

The perceptions of English teachers on English varieties & English language teaching and their implications on current ELT practices in public schools in Cali, Colombia

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Dedication

This Master's report is dedicated to my family. My father, Carlos Ignacio Castro who instill in me the importance and love for studying. My mother Silvia Victoria Lopez and my sisters Carolina and Andrea for their unconditional love and support. To Johann, for your endless understanding, encouragement, support and infinite love. To Siddhartha, for your calm and loving presence in my life.

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Abstract

English as a Foreign Language is still the preeminent model in English language teaching. However, the globalized world and reality faced by learners requires recognition, and assessment of new dynamics and models, as English as a Lingua Franca, that align better with the real use of English in the world and contexts in countries in Kachru's (1985) Expanding Circle, like Colombia. Even though, the Colombian Ministry of Education has developed different policies to promote English learning, these have shown little results and improvement in the language learning due to challenging and difficult learning and teaching conditions in public schools, as well as non-sensitive policies. The purpose of the present study was to inquire about the perceptions of public school English teachers on English varieties and English language teaching in order to identify and analyze their impact on their current English learning, teaching and evaluation practices in Cali, Colombia. This paper reports a research carried out with 17 Non-native English and non-English teachers who teach English in public schools in the city of Cali, Colombia. Results indicated that teachers perceive English from a 'standard' scope and this influences their teaching practices, students' motivations and learning processes, which means that the adoption of a model like ELF would require a deep and slow transformation of teachers' perceptions towards English and ELT, through a transformative teachers' training.

Key words: English varieties, English language teaching, English as a Lingua Franca English and Non-English teachers, perceptions, Standard Model.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

As interactions among English speakers have been redefined, due to the language's international status, one would assume that there has been a reevaluation of English language teaching dynamics and goals. However, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is still the preeminent model in English Language Teaching (ELT). This new reality, learners will face, requires acknowledgment, and assessment of new dynamics and models that align better with their context, especially in countries in Kachru's (1985) Expanding Circle. English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) has been construed as the best alternative of EFL, for being a sensible model that recognizes learners' context and motivations for communicating in English (Graddol, 2006; Jenkins, 2006a, b; Kirkpatrick, 2006; Seidlhofer, 2012).

A review of the literature reveals researchers have been interested in studying teacher's perspectives towards ELT and possible adoption of ELF framework. The research exposes that there is a negative perception towards ELF framework from teachers and students because they are still towards Native Speaker (NS) standard. There is also a low acceptance towards Non-native accents and other English varieties. (Young & Walsh, 2010, Coskun, 2011, Jenkins, 2007, Fauzia and Quismullah, 2009 and Mckay, 2003).

In Colombia English language teaching education and the different policies have been revised and modified multiple times in order to provide a better fit program for students to achieve the expected level. However, the ultimate learning goal for the students has always been a standardized native model. Traditionally, the teaching and learning of English in Colombia has been dominated "a representation of colonial, traditional, and central discourses in ELT" (González, 2007 p. 326) due to the long-established relationship between ELT in Colombia and dominant inner circle varieties of English. (Macias, 2010).

In 1996 The Ministerio de Educación Nacional (MEN) decided to promote the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language in Colombia. In 2004, the MEN created The National Bilingual Program, directed at offering the school students the opportunity of achieving a B1 level of proficiency in English at the end of their school years. These policies meant that all the students had to be taught English from elementary to high school. Furthermore, English teachers were set to have a C1 level. What the MEN did not consider was public schools' educational and challenging conditions and contexts. There is a deficiency of English teachers at the elementary level, they are usually Non-English teachers being asked to teach English; teachers' low language proficiency; limited class time (1 to 2 hours per week for English classes); almost no exposure to English; priority teachers give to other subjects because of official standardized exams and its results; and lack of spaces and resources. These distinct circumstances impact the teachers' convictions and perceptions about teaching English, their own role in the classroom, the nature of assessment and feedback, even the very use of English and its varieties inside and outside the classroom.

It was assumed from the beginning that ELF would provide ELT in Colombia, a more flexible, sensitive, realistic framework for teachers to be empowered and be part of transformative teaching and learning practices. The purpose of the present study is to inquire about the perceptions of public school English teachers on English varieties and English language teaching in order to identify the impact on their current English learning, teaching and evaluation practices in Cali, Colombia. The present study has two objectives. The first one is to identify the perceptions of Public school English teachers on English varieties and ELT, through the development of focus groups, a workshop, in-depth interviews and observations. The second one is to critically analyze the impact of the perceptions on current ELT practices in public schools in Cali.

Five main conclusions emerged. To start, English in public schools in Cali, Colombia is being approached by some teachers within a standard model, native-

like framework, which undermines students' needs context, reality and real use of the language in the world. Second, English is taught mainly through a strong emphasis on grammar, pronunciation and accuracy without results. Third, teachers low self-concept as English teachers have negative effects on their teaching practices and students' learning process. Fourth, there is low awareness and exposure to the real use of English in the world. Fifth, there is a need for English as a Lingua Franca transformative training programs to be designed, implemented and promoted to empower teachers and reconstruct their perceptions of ELT and English.

The study began with four observations from which this study emerged. In order to accomplish the two objectives of this study, focus groups were carried out with teachers from public schools. Given the challenges to carry out some focus groups, a workshop was also designed and carried out to gather data.

Chapter 2: Research Questions, General and Specific Objectives

What are the perceptions of public school English teachers on English varieties and English Language Teaching?

What are the implications of those perceptions on current ELT practices in public schools in Cali, Colombia?

General and Specific Objectives

General:

Describe the impact of the perceptions of English teachers on English varieties and English language teaching on current ELT practices in public schools in Cali.

Specific

Identify the perceptions of public school English teachers on English varieties and English language teaching.

Critically analyze the impact of those perceptions on current ELT practices in public schools in Cali.

Chapter 3: Background of the study and Literature Review

The following literature review analyzes some of the main principles underlying English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) and research performed on ELF and English teachers' perceptions. Subsequently, this literature review summarizes and outlines a basic framework of the nature and principles of English as a Lingua Franca. Furthermore, it reports and compares the findings from different research on ELF and English teachers' perceptions; in order to emphasize on the need to inquire about the perceptions of Public School English teachers on ELF and its impact on their current English teaching practice in Cali, Colombia.

Teaching Practices in EFL

The teaching practices in EFL are the visible plans carried out in the classroom that attest for an approach, how the teacher understands and conceives the nature of language and language learning; a method, the teachers' chosen blueprint to accomplish the language learning objectives; and the techniques, which are the activities, exercises developed in the classroom (Richards, 2014). Those approaches and methods have emerged and transformed through the years as a consequence of determined needs, learning goals and/or point in history. According to Richards (2014), 60% of the world's population is bilingual, and he argues that foreign language learning has been a practical concern throughout history.

English in a Globalized World

The world has experienced a globalized phenomenon for decades now, and even if people give it a negative or a positive connotation, it has brought much transformation in different areas. The rise and accelerated development of technology has made the phenomenon more real than ever. "Globalization involves reductions in barriers to Transworld social contacts. People become more able – physically, legally, linguistically,

culturally and psychologically – to engage with each other wherever on earth they might be” (Scholte, 2008, p. 11). Society has become globally interconnected, and as consequence, there was a need for a language to serve as communication bridge among all the languages, cultures, identities and economies of the world. English language found its place in that setting and was adopted as a tool for international understanding, in not only business, politics, science, technology but also for people to meet in common ground. English has become a world language, the language that is used in academics in general and in everyday life among people and organizations.

English as a Lingua Franca

The international status English holds nowadays implies that the interactions being held in English have shifted. Those interactions are no longer just between Native speaker-Native speaker or Native Speaker-Non-native speaker, but the majority of them are being held between NNS-NNS. Seidlhofer (2011) states that “far more people learning English today will be using it in international contexts rather than in just English Speaking ones” (p.17) and there is an “Unprecedented number of English learners around the world, a number that supersedes that of speakers of English” (Garcia, 2013, p. 114). According to Graddol (2006), NNS now outnumber native English speakers by 3 to one. For that reason, the majority of encounters in English take place between NNS. Therefore, it is imperative to reevaluate English Language Teaching dynamics as well as acknowledging, and assessing new dynamics, especially in countries in Kachru’s (1985) *Expanding Circle*.

ELF in the Classroom

Kirkpatrick (2006) acknowledges that governments, international language teaching organizations and even publishers are the ones making decisions about which model of English to learn and teach. English as a Second Language (ESOL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers have always established an unrealistic native

speaker standard for learners' competence and performance, which as Cenoz and Gorter (2013) assert, comes from a monolingual ideology that promotes for students and teachers to attempt to seek an almost impossible goal of acting as if they were native speakers of English. The classroom practice and experience in foreign language classrooms demonstrates that an unattainable goal such as the native standard carries many challenges and difficulties with it that are problematic for teachers to deal with. Cook (2001) recognizes that students who are learning English as a foreign language portray different characteristics from a native-speaker and the goal set for them in regards to language competence ought to be examined from a different perspective and not from the one used to describe an L1 learner. Graddol (2006) also asserts that EFL and ESL models have become inadequate nowadays when international mobility and communication are accessible to a larger amount of people and where the aim for learning English has shifted from the idea to become and acquire a native-like speaker model.

Graddol (2006), Jenkins (2006a, b), Seidlhofer (2011) and others insist on English as a Lingua Franca as an alternative to EFL. ELF as Firth (1996) defines it is "a 'contact language' between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is the chosen foreign language of communication" (p. 41). This perspective seems to align better with the globalized world and reality faced nowadays by the world citizens. Kirkpatrick (2006) also favors the Lingua Franca model, as the most sensible model, that recognizes learners' context and motive for communicating in English. However, the author emphasizes on the need to provide a better and clearer description of what ELF is and entails to offer teachers and learners an appropriate alternative. Thinking about adopting an international framework denotes the adoption of many transformations, which might clash with the already established standard model in many countries of the expanding circle, like Colombia.

Those transformations should focus in the conception, design, delivery and assessment of English teaching programs. According to Seidlhofer (2011), the focus

should be shifted from learning a language to learning to *language*, i.e. teaching students and providing them with strategies, as the ones mentioned by Garcia (2013) negotiate communication, accommodate themselves linguistically to interlocutors, and portray linguistic solidarity as well as exploiting non-linguistic resources, to communicate effectively in English with other NNS. The work done specially by Jenkins (2007) and Seidlhofer (2011) gives some general features and core as a starting point to conceiving ELF. However, they argue that their work does not aim to replace a standard with another standard but to present an alternative for speakers and teachers to have in order to decide which model suits them best.

ELF signals some linguistic features, which are relevant and common to international speakers of English. As Jenkins (2006b) states, the LFC (Lingua Franca Core) should not be regarded by NNS in the Expanding Circle, as a model but as a 'core' that identifies features for *international intelligibility*, with their accents and regional features that encourage "local identity and sociolinguistic appropriacy" (p. 38). This is complemented with Kramsch (2013) understanding that language learners learn who they are through their encounter with the other and that cultural and personal identity do not precede the encounter with a foreign other, but rather they are constructed through the obligation to respond to that other, through dialogue. In this regard, Paige et al. (2000) acknowledge that for learners to move towards the development of intercultural competence, they should learn and practice different learning strategies that vary from reflective to active learning starting from the learning about the self as a cultural being and recognizing others.

In contrast to ELF, Bruthiaux (2010) argues and questions that 80% of learners are immersed in contexts where English is neither used nor required and students have very low levels of proficiency. (Cited in Garcia, 2013, p. 123). He also debates that adopting English as an International model in ELF settings is not valid due to challenges in the educational context, limited class time, almost no exposure to the target language and ill-trained teachers. He insists that under those conditions a more stable model, as the native-standard, that facilitates learning and teaching is needed. Even though, most

circumstances that surround English teaching and learning in EFL settings are adverse, a stable standard model in countries of the expanding circle has not seem to have shown much development in students learning of English, and a need to provide an alternative to policy makers, academics, teachers and most of all students is imperative.

ELF and Teachers' perceptions

New alternatives need to be explored, researched and experimented with in addition to the standard one already established for many years. ELF seems to encompass to some extent the world's and EFL settings reality. Not much work and literature is found against ELF, however one of its main challenges is the "negative" perception from teachers and students. Different research has been done on the area. Studies regarding teachers perception on ELF, accents and varieties carried out by Young & Walsh (2010), Coskun (2011), Jenkins (2007), Fauzia and Quismullah (2009) and Mckay(2003) shed similar outcomes. The researchers suggest that teachers are not aware of the variety or varieties of English they had learnt; nor the variety they teach. However, most of them report to be teaching something that resembles *American English*. English teachers explicitly indicate their aspiration to teach a standard variety. Teachers also perceived ELF as "conceptually attractive" (Jenkins, 2007, p. 135) but question its implementation in the classroom. The authors confirm that teachers are aware of the sort of communication being held around the world in English, mainly between non-native-speaker and non-native speakers. The findings also expose that teachers see intelligibility as a clear goal for learning and teaching English pronunciation.

Nonetheless, teachers assume and connect intelligible English with Native speaker pronunciation. Therefore, teachers showed a low acceptance towards non-native accents and other English varieties to teach or as content for pronunciation books. The participants teachers admit mixed attitudes towards their English accents. According to Jenkins (2007), those conflicting attitudes derive from beliefs about Native Speakers and Non-native speakers' English accents which in summary were "NS

English accent is 'good' and NNS 'bad' ” (p. 209). Teachers' perspectives are still towards NS standard and even though they have inconsistent feelings towards ELF, the findings shed a light on the fact that teachers might consider an ELF perspective only if they believed that ELF is perceived positively in the wider-English speaking context and that if ELF accents were to enhance their success rather than segregate them. Jenkins (2009) believes that the inconsistent attitudes reveal that ELF is being thought of by NNS teachers who know about it.

ELF In Colombia

Although, there has been quite an amount of work in ELF and teachers perspectives towards it. In Colombia, the discussion is still just that a discussion. González (2007) questions the professional development program for English teachers established by the Ministry of Education in Colombia by stating that it “is a representation of colonial, traditional, and central discourses in ELT” (p. 326) due to the choice of method, proficiency exam, framework it follows. She criticizes the leading role of the British Council in the National policy that favors a native-speaker inner circle variety of English. Furthermore, she asserts that that approach conceals the creation of a local language policy that fits the diversity of Colombia's context and educational needs. That is why she insists on the need to develop and construct a new and different approach to the English teachers' development programs, based on local ELT discourses and designed by Colombian ELT academics and teachers. However, these conclusions have emerged from the analysis of documents and statistics but not by inquiring about teachers whom at the end are the ones making the decision towards their teaching practice.

Macías (2010) endorses “the need to disassociate the long-established relationship between ELT in Colombia and the dominant Inner Circle varieties of English” (p.183). According to Macias (2010), this new perspective would empower English teachers and policy makers in Colombia to construct a local method or methods, materials, syllabus, programs, and curriculums that are suitable for their students'

culture, goals and attributes, lowering the unattainable goal set by the concept of standard Native English. What is true from the analysis and English learning education in Colombia is that the results from the PNB are not what academics expected and because of this the program has been modified multiple times in order to provide a better fit program for students to achieve the expected level. However, the ultimate learning goal for the students has always been a standardized native model. This creates the need to inquiry about Colombian English teachers' perceptions on ELT within an ELF framework and its possible impact on their current English teaching practice.

To conclude, According to Sifakis (2007) and Jenkins (2006a) What ELF research has shown is that EFL teachers have particular deep-rooted convictions about teaching English and that those convictions influence their perceptions about their own role in the classroom, the nature of assessment and feedback, even the very use of English inside and outside the classroom. As the research showed those convictions move towards the teaching of a native-like variety, which undermines students' needs context and reality. The understanding of the underlying perceptions of Public School English teachers on ELF aspects and their impact on their current English teaching practice in Cali, Colombia might imply re-thinking English Language Teaching and Learning in Colombia.

Chapter 4: Methodology

Context

This study took place in Cali, Colombia, which is the third largest city in Colombia with 2'401.000 inhabitants¹. The participants for this research study were teachers who teach English in public elementary and high schools. There are over 91 public schools in the educational system of the city. Some of these public schools are located in marginalized areas. A large part of the population relies on the public educational system, which is managed by The Municipal Secretary of Education. There are over 3.000 students and around six English teachers, in the largest institutions. However, smaller institutions normally have just one or two English teachers.

Given that most of the schools are located in marginalized areas, teachers have to deal with different and difficult situations. Usually they prioritize those difficulties and some other subjects as Math and Spanish, that is why English is usually not paid as much attention to, with exception of around 29 focalized schools that are provided with various programs to strengthen their language competence. Most public institutions assign limited class time for English classes, from 1 to 2 hours per week to English classes, which restrains the exposure to the language and its linguistic varieties.

Furthermore, English teachers in high schools have bachelor's degrees for the teaching of English, yet teachers in elementary schools are not trained in ELT but are required to teach by the government and its public policies. According to the results from the Masterful English Program most teachers' language proficiency is basic. These circumstances influence the teachers' convictions and perceptions about teaching English, their own role in the classroom, the nature of assessment and feedback, even the very use of English and its varieties inside and outside the classroom.

¹ According Census in 2014 carried out by DANE.

Data Collection Process

A qualitative approach was proposed to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations. It will help provide insights into the problem and uncover trends in thought and perception.

This study involved four stages and three data collection instruments were used.

Stage I: Access to the Field

This stage will be divided in three steps.

Familiarizing with the school setting:

This first step was attained during the systematization of a program which consisted on teaching the didactics and pedagogy of English and worked at improving Public school teachers English teachers and Non-English teachers' English level. It was carried out in 2015 and 2016 at a private higher education private institution. During the first step, the 20 institutions that participated in the program were contacted and I became acquainted with the work environment and context of the participants.

Ethical issues:

Due to the nature of the research study, two ethical issues, consent and confidentiality, needed to be considered. According to Corti, Day and Backhouse (2000) "This implies a responsibility to explain fully and meaningfully what the research is about and how it will be disseminated. Participants should be aware of their right to refuse to participate; understand the extent to which confidentiality will be maintained; be aware of the potential uses to which the data might be put; and in some cases be reminded of their right to re-negotiate consent" (part 2.1 para 1). A formal consent form was written to be given and signed by the participating Public school English teachers. (See appendix 1).

Sample:

The last step for this stage was the selection of the sample (participants). To ensure that this sample was credible, and covered the main groups with the

characteristics I wanted to explore. The participants were selected to document diverse variations that could help identify common patterns that cut across variables. The strategy chosen is a maximum variation sample, which according to Patton (1990) “for purposeful sampling aims at capturing and describing the central themes or principal outcomes that cut across a great deal of participant or program variation” (p.172)

17 participants were selected based on two variables; the first variable is profile: different age range, gender, degree (English major or not, masters or not). The second one encompasses Institutions: location of the institution, high school or elementary school.

Stage II: Design of the Research

In this study, focus groups and individual in-depth interviews were originally meant to be used to inquire the participants’ perceptions towards English varieties and ELT. Nonetheless, as the data collection process unfolded many challenges arose to have participants participate in focus groups, due to time constraints and unwillingness to take part in research projects in fear of their participation affecting their work environment, in that regards the necessary changes were made and the instruments used were observations, focus groups and theoretical-practical workshop which fully covered the information required to identify their perceptions and beliefs..

Stage III: Data Collection

The data for this study was collected using three main instruments, classroom observation, in group semi-structured interviews, as well as a theoretical-practical workshop.

This study involved 17 teachers from public schools. Their ages ranged between their 30’s and 60’s. They came from different public schools in Cali, 6 are currently teaching in high school and 11 in elementary school. All of them had completed a university degree in Pedagogy in different fields (Math, basic education, and others). 3 were *licenciados* in Languages. 11 are studying a Masters, 6 are studying a Masters in TEFL and 5 in Education at Icesi University. It is important to mention that the Masters

in TEFL has 2 courses which focus directly on ELF, at the time of the study the 6 students studying this Masters had taken one of the courses. 6 of them attended the Masterful English program developed at Icesi University during 2015 and 2016. All of them are required to teach English at their institutions. However, the 11 teachers from elementary schools are non-English teachers and are required to teach all the subjects to their students as it is requested by the ministry of education.

6 participants are familiar with the subject of English as a lingua franca framework as they took a course on it in their masters. Still, the questions did not refer directly to the concept of ELF, considering the teachers' background. The focus groups and the workshop was done in the participants L1, Spanish to avoid any misunderstanding or miscommunication with the language.

Observations and interviews:

The classroom observations and in-depth interviews that took place during the teachers' training program in 2017, motivated this study. 4 observations and in-depth interviews from the systematization were used as part of the data collection of this study. I visited and accompanied the four teachers, in their institutions to explore their daily practice and to identify the meaningful transformations and changes in the classroom, after the program took place.

The observation was an essential part in this study since, as Bricki and Green (2007) assure is very useful in overcoming discrepancies between what people say and what they actually do and might help uncover behavior of which the participants themselves may not be aware. The observations gave somewhat of an account for the impact and influence teachers' perceptions have on their teaching practices, which according to Sifakis (2007) and Jenkins (2006a), EFL teachers have a particular deep-rooted convictions about teaching English and those convictions influence their perceptions about their own role in the classroom, the nature of assessment and feedback, even the very use of English inside and outside the classroom.

Focus groups:

A focus group “focuses on understanding *how* human beings experience their world. It gives researchers the opportunity to put themselves in another person’s shoes and to understand the subjective experiences of participants” (Sutton, & Austin, 2015, Introduction para.2). Two-one-hour focus group discussions were carried out at Icesi University. The chosen place was Icesi University because it provided spaces, which are equipped to carry out this type of studies and at the same time record them. As mentioned before, putting together focus groups was a challenge, especially due to logistics and teachers unwillingness to meet outside their work hours and having to go to the University. That is why the 2 focus groups were made up of 4 teachers that are currently studying a Masters at Icesi University, in order to fight the challenges face and have willing and pleased participants. One group had 1 teacher that is not studying a Masters and participated voluntarily in the focus group.

An interview schedule was designed. (See appendix 2). Bricky and Green (2007) state that an interview schedule is “a list of the key questions the interviewer would like to cover, with some useful prompts to encourage the interviewee to talk about specific issues if they do not come up spontaneously”. Before the actual administration of the interview schedule, it was piloted with 2 English teachers, one from high school and one from elementary school. The pilot helped me create initial categories and reduce the number of questions in the interview schedule. In addition, a new aspect that was not considered in the initial interview schedule came up and was included for the actual focus groups.

Every focus group started with opening questions in order to set up a much more relax environment among the participants who were present at the time. The focus group continued with a group of general perceptions and beliefs questions to find out what interviewees thought about English and the teaching of English in Public schools, which would aid to start identifying the place they give to the English class and the underlying perception for the selection and use of different teaching methods and materials. Finally, the questions focused on teachers’ identification and attitudes

towards Englishes and accents, two audios that included a Non-native Speaker and Native-speaker were played and teachers discussed different essential aspects that are considered in an ELF framework, their attitude and opinions about the English being used, the people speaking, and the accent. The groups ended with a formal farewell and a deep sincere thank you snack.

The interaction between people and the analysis was done at the group level rather than the individual because common perceptions could emerge. The second focus group allowed to add to, revise or expand on the first group's responses.

Theoretical-Practical workshop:

As an alternative to the focus groups, and given the difficulty to bring together the participants, I decided to design a workshop that allowed me to gather teachers' reflections about their perceptions and practice of teaching English in public schools and provide tools that will help enhance teachers' awareness of effective oracy strategies they can promote in class. I created a booklet (See appendix 3) where the teachers recorded the reflections about what it meant for them to be English teachers in public schools; how they defined their English students; what teachers considered were the motivations students have and will have for studying English; what the objectives of their classes were; what materials are used and what their perceptions towards the same two audios played for the focus groups were.

The workshop was approached informally to make the respondents feel free from pressure of expressing their ideas and feelings. At the end of the workshop, I took the reflection part of their booklets.

Stage IV: Data Analysis

The final stage was done through a thematic analysis method and triangulation of the data. Taking into consideration the nature of perceptions, and Bricki and Green (2007) affirmations, "thematic analysis will help look across all the data to identify the common issues that recur, and identify the main themes that summarize all the views collected" (p.23).

As this study was related to perceptions towards English varieties and ELF aspects, a definition of the concept perception was needed to provide a theoretical background for the study. According to, Lindsay and Norman (2013) “Perception is the process by which we interpret the world around us, forming a mental representation of the environment. This representation is not isomorphic to the world, but it's subject to many correspondence differences and errors. The brain makes assumptions about the world to overcome the inherent ambiguity in all sensory data, and in response to the task at hand” (P. 17).

The focus groups were audio-recorded and the relevant pieces of information were transcribed and translated. Likewise, the relevant pieces of information from the workshop's booklets were also transcribed to give support to the findings. The observations were registered using a log, to describe step by step what unfolds in the classroom. There were initial categories that emerged from the literature review, the pilot and the first data collected.

As suggested by Braun and Clarke (2012), the first phase for the thematic analysis involved reading and re-reading textual data and listening to audio-recordings. While reading and listening, I made notes, highlighted potentially important data, and made comments. This phase helped me familiarize with the data collected, and to start pinpointing relevant data aspects. This phase shed a pre-coding structure.

Afterwards, I began coding. According to Braun and Clarke (2012) “Codes identify and provide a label for a feature of the data that is potentially relevant to the research question” (p.7) I coded by hand, using word and an excel file to organize the collated data. This phase was followed by uncovering themes which “captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of *patterned* response or meaning within the data set”(Braun and Clarke,2012, p. 9). In this phase, I re-examined the coded data to find similarities and overlapping codes as well as possible relationships among themes. Additionally, as Braun and Clarke (2012) state, “this phase involves selecting extracts to present/analyze and then setting out the ‘story’ of each theme with or around these” (p. 12).

Likewise, Triangulation helped deliberately to describe, relate, analyze and seek evidence from the different sources, focus groups, workshop and observations and compare their findings (p.27). These methods helped me understand teachers' perceptions on English varieties and ELT and to gain insight of their attitudes and beliefs.

Chapter 5: Research Findings and Analysis

As previously mentioned, this study involved different phases in which a total of 17 teachers from public schools in Cali approved to participate in observations, focus groups and a theoretical-practical workshop. These included questions related to the perceptions of the teachers in regards to what it is for them to be an English teacher, their perceptions of English and English teaching in their context and their perceptions towards some ELF's aspects.

The four themes identified will be described and analyzed in this section in order to provide a detailed picture on how English teachers and Non-English teachers perceive themselves, their students, the teaching practice and some ELF's aspects.

1. English and Non-English teachers low self-concept as English teachers

1.1 They perceive that specialized training is imperative to teach English in public schools.

During the workshop and focus groups teachers were asked to describe how they would define an English teacher who works in a Public school in Cali, Colombia, and what qualities they should have. As mentioned in the participants' description the teachers confirmed that English teachers in high school are usually specialized in the area, but most if not all elementary school teachers are not. One high school teacher who attended the workshop and who is a *lincenciada* in languages, wrote in her reflection:

“an elementary English teacher are not training for teach English in their schools.”

Teachers question their own preparation and insist on the need for English teachers to be academically prepared to be able to satisfy students' needs. Some teachers even mentioned that an English teacher *must be licenciado* and have a B2 level. It is important to mention here that according to Colombian Bilingual policies,

English teachers are required to have a B2 level according to the Common European framework to be able to teach English. Nonetheless, according to teachers' account most of them don't comply with this requirement. This initial perception advocates Bruthiaux's (2010) arguments that state that the adoption of English as an International model in ELF settings is not valid due, among other aspects ill-trained teachers. He insists that under those conditions a *more stable model*, as the native-standard is needed, leaving a smaller room to consider ELF framework.

Notwithstanding, as mentioned in the literature review despite the fact that the teaching and learning situations and contexts of English teaching and learning in public schools in Cali, are disadvantageous, the EFL standard model established in Colombia for many years has not shown much progress towards the learning of the language. In that regard, other models should be explored, studied and built up from.

Additionally, teachers also used adjectives such as dedicated, innovative, creative, enthusiastic, perfectionist, have continuous training and researcher to list the qualities an English teacher should have. Nonetheless, they were not usually very positive about their English level and showed concern in regards to what and how they were teaching their students and the lack of continuity with the little they achieve.

“yo hago todo este esfuerzo que no nos gusta que no lo manejo trato de esforzar a los chicos que lleguen a un nivelcito pues más... pero cuando pasen a la compañera... ahí se perdió todo....”

²[I make a huge effort for something that I don't like or even know how to teach, but I make the effort for students to reach a certain level.... But when they move on to another teacher... everything is lost]

Most of the comments and opinions about being an English teacher in a public school were made in third person and not in first person, which indicates how most of them, especially elementary school teachers do not identify themselves as English

² Author's own translation March 29th, 2018.

teachers and have a difficult time coping with the idea of having to teach a subject they do not specialized in. They do not feel qualified and consider they are being forced to teach a subject for which they don't have the level or the training. One adjective used repeatedly was "recursivo", "resourceful"³. This reveals once more two important points, first that teachers are doing what they can with what they have and know and second that they are not well-trained and their teaching practice could be affecting their students.

"Nosotros somos los profesores toderos...que yo creo que es la gran debilidad de la educación pública en primaria nosotros damos todo... si eso se modifica yo creo que alcanzaríamos a dar la calidad que el gobierno nos está exigiendo..."

⁴[We are the *toderos* teachers... I think that is the great weakness of public education especially in Elementary school we teach everything... if that is modified I think we could achieve the quality the government is asking us for].

According to Mercer, S. (2012), a person's self-concept is composed of complex interrelated beliefs, which are very important in successful and effective language learning, self-efficacy, self-confidence. In that regards teachers having low self-concepts as English teachers, could arise from their individual comparison of their self-concept with other such as their ideal-self or in this case "ideal speaker" which later on is revealed that it is the 'native speaker (Mercer, 2012). In the path to close that self-concept gap they lose sight and end up being frustrated and believing to have a low ability. Likewise, many internal and external factors as contextual nature, demands, and expectations strongly influence that low self-concept. In a scenario like this, teachers could slowly develop a sense of confidence and progress within an environment that provides them with tools and reflections that makes them become aware of the misconceptions and allows them to construct a strong self-concept and identity as English teachers in Colombia and in public schools. Adopting

³ Author's own translation March 29th, 2018.

⁴ Author's own translation March 31st, 2018.

and adapting an ELF framework could eventually help to the construction of teachers' self-concept.

Even though, there seems to be a negative atmosphere and attitude of English teachers and non-English teachers towards English, the adjective used repeatedly "resourceful" aligns with the qualities an ELF teacher should have to be able to plan, prepare and design classes and courses. *Resourceful* is a first step to help teachers through a "transformative learning program" similar to what was proposed by Sifakis (2007) to develop a set of skills and qualities that transform them as teachers and as consequence their teaching practices.

To sum up, the collected data shows that, even though all teachers are asked to teach English by the government and institutions, most of them are not prepared, motivated or comfortable to teach it, since they don't feel well prepared and have a low self-concept of themselves as English teachers. They do recognize some important traits an English teacher ought to have like dedication, innovation, flexibility, creative, enthusiasm; however it seems as if it were far-reaching to them. Nonetheless, considering most teachers unique condition of being Non-English teachers teaching English, I believe that there is a positive disposition towards professional development and improvement of their competence.

Because of this one could assume that, empowering public school teachers in Cali, to become aware that English belongs to nonnative speakers, will most likely help them to see their non-nativeness as an advantage and a source of confidence, not insecurity (Seidlhofer, 1999 cited in Majanen, 2008). As stated by Majanen (2008) ELF provides an additional, more attractive identity option to nonnative teachers, without the burden of becoming proficient at some not contextualized aspects of native speaker competence.

1.2 English teachers perceived self-concept affects and impacts students

Teachers are naturally those who influence English learners most. Consequently, it is important to know what exactly is the information they are passing to the future users of English (Majanen, 2008 p. 28). During the workshop and focus groups teachers were asked to define their English students. All the accounts described are indeed the teachers' perceptions of their students and their motivations to learn English now and in the future.

The perceptions described by teachers indicated that most students from the public sector are "apaticos", "apathic"⁵ towards English. Teachers mentioned a lack of motivation because of the lack of resources and time for the English class. A teacher even went to blame some teachers' practices for the loss of enthusiasm of some students in the English class.

"A student is a person who wants to know English especially in sixth grade but, then, they lost their enthusiasm. I think maybe for teacher's teaching."

This lack of enthusiasm might account for what most of the literature shows and what Cook (2001) recognizes, that students who are learning English as a foreign language portray different characteristics from a native-speaker and the goal set for them in regards to language competence ought to be examined from a different perspective and not from the one used to describe an L1 learner.

As students are directly benefited or affected by teachers teaching practice, if teachers as expressed before are not comfortable or completely competent in their day to day practice, students will definitely perceive that insecurity and feed from it. Most likely creating negativity towards the language.

Teachers agree on the fact that elementary school students like and enjoy their classes since it generates curiosity in them and emphasize that high school students have a more difficult time finding the motivation for the class. This

⁵ Author's own translation March 29th, 2018

perception contradicts somehow to the fact that in elementary school, teachers are Non-English teachers and high school teachers are. In the observations, I could observe that mainly elementary school teachers who participated in the Masterful English program, which was aim principally to elementary teachers, were trying to apply the strategies, tools, techniques learnt in the program. In the class, children were excited and motivated with the activities carried out. Consequently, the participation in meaningful and well-designed teachers training does transform the classroom and directly impacts students positively.

According to the teachers' comments, the majority of students have internet access from home or public computer. This aspect obliges that the teacher becomes almost always the only English model students have. Furthermore, teachers stated that students are not asked to buy textbooks or dictionaries, they are only asked to have an English notebook. I will analyze this condition in another section.

There was an important point mentioned by one of the teachers that is students' lack of competence of writing in Spanish, which could make it difficult for them to even write in another language. Cognitive aspects like this one are not usually taken into consideration by policy makers.

“Si por ejemplo le parece al niño mortificante el hecho de la escritura en español, pues más mortificante en inglés. Porque si en español uno le pone una palabra y el la escribe como la escucha porque así mismo hace en Español....”

⁶[For example, if the child finds it mortifying writing in Spanish writing in English is even more mortifying. If in Spanish students write a word as they hear it they will do the same in English]

Many authors have discussed how early or late children should start learning English. Studies have shown mixed findings towards the widely-known belief that children should be exposed to the learning of English as a foreign language as early

⁶ Author's own translation March 31st, 2018.

as possible. Professor Simpson in her article When Should "Bilingual"⁷ Schools in Colombia start Instruction in the Foreign Language? (1997) thoroughly outlines support ideas as to why Bilingual schools in Colombia should begin instruction in Spanish, to first allow children to develop a *threshold level of competence* (Cummins, 1979 cited in Simpson, 1997) in the first language and when children are around 8 years old begin instruction in foreign language. As the author states this will allow for the knowledge to be transferred into the L2, making learning more efficient than for a child who has not developed those skills through education. If the framework explained above is so for Bilingual schools in Colombia, the same principles should be considered for public schools also given the deficient conditions teachers and students face and the fact that as teachers state students are not even competent yet in their L1.

English teachers perceived self-concept, chosen methodology, attitude and knowledge about language learning affect and impact students directly, positively or negatively. Unfortunately, as the study shows more negative than positive impact is caused in public schools in Cali, Colombia. The development of a local and strong non-native teachers' identity and self-concept through ELF, along with well-structured and thought about state policies which are aware of the language learning individual and social factors, will also have a positive direct impact in students and their language learning process.

2. Teachers' perceive students' motivations for Learning English as unclear

When asked about what they believed were students' motivations to learn a language now or in the future, most thoughts expressed by teachers were assumptions since they expressed students do not usually voice their motivations.

⁷ "In these schools, language is taught not only in language classes, but also through content area instruction in the foreign language. The purpose of these schools is to teach students the language and cultural aspects of people who speak the language as their mother tongue." (Simpson, 1997 p. 33)

As mentioned by teachers the students come from a low social strata and do not have direct contact with the language. Teachers mentioned that some of them do have family members in the United States, but do not actually use this aspect as motivation. This could be because either they communicate with them in Spanish or students do not even consider the possibility of travelling there someday.

Teachers also agreed that students just take the English class because is part of their school curriculum but do not find any purpose for it. They are emphatic when they indicate that some of the students even have a difficult time envisioning their future as to studying in a university or traveling abroad. They see themselves finding a job that helps them with money to survive, which makes English non-useful for them.

“por el contexto cultural, incluso no se visualizan como profesionales... casi siempre son oficios...” “un obstáculo muy común fue en mi casa no hay plata para estudiar....no vinculan a estas aspiraciones con el inglés, no hay motivación de que voy aprender inglés PARA ser un profesional PARA estudiar en la Universidad No ellos no lo ven de esta manera...”

⁸[Due to their cultural context, they don't even visualize themselves as professionals....almost always they talk about practical jobs...] [A very common obstacle is the lack of money to study.... They do not associate those aspirations with English, there is no motivation to learn English TO BE a professional or TO study in the university, NO they don't see it that way...]

Some teachers do comment and consider that English is important for any student because in the working world it is necessary to speak a second language. Nonetheless, there is little research done to support this widely-spread belief, and a study should be done to determine the actual reasons why Colombians should study English, to have stronger arguments to present to students. “English is largely seen as a skill for greater employability, regardless of whether English is actually used or necessary in the workplace” (British Council, 2015 p. 58). Teachers mention that

⁸ Author's own translation March 31st, 2018.

there is a need to do an extra social work with students' parents to have them understand the importance of English for their children' future studies.

Other teachers express that some students are motivated to learn English to watch and understand videos or the music they like. Teachers recognize that some students:

“Les gusta.... Para chicanear o para ver películas en inglés y videos.”

⁹[They like it..... to show off or to watch movies or videos in English]

As to motivate students to learn English a teacher talks to them about successful soccer players that speak different languages. However, there is no evidence of using those same successful soccer players as models and as input for their classes.

“Hasta los grandes jugadores manejan diferentes idiomas”.

¹⁰[Even the great soccer player speak different languages].

Out of this information, it is possible to claim that students in public schools are not motivated to learn and use English beyond the classroom. One of the reasons could be the little exposure to the target language, which does not allow them to construct motivation towards the language and the spaces provided for learning English in the institutions, do not usually have internet access or technological devices to support the teachers' teaching practices and learners' learning processes. Additionally, motivations change from elementary to high school and even between each grade. Teachers have a marathon job to motivate students through the classes, nevertheless due to the lack of intrinsic motivation very little is achieved. Students' difficult social context influence the way they see education. As mentioned before in these contexts students do not see English as useful, and finishing school is not a goal for them. Their immediate need is to earn money and

⁹ Author's own translation March 31st, 2018.

¹⁰ Author's own translation March 31st, 2018.

help their families. They usually look for operational jobs which just require basic education or sometimes none.

Even though teachers attempt to illustrate the importance of learning English to students, their approach could be improved by bringing English down to their context, and showing them how close it can be to them. With the accessibility to technology a teacher can find very good bilingual models to which students can actually relate. Models which come from their own context and who attain an authentic English competence, which allows them to communicate and interact in English in an international scenario.

As one of the world languages, English is considered and applied as an international language. Therefore, it is very popular and has been spoken and learnt by almost all peoples in the world. There are many reasons why English is widely believed to be important and many people attempt to learn it in Colombia. Some of these reasons and even misconceptions are finding job, traveling, interacting with each other, doing business, taking examination, doing research, writing in the foreign language, etc. This links to the stated aim of the National Bilingual Programme, which conceive “English as a means of attaining competitiveness and global development” (De Mejia, 2011 p. 13). As mention by De Mejia (2011) this an instrumentalized vision of language learning which is a narrowed view that directly influences the teaching and learning of the language.

A flexible ELF framework, could aid broaden the view and allow space to focus more on the second aspect discussed in the National Bilingual programme. This one states that there is also a goal to promote the learning of English to “open their minds and accept and understand new cultures and promote interchange between different societies” (MEN 2006b: 9 Cited in De Mejia, 2011 p.7). This view actually recognizes implicitly the idea of an international scenario where English is used as the language for communication regardless of their non-native nature.

Allowing this course to filter through the Bilingual education system in Colombia could help transform and actually shape students and teachers' motivations and ideas of why to learn English in our *Extended Circle* context.

3. Teaching Practices perceived from a traditional and Native-standard view

During The first part of the study, the observations, different teaching practices were identified and later established in what the teachers expressed during the workshop and focus groups.

Teachers affirmed that their objectives were aligned with the planes de aula. In the observations it was observed and confirmed that teachers were working lined up with the *Estandares para la Enseñanza de ingles* given by the government. Most of the activities focused on the segment established for Beginners, A1. Additionally, teachers often presented, drill and reinforce common commands and greetings. As stated in the *Sistematizacion Masterful English* booklet (2017), from the teachers that participated in the Masterful English program and the classes observed the authors affirmed that in almost all the classes observed there was at least a 40% used of English by the teachers to develop the class. In most classes observed teachers used videos with children' chants to practice vocabulary and commands. The videos used had a neutral English and not a marked or specific variety was identified, they were slowed paced and TPR was used in them. Even though, ELF advocates do not call for avoiding English Native-standard models or English RP, they do acknowledge that not exposing students to different accents and varieties will make international communication interactions more difficult for them. The advocates call for the training of students' ears to be tolerant with the varieties and different accent the might face.

In the focus groups and workshop some teachers also asserted to use videos and songs in their classes. When asked on how those videos were chosen, the

answers were more towards what the topic was and if it were going to be clear or easy to understand for their students.

“se escogen videos claros”

¹¹[Understandable videos are chosen]

Once more they did not refer at this point to a specific variety or accent of English, which can be because of lack of awareness of the existence of different varieties or thinking that British and American English are the Englishness in the world. Some elementary school teachers mentioned that due to lack of resources (computer, radio, etc.) they did not use videos or songs in their classes, instead they use short texts, flashcards, and worksheets as input. Notwithstanding, intelligibility is not mentioned, it is actually considered by teachers when choosing videos or audios for their classes, which aligns with one of ELF's goal “international intelligibility” (Jenkins, 2006b).

Despite the fact that teachers “try to” work along the lines of the Estandares established by the government, teachers were empathetic to the fact that they don't feel the Estandares and policies given are appropriate for their context and students profiles. One of the teachers who participated in the focus groups, mentioned a program led by the government where a foreigner came to support their English classes, however those foreigners were not teachers and sometimes it meant a bigger bargain for teachers instead of support. This is a big issue, because Colombia Non-native English teachers cannot provide the Standard model asked by the National Bilingual program, and the Native teachers' brought, who could provide it, are not qualified as language teachers. Even knowing this reality there is usually a preference for native-speakers of English to teach the language despite them not being trained for it.

Authors as González (2007) and Macias (2010) question the professional development programs for English teachers established by the Ministry of Education

¹¹ Author's own translation March 31st, 2018.

in Colombia through the years. Gonzalez (2007) states that it “is a representation of colonial, traditional, and central discourses in ELT” (p. 326). They criticize the prominent role of the British Council in the National policy that favors and enforces a native-speaker inner circle variety of English in English language teaching and learning. In agreement with these authors, a disassociation between ELT in Colombia and inner circle varieties must happen to enable English teachers and Policy makers to build up an English national program that emerges from local language and suits Colombia’s culture, context, students, goals, and educational needs. Moving away from the unattainable idea set by the concept of Standard Native English.

3.1 Teachers perceive the need to Emphasize on Pronunciation Teaching

From the teachers’ opinion and observations it can be said that there is a focus on a sentence level and most classes evolve around vocabulary and pronunciation. Students usually replicate the sentences given by the teacher even written or orally.

“que los estudiantes entiendan y aprendan a pronunciar....el inglés”

¹²[For students to understand and to learn to pronounce in English].

The aforementioned give evidence of teachers’ lack of awareness, or perhaps training, on new methods and approaches Language Learning has developed. There is still a focus towards accuracy and not communication. Within an ELF framework the focus shifts and it allows teachers and students to use, experiment, and be creative with the language more freely. As mentioned before in the literature review, Seidlhofer (2011), assures that the focus should be shifted from learning a language to learning to *language*, i.e. teaching students and providing them with strategies as negotiating communication, accommodating themselves linguistically to

¹² Author’s own translation March 31st, 2018.

interlocutors, and portraying linguistic solidarity as well as exploiting non-linguistic resources, to communicate effectively in English with other NNS (Garcia,2013).

During the observations, it was evidenced that teachers were the English models in the class, any pronunciation correction was done by them and students trusted their teachers with this aspects. Nonetheless, most teachers struggle with this aspect the most and gave inappropriate pronunciation to students.

“En ese momento el docente refuerza la pronunciación. Los estudiantes trataban de imitar esta pronunciación. El docente se mostró un poco inseguro cuando pronunciaba las partes de la cara, es por esto que se cometieron dos errores de pronunciación; “cheeks” se pronunció [tʃek 'k s] y “chin” ['tʃa jn].” Observation Journal entry.

¹³[at that moment the teacher reinforces pronunciation and the students tried to imitate the teachers pronunciation. The teacher seemed a little bit insecure when pronouncing the parts of the face, and indeed he made to pronunciation mistakes; “cheeks” was pronounced [tʃek 'k s] and “chin” ['tʃa jn].” Observation Journal entry.

Similarly, in the focus groups and workshop teachers repeated the need to focus and emphasize on pronunciation in their classes, it seemed they were mostly concerned to make sure that students were able to pronounce different words in isolation. Some teachers expressed that sometimes they used google translator or WordReference to check for pronunciation, when they did not feel comfortable pronouncing the word. I would like to highlight here that teachers used their body and gestures to communicate with the students. That corroborates what the teachers said before about being *resourceful*. What's more, using and learning about paralinguistic features are important for students to have more resources to communicate with other Non-native speakers of English.

The emphasis made in pronunciation deviates somewhat to the idea of intelligibility and communication. They are encouraging the students to perfect their pronunciation which can cause students not to participate in fear of making mistakes and once more as an unattainable goal. Pronunciation is important but all the focus

¹³ Author's own translation March 28th, 2018.

should not be put here. ELF signals some linguistic features, which are relevant and common to international speakers of English. As Jenkins (2006b) states, the LFC (Lingua Franca Core) should not be regarded by NNS in the Expanding Circle, as a model but as a 'core' that identifies features for *international intelligibility*, with their accents and regional features that encourage "local identity and sociolinguistic appropriacy" (p. 38). This core would help teachers make emphasis in the pronunciation aspects that do impede intelligibility and use the rest of the time to teach and strengthen other communication and cultural aspects.

As Studies of ELF pragmatics expose, teachers should know that in ELF communication, misunderstandings are not particularly frequent, interference from L1 interactional norms is rare, and the interaction appears to be consensus-oriented, cooperative, and mutually supportive (House 2002; Seidlhofer 2004; Mauranen 2006 cited in Majanen,2008). Understanding this view consequently leads to the transformation of what should be taught in the English class and how to teach it.

3.2 Preference for American and British Standard varieties

As with the research done by Young, et al (2010) this study examined the way English teachers' beliefs influence a determined choice of English variety to learn and teach. The findings shed with the teachers in Colombia come together in agreement with those of Young's and other authors. Teachers are not aware of the variety or varieties of English they had learnt; neither the variety they teach, however most of them report to be teaching something that resembles a Native Standard variety (American or British).

Teachers were asked what varieties of English do they promote or use in their classes. In some cases I had to explain what variety of English meant since they were not familiarized with the concept. I would like to note here that the explanation was very shallow not to interfere with their perceptions. All the teachers immediately mentioned American English or British English; unlike the observations,

where not established variety was identified. This contradiction, demonstrates once more, their deep-rooted perspectives towards Native-Standard Englishes. As to why they preferred those two varieties teachers gave different ideas. For the American English teachers declared that it was the most common variety for them since it is used on most of the movies, tv programs, videos and also it was the one they learnt at the university. Some even mentioned the vast political influence of the United States in Colombia.

“el inglés de Inglaterra es muy marcado, ósea para mi es más audible y entenderlo, porque hacen la pausa porque... pero nosotros en el contexto en el que estamos diría que prefieren más el Americano... porque comercialmente nosotros.... Jajajaja....estamos ligados allí por ese lado. Una parte es la parte didáctica y la otras son las cuestiones políticas y económicas que tenemos nosotros...”

¹⁴[British English is strong, I mean for me is easier to listen to and understand because they pause because... but in our context in which we are I would say they prefer American English... because commercially we.... Hahahahaha.... We are bound to that side. One think is didactics and other the political and economic we have...]

Another reason was that it was more clear and intelligible than the British English, but some of them highlighted that American English was faster than British English. Furthermore, the few teachers who acknowledge their preference towards British English, said so because it is the *pure and perfect English*.

“Les influyo a los estudiantes el inglés de Inglaterra a lo que escucho es el inglés puro.”

¹⁵[I promote British English in my students, because as far as I understand is the pure English].

This clearly shows the lack of awareness from teachers to the idea of International communication and English as a Lingua Franca. As the data shows English is mainly taught at a basic, sentence and vocabulary level with unnecessary extra emphasis on pronunciation. It can also be argued that students don't have

¹⁴ Author's own translation March 31st, 2018.

¹⁵ Author's own translation March 31st, 2018.

quality input, due to teachers' poor competence and understanding of the language and language learning. According to Jenkins (2007), these rooted idea of Native speakers being the owners of the language, derive from beliefs about Native Speakers and Non-native speakers' English accents which in summary were "NS English accent is 'good' and NNS 'bad' " (p. 209). Furthermore, the long-established relationship between ELT in Colombia and the dominant Inner Circle Varieties (Macías, 2010).

As finding in studies such as Jenkins (2007) what was mentioned before implies that there are two important aspects to consider if ELF framework were to be adopted in public schools in Colombia or even in Colombia in general. The first one is that unless there is a larger acceptance and recognition of ELF in the English-speaking context, English teachers and Non-English teachers would take it up. Secondly, as referenced in the literature review a well-structured teachers training program must be designed and implemented to target a slow and deep transformations of those deep rooted Native standard beliefs teachers hold.

4. Accent Attitudes and Beliefs

Since English used as a lingua franca typically manifests itself in spoken language, accent is one visible area of this diversity. Therefore, accents easily call upon strong opinions, both positive and negative (Majanen, 2008). In the workshop and focus groups a segment was devoted to learn more about teachers' perceptions towards different accents, considering accent as an essential factor for researching and adopting ELF in Colombia. For this segment two audios were played. Both audios were obtained from Tedtalks; the first one was from an American teacher and the second one was from a Brazilian writer. The teachers were instructed to reflect not on what the two people were saying but rather on what they thought about the people who were speaking, where they think they were from, what they thought of their English and finally if they would use the audios as English models for the English students.

Teachers were not told who were the people speaking and where they were from. Due to some teachers' low level of English, their first reaction was a bit negative and frustrating and even expressed that they did not understand anything the speakers said. Nonetheless, most teachers expressed that the first person speaking was American, they highlighted the fluency and speed of her speech; her competence of the language. Some others claim being able to understand more words.

“Es un inglés Americano, se entienden muchas palabras. Es una persona con dominio del tema y del idioma.”

¹⁶[It is American English, many words are understood. It is a person with competences of the topic and the language.]

One teacher mentioned that this person vocalized each word carefully which as the teacher infer could be because the speaker was a teacher and wanted to make sure that each point was understood or either because her English was learnt (as second language). Another teacher explained why they though the speaker was American and mentioned that the language and vocabulary used sounded as if she were highly educated and from a high strata. Even though, the teacher did not recognize the native-speaker accent right away he/she identify other features that could eventually be used in the classroom to teach students to become effective communicators.

As far as the second audio, most teachers agreed that it was a native speaker talking, but disagree to decide where she was from. They felt that the second speaker spoke faster, and were consistent to say that she had total command of the language.

Two teachers were a bit more reserve and vague in their answer. They stated to have heard some sort of accent but could not identify were it was from. One teacher said. Some others felt strongly that the speaker was British.

¹⁶ Author's own translation March 31st, 2018.

“I think she is Indian, and I didn’t understand anything. She had an accent.”

When asked if they felt accent could affect communication, their opinions were divided. Some of them felt that accent is innate and does not affect what you are trying to say. On the other hand others mentioned that the accent could even interfere the teaching of the language and that one must possess the pronunciation ability in English to be able to speak it adequately, and one teacher even asserted that to be able to have that ability you must be in constant contact with Native-speakers.

“yo creo que si (el acento puede interferir en la enseñanza)... si la persona que tiene la habilidad es capaz de pronunciarla... o lo aprendió pero es un inglés como machucado”. “la persona que está en constante contacto con el nativo es quien tiene la habilidad.”

¹⁷[I think that it does (accent can interfere with the teaching of English)... the person needs to have the ability to pronounce the words... or what they learnt is an English machucado] [The person that is in constant contact with a Native-speaker is the one that possesses that ability].

Clear evidence of the Deep rooted idea of Native-Speakers being the only ones to speak “perfect English”. There is not even a small trace of awareness towards other intelligible nonnative speakers of English. Even when some teachers vaguely expressed understanding the use of English by people from different places in the world. This makes it very difficult for teachers and in consequence students to have real models. As teachers recognize and understand that “variation in accent is acceptable as long as intelligibility and conversation flow will be secured” (Majanen, 2008, p.1). The focus of the classes will shift to teaching accommodation skills and cultural sensitivity towards the various Englishes and accents students might face.

To sum up the following assertions can be made; first, teachers have mostly been exposed to Native varieties of English, they do not recognize a Non-Native speaker accent not even one that should be familiar to them. Consequently do not use other varieties or models in their class. Second, there is a clear lack of

¹⁷ Author’s own translation March 31st, 2018.

awareness to the existence and use of good and effective non-native English speakers for them. Third, their teaching practices and beliefs about English have its foundations in the traditional Native-Standard that does not reflect or appeal to Public school context. English is taught without a focus on the real use of the language in the international scene, not allowing students to develop the communicative resources and tools they might actually need in the future to communicate in English with other Non-native speakers of English.

Chapter 6: Conclusions, Recommendations and Implications

After years of the adoption of an EFL model in Colombian's national bilingual programme, it is clear that this model must be reconsidered and transform, especially for the benefit of Public school institutions. As observed, several circumstances and elements impact the teaching of English in public schools in Cali and due to those aspects the teaching of English is being affected.

Although the study was small to provide generalized data on teachers' perceptions towards ELF' aspects, the findings were aligned to what other studies done in others countries of the expanding circle have shown. There are similarities in perceptions about the Native-Standard Model. Among many factors, the findings reveal that teaches still favor a Native-standard English model, and this is because the imposed and widely advertise EFL model in English Language Teaching in Colombia. As the literature exposes this model sets the unrealistic goal for teachers and students to achieve.

As far as ELF pedagogical implications, it is important to mention that thinking about adopting an international framework means the adoption of many transformations, which might clash with the already established standard model in Colombia. One of its main challenges could be the "deep-rooted" perceptions on EFL from teachers and students, which would require a deep and conscious transformation if a different model like ELF were to be considered.

The deep rooted perceptions expressed by teachers in this study outline the negative effects an adopted model has, if it is not conceived or if it does not emerge from the country's context, circumstances, need, teachers and students. The first perception was that teachers did not feel capable or well trained to teach English within an EFL model and it has caused for English and Non-English teachers to develop a low self-concept as English teachers. Consequently, the low self-concept impacts directly their teaching practices and students' learning process.

Given that the goal set within an EFL model in a country like Colombia is unreachable, there are not clear motivations students could embrace for learning English. Providing a framework, as ELF, that grants teachers and students the flexibility to rediscover English in their context and English in the world, could help shape meaningful and relevant motivations for the learning of the language.

Added to motivations, teachers also conceived their teaching practices from a traditional and Native-standard view, which is restricted towards the actual use of English in the world. As other authors I do not wish to call for the complete elimination of EFL model from Colombia, but to widen the scope and consider other models and varieties that are more sensible to our context, what's more involving teachers and students in the process.

As expected teachers showed a low tolerance and even knowledge of different English accents and varieties, thus as observed in their classes limiting students exposure to them. The classes are more focused towards an accurate pronunciation than on the teaching of communicative resources which might be more helpful for students in the future to communicate in English.

Even though it seems as if it were difficult to adopt an ELF model in Colombia because of teachers' perceptions. I believed that when teachers are given the opportunity to reflect and discuss the different factors that encompass English and teaching and learning of English, it gives hope because they question their teaching practices and allows for them to share experiences and techniques that could be used in class. At the end of one of the focus groups a teachers stated:

“Es muy interesantes este tema porque nos cuestiona a reflexionar como todavía esa necesidad que tenemos cada día, y volvernos exigentes... existe esa dificultad que no sabemos pero tenemos que hacerlo, y nos permite retroalimentarnos y darnos ideítas...”

“Autoevaluarse hasta qué punto y que puedo hacer... cuando no se tiene la intención o le hace quite a la asignatura.... Pero si uno entiende que se puede hacer dinámicas.... Esforzarse un poco en el proceso”” esas dificultades se las pasa a los niños y existen bloqueos... “

That is why, I consider that in agreement with Sifakis (2007), the first step should be to work with teachers' traditional beliefs; mainly, in regards to the use of a single variety of English in their classes and the competences and abilities they tend to believe learners might need when communicating with other users of English. This first step will eventually lead to help teachers and students make informed decisions that will contribute to developing a stronger self-concept in teachers and effectively learning the language and communicating in English in an international scenario.

Nonetheless, the effort should not only come from teachers but also on the need for the government to address these issues and design more appropriate bilingual policies for their contexts.

I wonder if the teaching of English in public schools in Colombia, should start from high school and not from elementary school. When in high school students will have become more competent in their L1 and will find Well-trained English teachers to instruct their learning process. I don't wish to go deeper into this dilemma but I call for further consideration and deliberation into it.

To conclude, it is important to mention that the implications mentioned above lead to the following questions. What kind of training courses should be developed in order to help teachers to self-reflect, question and transform their teaching practices? How could teachers play an active role on the adoption of an ELF local model? And Are the policies currently held for when children should start learning English appropriately informed and appropriate for our context?

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Appendices

Appendix 1

CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO

Grupos Focales

Introducción

Usted ha sido invitado a participar en un grupo focal para compartir y conocer algunos aspectos sobre la práctica docente y las percepciones de los docentes en IEO sobre el inglés y las clases de inglés. En el marco del trabajo de grado para la Maestría TEFL de la universidad Icesi.

¿Por qué razón se está haciendo este estudio?

Con el fin de identificar y conocer las percepciones que tienen sobre el inglés y la enseñanza de inglés en IEO.

¿Cuáles son los procedimientos de este estudio? ¿Qué me van a pedir que haga?

Este estudio busca recolectar información sobre las percepciones que tiene usted sobre el aprendizaje y enseñanza de inglés. Se le solicitará participar activamente de la discusión.

¿Cuáles son los riesgos o inconvenientes del estudio? Se considera que no hay riesgos ni inconvenientes por participar en esta investigación, debido a que implica solamente la reflexión sobre sus percepciones y experiencia docente. Sin embargo, un posible inconveniente para usted puede ser el tiempo que debe dedicarle a este grupo focal.

¿Cuáles son los beneficios de este estudio? Su participación es muy importante en este estudio. Una vez se hayan terminado de recolectar los datos, se realizara un Master's report que permita visualizar y dar a conocer sus percepciones acerca de la enseñanza y aprendizaje de inglés en las Instituciones Educativas Oficiales con el fin de proponer alternativas y talleres adicionales de formación docente en el área de inglés.

¿Recibiré algún pago por mi participación? No recibirá pago alguno por su participación.

¿Existen costos por participar en este estudio? No hay costos para usted por participar en esta investigación.

¿Puedo dejar de participar en el estudio y cuáles son mis derechos? Usted no tiene que hacer parte de este estudio si no quiere. Si está de acuerdo con participar en este estudio, pero luego cambia de opinión, se podrá retirar en cualquier momento. No hay ninguna penalidad o consecuencia si usted decide que no quiere participar o no quiere continuar participando.

¿Debo contestar preguntas que no quiera contestar? No está en la obligación de contestar.

¿A quién puedo contactar en caso de tener preguntas? Puede contactar a Hector Biancha bianchahector@gmail.com Silvia Juliana Castro Silvia_juliana15@hotmail.com

¿Qué uso harán de la información que yo brinde? La información recolectada en la presente investigación será usada con fin exclusivo de identificar las percepciones de los docentes de inglés en las IEO en sus prácticas de aula. No se publicarán nombres ni datos propios en los informes que se produzcan en el proceso de investigación. El uso de la información será confidencial y con propósitos académicos únicamente, tanto para el Masters report, como para investigaciones que sobre el programa este tema se adelanten en el departamento de Idiomas de la Universidad Icesi. No se comentará con ninguno de sus colegas o directivos lo que se discuta en este espacio, ni tendrá repercusiones en su ámbito laboral.

Agradecemos su participación en esta investigación. Si desea participar, le pedimos amablemente firmar el consentimiento informado.

Documentación de consentimiento

Yo he leído este documento y decidí participar en el proyecto de investigación descrito arriba. El objetivo general, el tipo de participación que tendré, y los posibles riesgos e inconvenientes han sido explicados de manera satisfactoria. Declaro entender que puedo retirarme en cualquier momento. Al escribir mi nombre yo certifico que he leído este documento de consentimiento y que estoy de acuerdo con participar en esta investigación.

Nombre del Participante

Fecha

CC.

CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO

Taller

Introducción

Usted ha sido invitado a participar en un taller teórico-práctico para compartir estrategias que permitan mejorar la oralidad en las clases de inglés y adicionalmente conocer algunas de sobre la práctica docente y las percepciones de los docentes en IEO sobre las clases de inglés.

¿Por qué razón se está haciendo este taller?

Con el fin de proveer reflexión y herramientas significativas que los docentes puedan implementar en sus clases de inglés, e identificar y conocer las percepciones que tienen sobre la enseñanza de inglés en IEO.

¿Cuáles son los procedimientos de este taller? ¿Qué me van a pedir que haga?

Se le solicitará participar activamente del taller y documentar sus reflexiones.

¿Cuáles son los riesgos o inconvenientes del taller? Se considera que no hay riesgos ni inconvenientes por participar en este taller, debido a que implica solamente la reflexión sobre su práctica docente.

¿Cuáles son los beneficios de este taller? Su participación es muy importante en este. Una vez se haya terminado de recolectar información, se analizará la información para evaluar la pertinencia de este tipo de talleres y proponer talleres adicionales de formación docente en el área de inglés.

¿Recibiré algún pago por mi participación? No recibirá pago alguno por su participación.

¿Existen costos por participar en este taller? No hay costos para usted por participar en este.

¿Puedo dejar de participar en el taller y cuáles son mis derechos? Usted no tiene que hacer parte de este taller si no quiere. Si está de acuerdo con participar en este taller, pero luego cambia de opinión, se podrá retirar en cualquier momento. No hay ninguna penalidad o consecuencia si usted decide que no quiere participar o no quiere continuar participando.

¿Debo contestar preguntas que no quiera contestar? No está en la obligación de contestar.

¿A quién puedo contactar en caso de tener preguntas? Puede contactar a Hector Biancha bianchahector@gmail.com Silvia Juliana Castro Silvia_juliana15@hotmail.com

¿Qué uso harán de la información que yo brinde? La información recolectada en la presente taller será usada con fin exclusivo de identificar las percepciones de los docentes participantes este sobre inglés y sus prácticas en las clases de inglés. No se publicarán nombres ni datos propios en los informes que se produzcan en el proceso de análisis y evolución del taller. El uso de la información será confidencial y con propósitos académicos únicamente, tanto para la el mejoramiento de los talleres, como para estudios que sobre esto se adelante en el departamento de Idiomas de la

Universidad Icesi. No se comentará con ninguno de sus colegas o directivos lo que se discuta en este espacio, ni tendrá repercusiones en su ámbito laboral.

Agradecemos su participación en este taller. Si desea participar, le pedimos amablemente firmar el consentimiento informado.

Documentación de consentimiento

Yo he leído este documento y decidí participar en el taller teórico-práctico descrito arriba. El objetivo general, el tipo de participación que tendré, y los posibles riesgos e inconvenientes han sido explicados de manera satisfactoria. Declaro entender que puedo retirarme en cualquier momento. Al escribir mi nombre yo certifico que he leído este documento de consentimiento y que estoy de acuerdo con participar de este.

Nombre del Participante

Fecha

CC.

Appendix 2
Interview Guide
Protocolo Grupos Focales

Bienvenida y descripción corta del objetivo de la entrevista:

- Buenos días/tardes, sean todos ustedes cordialmente bienvenidos a este espacio para poder compartir y hablar sobre sus experiencias y percepciones acerca de la enseñanza del inglés. Agradecemos de antemano el tiempo dedicado para este proyecto.
- Las personas que los estaremos acompañando durante esta sesión somos Silvia Juliana Castro y (nombre moderador). Soy estudiante de último semestre de la maestría TEFL en la Universidad ICESI, actualmente soy docente hora catedra de la universidad ICESI y Autónoma de Occidente. Como parte de la dinámica se ha designado que (nombre moderador) liderara la participación y yo tomare segundo plano para observar y recopilar la información pertinente.
- Este es un espacio de confianza en el cual se les invita a compartir con total libertad ya que lo aquí mencionado no tendrá juicios de valor de bueno o malo ya que tus experiencias y realidades son válidas para nosotros. Asimismo se respetaran los parámetros de confidencialidad ya que no se compartirán nombres o datos personales.
- Estamos aquí para conocer acerca de sus experiencias como docentes de inglés, y sus perspectivas de la enseñanza de esta.
- Como metodología de recopilación de datos serán grabadas las sesiones para poder ser recordadas fidedignamente y de esta forma disminuir al máximo el espacio de malinterpretaciones. Si no se siente cómodo con esto, siéntase tranquilo de no participar en este espacio.
- La entrevista tomara un tiempo entre 45 minutos y una hora.
- A continuación se les entregara el consentimiento en donde se acepta de total acuerdo ser parte de este grupo focal con las condiciones mencionadas anteriormente.
- ¿Tienen alguna pregunta antes de iniciar?
- Antes de iniciar me gustaría hacer que cada uno haga una breve presentación de ¿Cómo se llaman? ¿ De donde vienen? ¿que expectativas tienen?

Preguntas – tematicas estimulos

Tematica 1. Percepción de lo que es ser docente y estudiante de inglés en Colombia

Estimulos	<p>A. ¿Cómo definiría usted a un docente de inglés como lengua extranjera en Colombia?</p> <p>B. ¿Qué habilidades deberían tener? Nivel de inglés, acento, variedad</p> <p>c. ¿Cómo definiría usted a un estudiante de inglés como lengua extrajera?</p>

Temática 2. Motivaciones para aprender inglés estudiantes

Estimulos

- a. ¿Cuál son los motivos por los que sus estudiantes estudian inglés, y motivos a futuro?
- b. ¿Con quién cree que sus estudiantes se comunicaran en ingles en el futuro?
- c. ¿Qué variedades o modelos de inglés prefieren sus estudiantes?

Q3. Tematica 3. Práctica docente/ materiales

Estimulos

- a. ¿Cuáles son sus objetivos con la clase de inglés?
- b. ¿Qué tan importante es la gramática en su clase? ¿Qué rol tiene en su clase?
- c. ¿Que materiales usa normalmente en clase?
- d. ¿Qué variedades o modelos de inglés usa para enseñar inglés? ¿porque?

Q5. Tematica 5. Native speakers/Non-native speakers. Acento. Pronunciación. variedades

A continuación escucharán dos audios. ¿Cuál es su impresión general del audio?

1. https://www.ted.com/playlists/158/graduation_now_what
2. https://www.ted.com/playlists/220/7_talks_to_help_you_find_the_r

Estimulos

- a. ¿Quién habla en el audio?
- b. ¿Qué opina del inglés de esa persona? ¿A qué se refiere específicamente con ese calificativo...?
- c. ¿Qué aspectos lo llevan a calificarlo de bueno o malo?
- d. ¿Hubo algo en su forma de hablar que le llamo la atención?
- e. ¿Usaría esos audios para una actividad en clase? ¿Cual modelo cree que sus estudiantes preferirían? Porque?
- f. ¿Cree que este sería un modelo a seguir de una persona que habla inglés como segunda lengua?
- g. Si mencionan nativo ¿Qué es ser un native-speaker?
- h. Muchas personas consideran el acento como parte importante de la forma de comunicarse de una persona. ¿Qué importancia tiene el acento para usted y sus estudiantes cuando hablan en inglés?
- i. ¿Qué acento deberían tener los estudiantes o que acento querrían tener ustedes? Porque?
- j. ¿cree que el acento impide la inteligibilidad de los mensajes? ¿Por qué?

Cierre

Gracias por participar. Sus respuestas y discusión han sido informativas y de gran ayuda. Estamos muy agradecidos por la información que nos han dado.

¿Tienen alguna pregunta adicional o sugerencia para nosotros?

Appendix 3
Workshop Booklet



Héctor Bianchá
bianchahector@gmail.com
Silvia Juliana Castro
Silvia_juliana15@hotmail.com



Taller Práctico-Teórico

Enhancing Oracy in the EFL Classroom

DESARROLLADO POR:





°Bibliography°

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Marr, Tim. "Oracy." Masters' class. ICESI University, Cali. February 2017.

<http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Kayi-TeachingSpeaking.html>

°Conclusions°

°General Definition°

“The ability to express oneself fluently and grammatically in speech” (Marr, 2017).



°Objective of the Workshop°

To enhance teachers' awareness of effective Oracy strategies they can promote in class.

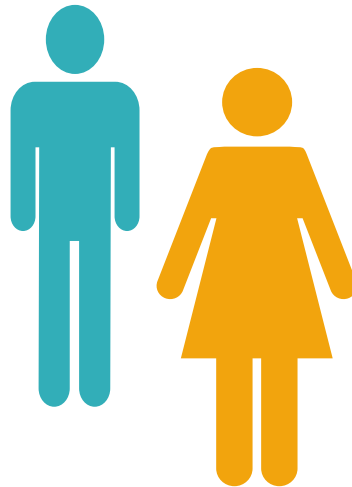
To reflect about their perception and practice of Teaching English in IOE.

°Did you know?

... that Non-Native Speakers now outnumber Native English Speakers by three to one? (Graddol, 2006).

- What does that mean?

What implications does that number have in an EFL classroom?



°Notes

What do teachers do during speaking activities?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

Aspects of Oracy

Cognitive: _____

Linguistic: _____

Physical: _____

Emotive: _____

Teach students to:



Tips^o

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Reflections

2. Motivations for Learning English



Reflections

3. Teaching Practices and Materials

