Hilda are Edilberto's daughters, they are also very different because Maria is shy and loves to study and Hilda is very funny and she only likes to sing and dance with her band "los tesos".

And Totoy, the little son who is 10 years old, he's a little heavy and really funny.

This is a very big family, because, in spite of they do not have a mother, they have an aunt, of the mother side, who takes care of them, her name is Yoli, she is very loving and cooks really well. They also live with Edilberto's sister; Laisa is tall and very talkative. Now, Mr. Reyes has a girlfriend, Natalia is a thin and a really beautiful lady who works with him in the company. This is definitely a very nice family we can enjoy every night on TV.



Totoy



Natalie



YoLi

1. Complete the sentences according to the reading. Use the vocabulary in the box.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Leonardo is Edilberto's _____ | 6. Laisa is Edilberto's _____ |
| 2. Edilberto is Maria's _____ | 7. Yoli is Edilberto's _____ |
| 3. Laisa is Hilda's _____ | 8. Leonardo is totoy's _____ |
| 4. Totoy is yoli's _____ | 9. Hilda is Laisa's _____ |
| 5. Edilberto is Yoli's _____ | 10. Natalia is Edilberto's _____ |

father	grandmother	sister	daughter	nephew
brother in law	son	grandfather	uncle	
brother	niece	sister in law	girlfriend	

**APPENDIX P: SAMPLE OF MATERIALES IN USE PROVIDED IN
THESIS 11**



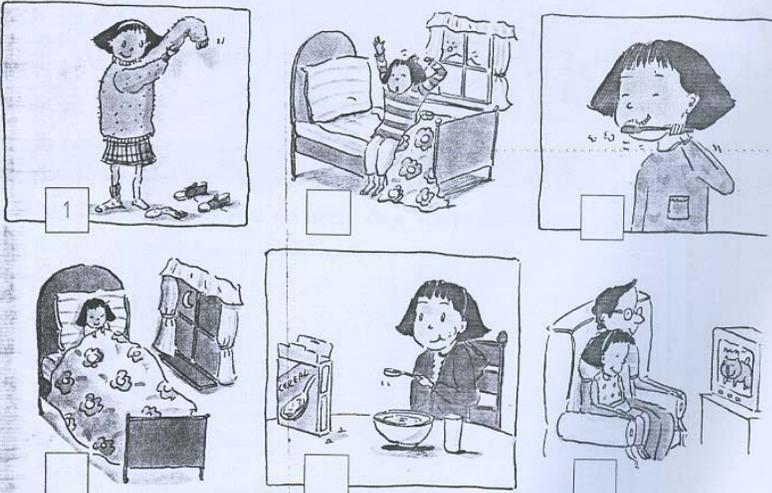
1 My Activities

1. Listen and say the chant. 

Hello. Good morning. How do you do?
Hello. Good morning. How are you?
I'm just fine. I'm just grand.
Give me a smile and shake my hand.

2. Listen, say, and match. 

Write the number in the box next to the picture.

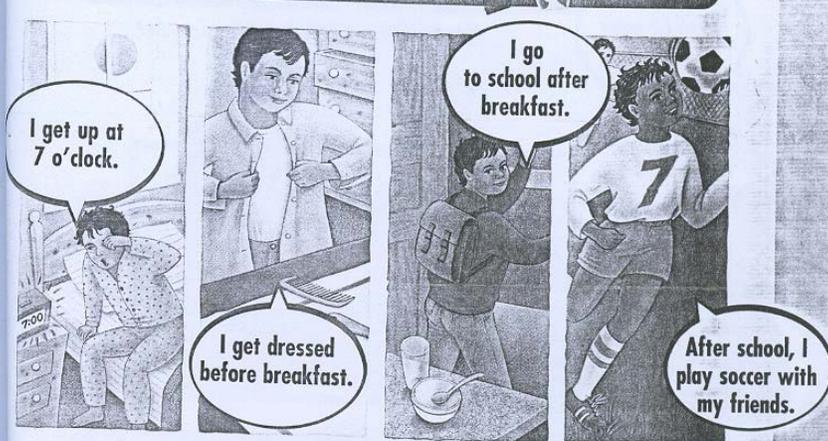


1. She gets dressed.
 2. She eats breakfast.
 3. She gets up.
 4. She goes to bed.
 5. She watches TV.
 6. She brushes her teeth.

2 UNIT 1 • My Activities • WARM UP/PRESENTATION



3. Read. Tell about your day.



I get up at 7 o'clock.

I get dressed before breakfast.

I go to school after breakfast.

After school, I play soccer with my friends.

4. Draw and write.

Draw two activities you do every day. Write about your day.



I ride my bike every day!



UNIT 1 • My Activities • PRESENTATION **3**



7. Make a clock. 

Ask your friend, "What time is it?"

Turn to page 93 to cut out the clock!





8. Listen and sing. 

Look at the Time
 Look at the time,
 It's eight o'clock, eight o'clock, eight o'clock.
 Look at the time,
 It's eight o'clock.
 Time to go to school!

eat my dinner



go to bed



Question: Where does Friday come before Thursday?

Answer: In the dictionary.

UNIT 1 • My Activities • PRACTICE **5**

APPENDIX Q: SAMPLE OF MATERIALS IN THESIS 14

UNIT 1

ASKING AND GIVING DIRECTIONS

Objective: Asking and giving information about location and direction.

Activity 1:
In this activity you are supposed to ask and give directions by using the given information in the box. You can follow this pattern

Part A

Excuse me, where is the hospital?

Excuse me, is there any drugstore near here?

Excuse me, can you tell me where I can...

Giving Directions

There are many ways to give directions. One common way to give directions is to give the name of the street and then some building nearby.

To give directions we use prepositions of place that will help us to get to the right place.

PREPOSITIONS

ON

→



BETWEEN

→





Part C: Practice the following conversation with a partner using the substitutions in the box:

A: Do you know where I can find a drugstore?

B: Sure. You can go to Drogas la Rebaja.

A: Where's that?

B: It's on 14 street near the Hospital.

A: Thanks.

B: No problem.

1. get some food

2. buy some milk

3. talk to the major

4. take some "X" rays

5. get some aspirin

6. mail a letter

7. talk to the

principal



Think about five places of your town and give the directions to go there.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____



Activity 1. Look at the Picture and find the places. Give the correct directions.



Part B: Look at the chart and the prepositions that are in bold. Use the prepositions to name some other places you know and work with your partner.

Street Information	Nearby Buildings
It's on 23rd Avenue	next to the school
It's on 14 Street	La Fogata Restaurant
It's on the corner of 23rd and 14th	across from the cafe

Taken from booblesworld.com

TELL ME YOUR STORY

Objective: Use of connectors by recognizing the sequence of the text and predicting ideas or information after connectors.

Organize the sequence of a story.

Activity 3: Listen and Enumerate

Example: Story No. 1



a. (6)



b. (3)



c. (5)



d. (2)



e. (4)



f. (1)

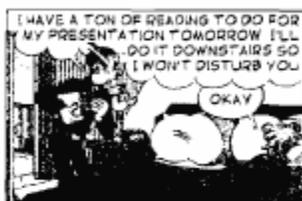
Source: Cutting Edge Resource bank

Story No 2

15

Now, it is your turn. Read and follow the story. Organize it according to the scenes presented and then tell the story with your own words. What do you think the story is about.

BLONDIE
by Dean Young
& Denis Lebrun



()



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()

"FIRST DATE"



Objective: Listen to a dialogue and get the information.

Activity 2: The first date is your first encounter with a boy or a girl. What would you do? How would you feel? What would you say? What would you wear?

I. Pre-Listening Exercises

What questions would you ask your son or daughter if they were going out on a date for the first time? Write them down:



Ex. I would ask him/her where the encounter is going to take place



R. 2.5



II. Listening Exercises

Exercise 1. Listen to the conversation and answer the questions.

1. What kind of movie is the girl going to see on her date?

- A. horror
- B. romance
- C. science fiction

2. At what theater is the movie playing?

- A. Central Palace
- B. Campus Plaza
- C. Common Plex

3. How is the girl getting to the movie?

- A. She is getting a ride with her brother.
- B. Her date is coming to pick her up.
- C. She is going by bus and will meet her date there.

4. What time does the movie begin?

- A. 7:30 p.m.
- B. 8:00 p.m.
- C. 8:30 p.m.

5. What time does she have to be home?

- A. 10:00 p.m.
- B. 10:30 p.m.
- C. 11:00 p.m.

APPENDIX R: SAMPLE OF MATERIALS IN THESIS 2

UNIT 3

CONNECTORS

El CONECTOR, como su nombre lo indica conecta ideas. Hay varios tipos de conectores. Unos son "sumativos" como "y", "además", "inclusive". Otros son "contrastivos" como "sin embargo", "pero", "no obstante", etc. Al encontrar un conector "contrastivo" inmediatamente podemos intuir algo nuevo en el texto y sobre esta base podemos entrar a buscar en el texto los elementos que se contrastan, lo cual nos da nuevos elementos de juicio para retomar la tarea de lectura.

Sentence connectors are used to express relationships between ideas and to combine sentences. There are several types: addition, opposition, contrast, cause/effect, contrast, condition and some others.

You are going to see some examples of several types of connectors in context.

Addition:
Between the world wars, the family moved first to Vienna and then to Berlin
Not only are high level positions stressful at times, but they also can be harmful to your health

Opposition:
According to Hobsbawm the historian's task, "is not simply to discover the past but to explain it
Despite the fact that high level positions are stressful at times, professionals can learn to manage their stress levels

Cause/Effect:
Professionals can sometimes be extremely impatient, for their positions are at times rather stressful
Due to the stressful nature of high level positions, professionals can sometimes be extremely impatient

http://esl.about.com/library/writing/blwrite_connectors_comparison.htm

En la tabla de la página siguiente encontramos varios tipos de conectores. Con base en la información que suministra realiza la siguiente tarea. Puedes hacerlo con un compañero y comparar tus resultados:

Piensa en la ciudad de Nueva York.

- Cuáles dos aspectos sobre Nueva York se mencionan en esta época?
- Son estas características positivas o negativas?
- Si tomamos un aspecto positivo y uno negativo, qué tipo de conector tendríamos que usar? Cuál usarías?
- Si recuerdas dos aspectos positivos o dos aspectos negativos, qué tipo de conector tendríamos que usar? Cuál usarías?
- Piensa en una característica, positiva o negativa. Cuál es la razón de ser de esa característica? qué tipo de conector tendríamos que usar? Cuál usarías?

Go to the following Web page:
http://esl.about.com/library/writing/blwrite_connectors.htm

Read the examples about connectors that you can find there. They will give you more ideas.

2

MEMORY AND YOU

How good is your memory? Look at the phrases in paragraph 1 for 30 seconds. Try to remember as many as you can. Then close your book and write down as many phrases as you can remember. Compare answers with your classmates. Who has the best memory?

Richards, J. and Eckstut-Didier S: Strategic Reading 3 - Cambridge



REMEMBER YOUR GRAMMAR AND YOUR VOCABULARY

Be Autonomous and Exercise your Memory

Go to the following web pages and perform the activities.

Perform this quiz on line. Check Bush's problems with grammar and vocabulary.

Bushisms - US President Proves How Difficult English Really Is!
President Bush's Problems with Grammar

<http://esl.about.com/library/weekly/aa032301a.htm> - grammar quiz
<http://esl.about.com/library/weekly/aa032301b.htm> - vocabulary quiz

MORE GRAMMAR ON THE WEB

Apply the following quizzes. Bring your doubts to the next class

1. Intermediate grammar review quiz I
http://esl.about.com/library/courses/blcourses_intermediate_review1.htm
2. Quiz II

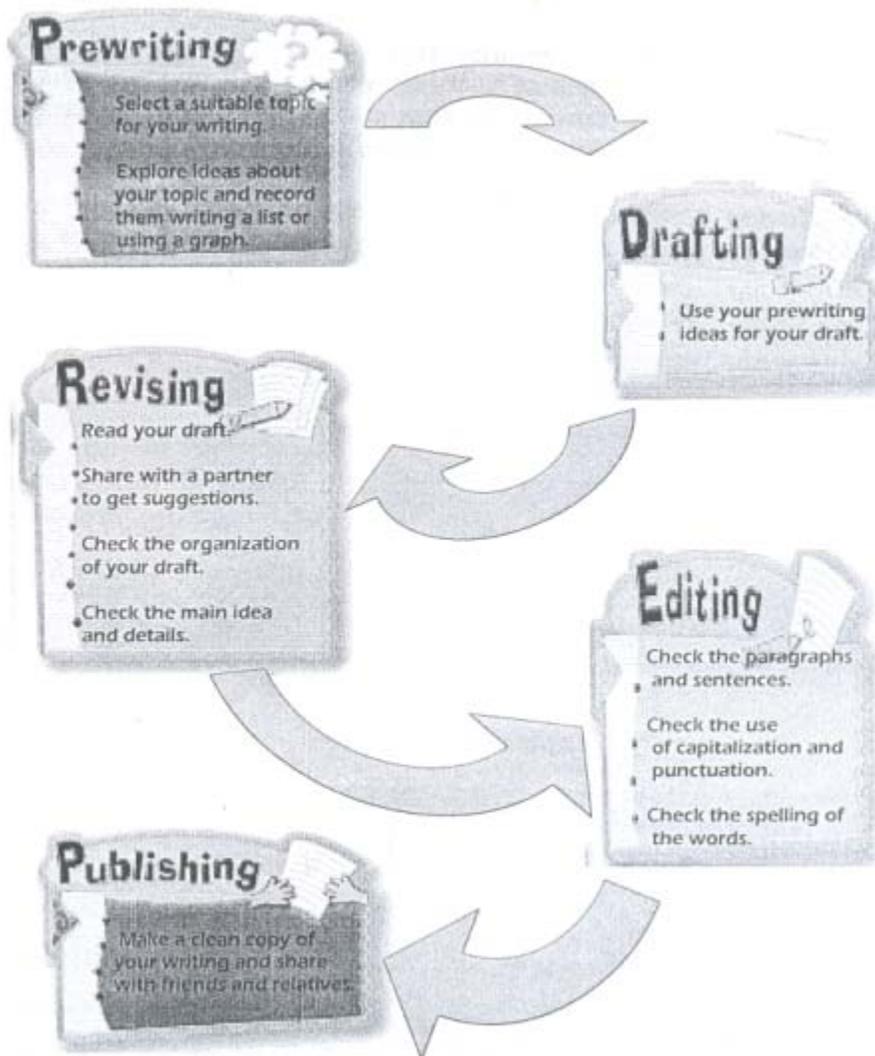


SELF EVALUATION

1. Do you remember what connectors are?
2. How many types of connectors can you name?
3. What strategies do you know to learn vocabulary? How many have you applied?
4. What other reading strategies have you practiced?
5. Have you learned new words?
6. Can you understand readings better now?

APPENDIX S: SAMPLE OF MATERIALS IN THESIS 17

This is the writing process and it includes five steps:



Source: Adapted from
http://catalog.depotcatalog.com/images/edu/big/CE/CD_110014.gif

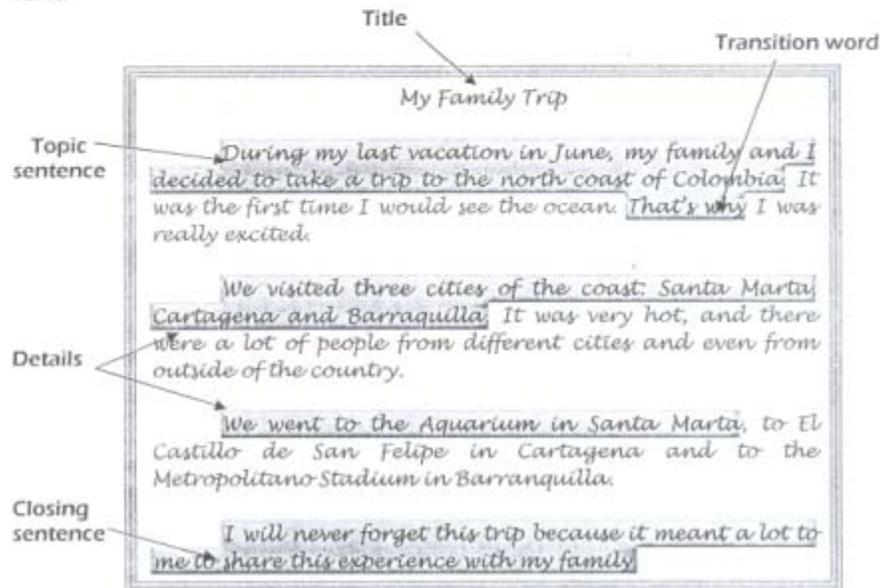
UNIT 2 PERSONAL NARRATIVE

The purpose of a personal narrative text is to share an experience or an event with your readers. The readers might be your family, friends, teachers or perhaps people you don't know.

You start your personal narrative writing the topic sentence. The topic sentence states the main idea of the paragraph and it should be attractive in order to catch the attention of the readers.

But you should add other sentences or details that support the topic sentence. Details give additional information about the event or situation you are sharing.

To connect ideas and paragraphs you should include transition words, for example: first, then, later, after, because, next or last. And it is important to write a closing sentence to conclude your text.

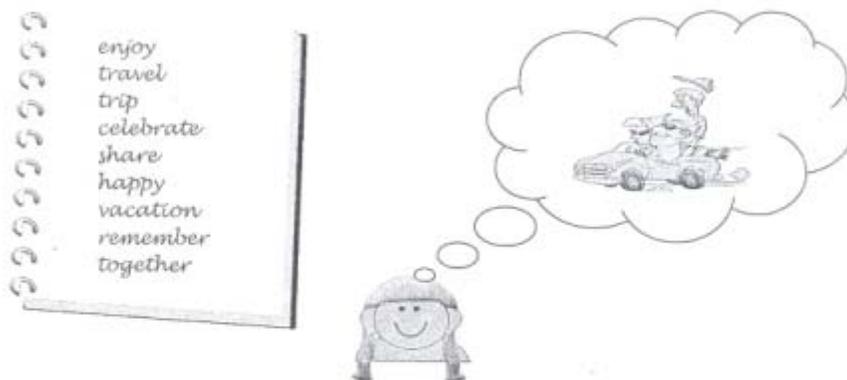




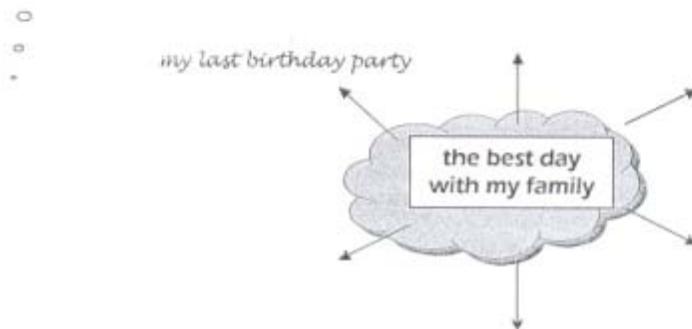
Time to practice

The best day I ever spent with my family

Take a look at your family album and try to get pictures of special moments you had with your family. You will write a text narrating that happy experience including who were with you, where it was, when it was, how was the experience, how you felt and why you consider it the best day with your family.



 First you should collect ideas in the graphic organizer.



 Use the following chart to organize the ideas.



Who were with you?

Where was it?

When was it?

How did you feel?

How was the experience?

Why is it the best day?



Go back to page 12 and read the model before you write the first draft.



Revise and edit: Use the following list to check your first draft. Put a tick (✓) on each item to make sure you have it or not.

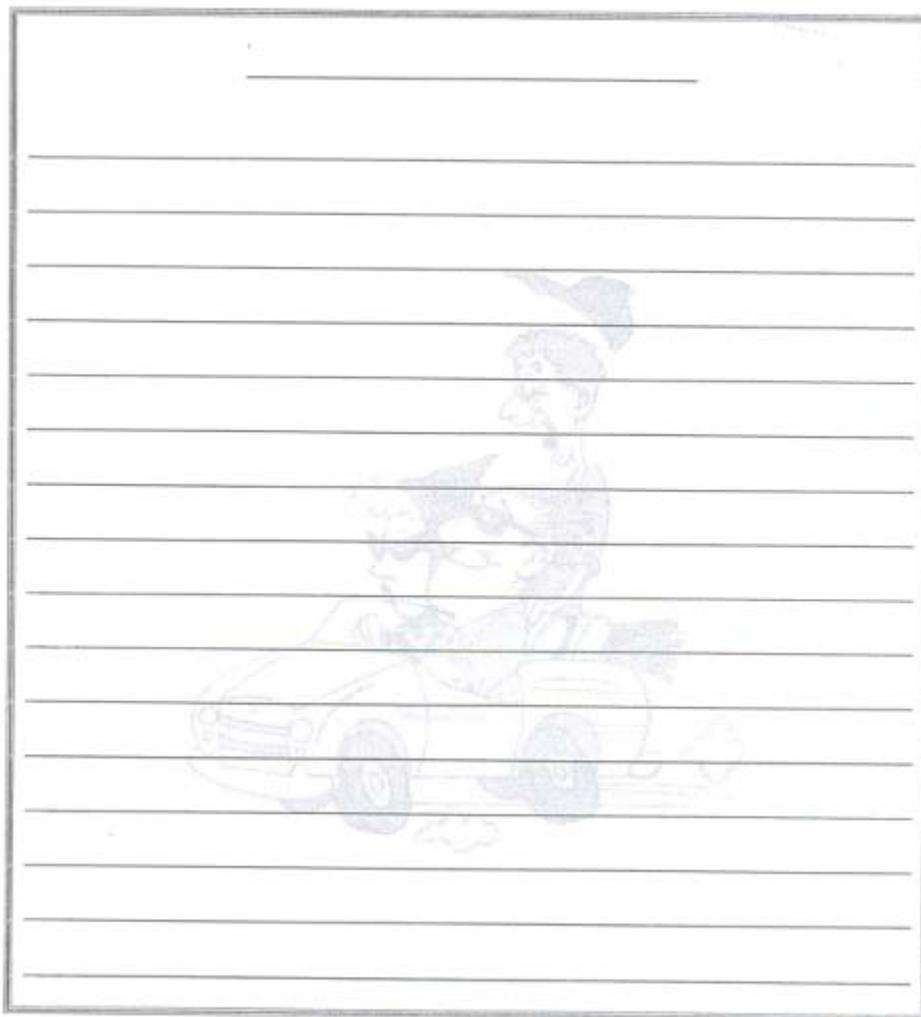
Writer's checklist

Did you ...	YES	NO
use capital letters properly?		
write neatly?		
write a topic sentence?		
write a closing sentence?		
use punctuation correctly?		
spell words correctly?		
write in sequential order?		
use details?		
write about the topic?		
use transition words?		



Share with a partner: Ask a partner to revise your text to make suggestions. You may use the writer's checklist. As well read your partner's work and share your opinion.

 **Clean copy:** Now write the final copy of your assignment and share with friends. Then include it in your portfolio.



APPENDIX T: ROLES OF TEACHER IN THESIS 20

Enthusiastic. This is perhaps the main role a teacher has to play these days. Nowadays students have many distractors. It is day by day more difficult for the teacher to get students' attention. Spreading enthusiasm all over the classroom may create a friendly atmosphere that will facilitate students' learning and focus their attention on what they have to do.

Monitor/assessor. This is one of the roles that will consume most of the teachers' time in the classroom. Teachers have to assess permanently students' work to see how well they performed. Harmer (1991, p.237) makes difference between two kinds of assessment: Correction and organizing feedback.

Correction. Instant gentle correction is suggested when students are in a drill-type activity. It is important to correct the students immediately after they have made the mistake in order to make them aware of it.

Organising feedback. This kind of assessment occurs at the end of a task. It can be focused on content or form. There are many ways to have records of students' performance during the tasks. The following ones will be included in the course design.

Pen and paper. The teacher keeps record of the mistakes listening to the students and writing down the mistakes. Teachers may have a chart with some categories that help them to be more specific.

Tape recorder. Teachers might want to record the students' oral performance to show them how they made the mistakes and also to compare that performance with a future one to evaluate the students' improvement.

Video. This is a more enriching way for feedback, because it is interesting for students to see themselves on tv, and also because they can also participate correcting their classmates mistakes.

Organiser/planner. This is an important role for the success of the class. Teachers have to prepare and think through the lesson in detail before teaching it so that it has a variety and there are appropriate activities for the learners in the class, (the TKT course, 2005, p.145)

Researcher. Research plays an important role in the teaching process. A research project may give us answers to many questions that arise during our everyday and help us improve our methodology and in that way we will be able to obtain better results.

**APPENDIX U: SUMMARY OF CONTEXTS, APPROACHES AND GOALS OF THE COURSES
DESIGNED IN EACH OF THE THESES.**

Tesis	Context	Ap. Ed	Ap. Lg	Ap. Learn	Goals
1	Private University Second-year students majoring in Business Administration, Economy, and International Finances	Functionalist	Skills-based without forgetting the structuralist approach	Cognitive, metacognitive without leaving aside the Social Affective one.	Reading and writing skills Awareness of importance of reading for increasing vocabulary. Development of confidence
2	Public University Third-year students majoring in History	To inculcate Delors' four pillars of education: Learn to know, to do, to live together and to be. Living in harmony. Economic growth and academic development is not everything. Take care of the environment. Develop talents and creativity of each person	Language should be used to exchange ideas, thoughts, feelings and not ust a meaningless outcome. Context, that is, not only the text itself, but whatever accompanies it. Words change their meaning depending on the situation. Etc/. Variation lies in the vocabulary. And also according to the culture where they are used, and the area they are said.	Learners reformulate existing structures when new info or experience is connected to knowledge in memory. New ideas must be integrated into memory. Constructivism – students think critically, take decisions, learn to learn and don't need teacher always beside them.. T should help S learn and grow by themselves, integrate knowledge with real life application, taking active role in their own education and learning.	Improve reading comprehension Students should become more united and supportive as a group. Development of the conscious construction of knowledge: Learn to use previous knowledge
3	Non-formal language course in a private language academy	n/a	Functionalist Language communication for	n/a	Development of oral competence. Cooperative learning Self-confidence
4	Open non-formal language course offered by a public university. Students of various backgrounds	Construction of knowledge	Not declared	Construction of knowledge paradigm	Development of listening competence, a critical attitude towards language structure. Implementation of useful strategies, awareness raising of the importance of affective and cognitive codes in language learning Appreciation of both individual and cooperative work.

Tesis	Context	Ap. Ed	Ap. Lg	Ap. Learn	Goals
5	Private University First- and second-year students majoring in Business, Administration and Economy.	Client-centred	Skills-based Richard's communicative approach Metacognitive knowledge of English structure.	Metacognitive approach -Plan, monitor and evaluate own learning, problem solving skills Autonomous approach which emphasizes cooperative learning	Development of the four communicative skills with emphasis on reading. Increasing students' motivation Respect for others' opinions
6	Private college. First-year students preparing for the service industry	Client-centered	Functional and structural	Cognitive approach	Speaking, strategies for speaking,; kindness, honesty and loyalty.
7	Public university. Second -year students majoring in Chemistry.	Functionalistic approach	Functional but without disregarding the other approaches; Skill-centered approach	Cognitive approach; cognitive and metacognitive strategies	Reading comprehension; increase motivation for reading and writing; Sequencing according to familiarity with topics. Grammar was presented according to frequency in texts to be read.
8	Large traditional private secondary school. Students of mixed social classes and ages.	Functionalist with a private goal to go beyond that.	Communicative view of language	Principles: Communication, task, meaningfulness. Also learning strategies.	Development of reading skills Development of reading strategies Respect for other people's opinion to promote peaceful co-existence.
9	Private university. Middle-class first-year students majoring in International Business	A client-centered approach Educate a social and an individual being. Develop individual's potentiality within the regulation of the society.	"the Hallidayan vision": words, intentions, surroundings, and cultural aspects take part in the meaning making.	Constructivism (as opposed to behaviorist' approaches based on stimulus-response)	Development of reading and writing skills. Development of cooperative learning strategies Awareness of relation between culture and language knowledge.
10	Preschool in a middle-class institution. Four-to-five-year children.	Client-centered approach	Structuralism and functional view.	TPR and cognitive approach	Development of pre-reading skills Awareness of written language Favorable and harmonious group interaction.
11	Middle-class private school moving into bilingual education. Elementary students.	Client-centered approach	Language as discourse Students as communicators. Awareness of context	Constructivism and cognitive approach Will take into account socio-affective factors	Development of reading comprehension Awareness of learning through the written language Respect for each other.

Tesis	Context	Ap. Ed	Ap. Lg	Ap. Learn	Goals
12	Low-class elementary public school.	Not expressed here, but implicitly functional.	Functional because it is related to use.	Learning strategies: cognitive and affective ,	Development of motivation toward the learning of basic English Development of vocabulary to offer services. Development of learning strategies. Development of sense of belonging to the community.
13	Open non-formal language courses offered by a public university: mixed population: from university students to teenagers, professionals and high school students of intermediate level.	Client-centered	Language as skills to communicate.	To develop strategies. Development of procedural knowledge supported by skills.	Improvement of the four macro skills Development of cooperative learning. Development of value for pair work.
14	Intensive course for in-service teachers of public schools.	Not expressed, but implicitly functional.	Skills-centered	Skills based and learning – centered approaches	Development of oral skills Greater autonomy in learning Acceptance of diversity
15	Private middle-class secondary school moving into bilingual education.	Client-centered	Mainly functionalist	Cognitive approach and affective factors	Cooperative learning Respect others' opinion Develop reading comprehension Self-assessment
16	Non-formal level-one course offered by a public university to the general public	The functionalist model, liberatory and client-centered.	Communicative competence	Cognitive. Learning strategies (all) are (theoretically) important.	Development of oral skills Development of multiple intelligences Respect of differences
17	Private middle-class secondary school	Social constructivism	Communicative approach, authentic situations.	Cognitivism (p. 28) Communicative approach (p.28)	Development of writing skills Encouraging of planning, monitoring and self-correction Encouragement of cooperative work.
18	English language teaching program at a public university	The autonomous approach to education, evaluators of own learning	Communicative	Cognitive approach	To write essays To choose metacognitive strategies to enhance the improvement of the writing process To value other's point of view and tone in writing.

Tesis	Context	Ap. Ed	Ap. Lg	Ap. Learn	Goals
19	Traditional low class secondary school.	The formation of competent citizens who know the citizen values and apply them to create a new project of life in their context.	Develop confidence in the students through successful communication in the classroom without making emphasis on the structure of the language	Though he does not single out one, he recognizes the validity of several ways of seeing learning: strategy learning, like cognitive and cooperative.	Development of reading Development of reading strategies Self-assessment – be able to assess own progress
20	Non-credit course in a language center at a public university. Mostly second-year law students.	Humanism.	Communicative approach	Multiple intelligences	Improvement of oral skills Awareness of cooperative and autonomous learning Respect for others

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