

Three Decolonial Research Methodologies: Interrogating Qualitative Research in English Language Teaching Education

Três metodologias de pesquisa decolonial: interrogando a pesquisa qualitativa no ensino de língua Inglesa

Tres metodologías de investigación decolonial: interrogando la investigación cualitativa en la educación para la enseñanza del Inglés

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Abstract

Along this reflection paper, we confront our former understandings of research as women-teachers-researchers who intend to take the Epistemologies of the South as ways of being-feeling-thinking-doing English language teacher education and research. A personal, academic, and collective journey has intersected and driven us into *the decolonial turn to research* ELT. Moreover, in this paper, we will share our uncertainties and struggles in an overt attempt to question our personal fine-grained colonial paradigms to find possible ways to *demonumentalize* research. Our research *methodologies* are *intended* to overcome a Western rationality of knowledge production that ingrains the ways through which our knowledge, research, and pedagogical practices are to be constructed. Walking the paths of decoloniality, we have moved from universal to more pluriversal understandings; we have constructed, co-constructed, valued and rescued situated knowledges emerging from our experience in our Global South. In the process, we have lived a mobilization of visions and pathways that destabilize and relocate our practices with a deep relation to that sense of locality that is ours. The aim of the following paper is to socialize how, through our research projects, we have envisioned inter-epistemic relational methodologies, hybrid, and testimonial narratives to portray ways to research English language teacher education with a decolonial spirit.

Keywords

decoloniality; educational research; English language teacher education; epistemologies of the south

Resumo

Ao longo deste texto de reflexão, confrontamos nosso entendimento prévio sobre pesquisa como mulheres-professoras-pesquisadoras que pretendem tomar as Epistemologias do Sul como modos de ser-sentir-pensar-fazer nos processos de ensino de língua inglesa e sua investigação. Uma viagem pessoal, acadêmica e coletiva se cruzou e nos levou a uma virada *decolonial* para estudar o ensino de inglês. Além disso, neste texto compartilharemos nossas incertezas e conflitos, tentando criticar abertamente nossos paradigmas de pesquisa coloniais e encontrar maneiras de *'desmonumentalizar'* a pesquisa. As nossas metodologias de investigação pretendem superar uma racionalidade ocidental de produção de conhecimento que dita como o conhecimento, as práticas e a investigação devem ser construídas. Pelo caminho da decolonialidade, passamos de compreensões universais para compreensões mais pluriversais; construímos, co-construímos, valorizamos e recuperamos o conhecimento situado que emerge do nosso sul global. Nesse processo, temos experimentado uma mobilização de visões e rotas que desestabilizam e realocizam nossas práticas, com uma relação profunda com nosso senso de local. O objetivo deste artigo é socializar como, por meio de nossos projetos de pesquisa, usamos narrativas híbridas, metodologias de relações intepistêmicas e narrativas testemunhais para mostrar caminhos de pesquisa no ensino de língua inglesa com espírito decolonial.

Palavras-chave

decolonialidade; pesquisa educacional; formação de professores em Inglês; epistemologias do sul

Resumen

A lo largo de este texto de reflexión, confrontamos nuestro entendimiento previo sobre investigación como mujeres-profesoras-investigadoras que tienen la intención de tomar las Epistemologías del Sur como modos de ser-sentir-pensar-hacer los procesos de enseñanza de la lengua inglesa y su investigación. Un viaje personal, académico y colectivo se ha cruzado y nos han llevado a una perspectiva *decolonial* para estudiar la enseñanza del inglés. Además, en este artículo compartiremos nuestras incertidumbres y conflictos intentando abiertamente criticar nuestros paradigmas coloniales investigativos y encontrar caminos para *'demonumentalizar'* la investigación. Nuestras metodologías de investigación tienen la intención de superar una racionalidad occidental de producción del conocimiento que dicta como se deben construir los conocimientos, las prácticas y las investigaciones. A través del camino de la decolonialidad, hemos pasado de comprensiones universales a comprensiones más pluriversales; hemos construido, co-construido, valorado y recuperado saberes situados que emergen de nuestro sur global. En el proceso, hemos vivido una movilización de visiones y rotas que

desestabilizan y reubican nuestras prácticas, con una relación al sentido nuestro de lo local. El propósito de este artículo es socializar cómo, a través de nuestros proyectos de investigación, hemos usado las narrativas híbridas, metodologías de relación inter-epistémicas, y narrativas testimoniales para mostrar caminos de investigación en la enseñanza de la lengua inglesa con un espíritu decolonial.

Palabras clave

decolonialidad; investigación educativa; formación de maestros en inglés; epistemologías del sur

Introduction: Our grasp of Decoloniality in ELT Education

Recalling a Charla

Julia: I think I have always been interested in decoloniality. When I was doing my postgraduate studies in literature teaching, I focused on Afro Colombian writers of the Pacific coast, and I started to learn issues related to the way they see the world and their struggles in our country; and then, I left that aside because I focused on teaching English. When I started the master's program, I realized that I was connected to decoloniality again, but from the critical pedagogy standpoint. Finally, in the doctoral studies, we were challenged to propose a research project with a decolonial perspective.

Adriana: But were you conscious that you were doing decolonial thinking?

Julia: Not at the beginning. When I was doing my thesis related to literature teaching, I was not aware that... that it was decolonial, but I think somehow, my mind has always been decolonial.

Yolanda: I told you once! I think you've always been asking 'ways otherwise'¹ to do your research, your teaching; but what I have found is that being educated within the system entailed following the Global North² ELT literature. When critically situating it in our contexts, we notice there is

a mismatch between what it is said, and what happens in our real schools and universities. We face uncertainties and tensions on the ways we teach or do research, interrogating our ways of knowing, being and doing situates the epistemological confrontations we live when doing research and brings to the discussion the what, why and how to do it; but above all, it constitutes an inquiry about the what for and with whom we research. I think our reflections as language educators on our ways of doing second language teaching and research are connected to the academic growth we have constructed through our years of experience, and realities, having an interpersonal growth with the people we shared with and learned about, co-constructing our worlds.

Julia: You brought up an interesting issue: Especially as English teachers, we are somehow framed within certain methodologies that come from the North. We have always followed the pedagogies and methodologies from white American or European teachers and writers; the same is true when we do research. I have always been in charge of research seminars as a teacher-educator, and I have realized that teachers and research methodologies have been framed within a positivist view. I struggle against this feeling: I am following the curriculum, but I know that I need to show other possibilities: arts-based research, decolonial approaches to research... I don't teach English anymore, but I realize that when I taught it, all the methodologies I used were framed within what pedagogues from the North decided for us to do.

Adriana: I think we never questioned who the ones were making the decisions on how to teach, what to teach, why to teach that way, why to teach those topics. As we are becoming more mature language teachers, we start noticing that we could also have our own discourses. I felt identified with

1 The term 'ways otherwise' is the author's take of the concept 'knowledge otherwise' (el saber otro) used by Escobar (2003), referring to the study of the ways of knowing from subjects of the Global South.

2 We acknowledge the tensions around the concepts of Global North and Global South. We conceptualize the Global South as the regions of the world where there has been a geopolitical impact of Globalization, Capitalism and Western Modernity as carried out by Enlightened Europe and North America (Global North)

you Julia, when you were talking about your path to decoloniality. I think my first encounter with it was when I read the writings of Fray Bartolome de las Casas... “A brief account of the destruction of the Indies” which I read as an undergraduate student. I was also reading Columbus’ diaries... about what Europeans thought on indigenous communities here. But I was not aware... like what to do with that info pedagogically speaking. I guess there were some seeds of decolonial thinking on approaching those readings. My first conscious encounter with it was by reading the *Epistemologies of the South*; however, reading didn’t mean that I was really able to carry out a decolonial research project. At that time, 2016, it was still very abstract to me...

Communal Laughter.

ELT sometimes has been really an aseptic field; but if we look further, a real teacher should know history, geography, geopolitics, so that teaching can be strengthened. I was not prepared, but perhaps, I am much more conscious now. (2021)

The previous excerpt is a transcription of one of our various *charlas*³ discussing decoloniality as PhD fellow classmates and friends in our coffee-study time while evoking the lessons learned in a course on the decolonial turn in a summer course in Barcelona and our sessions at the Doctoral Program. Many of our *charlas* have revolved around our insights, tensions and ruptures with English language teaching education faced along our personal and professional experiences. These talks have helped us situate our decolonial positionalities which entail 1) tracing the colonial effects of the European modernity in our constructions of teaching; 2) recognizing and praising our own ways of being, feeling, thinking, and doing ELT within the particularities of our territories; 3) finding other ways to document our practices; 4) co-constructing knowledge as a

3 *Charlas* in our Colombian culture are informal dialogues we have with family, friends, peers, and colleagues, among others, with whom we feel comfortable to share our feeling and thinking (*senti-pensar*, Fals Borda, 2003) intersected by our personal, cultural, pedagogical, and historical experiences regarding the ways we are constructing knowledges. We have been inspired by the term *pláticas* from Flores et al., (2021).

collective body; and 5) moving to a pluriversal view of ELT in which diverse perspectives, cosmologies and ways of thinking can enrich it. As Grosfoguel (2013, p. 66) explains, “decolonization of knowledge would require to take seriously the epistemic perspective/cosmologies/insights of critical thinkers from the Global South thinking from and with sub-alternized racial/ethnic/sexual spaces and bodies.”

Therefore, assuming decolonial positionalities implies interrogating colonial practices in our profession that are expressed in social practices, such as standardized teaching and learning, corporate knowledge production⁴, rankings, epistemic denial of knowledge production from Global South teachers, or invisibilization of such production through gate-keeping practices in top-tier publications (Diversi & Moreira, 2009). Thus, we have been trying to overcome harsh research, and teaching patterns from the Western rationality to vindicate that there are other valid ways of researching, not visible or acknowledged by the hegemonic Western thinking (Samacá-Bohórquez, 2021; Posada-Ortiz, 2020; Castañeda, 2021).

Our more conscious encounters with decoloniality took place when we read *Epistemologies of the South* (EoS) by De Sousa Santos (2009), in 2016 as first semester doctoral students. By that time, it was abstract knowledge that started to make sense afterwards. On our journey to Barcelona, as part of our doctoral coursework, we derived a few more understandings of decoloniality. Basically, we reflected on the research methodologies of our doctoral research projects, and on ways to challenge the limiting frames of Western research paradigms. Using the tenets of EoS was a challenge posed by one of our doctoral studies tutors. Therefore, the doctoral program was an important site to make sense of decoloniality. We understood the triangular structure of coloniality implicit in scholarship, that is, the coloniality of power, knowledge and being (Castro-Gómez, 2007).

4 By corporate knowledge production, we mean the current tendency to produce knowledge so that scholars’ cognitive published ideas rank the universities in scales of success or failure.

The coloniality of knowledge in scholarship determines what is worth learning and what is not. Hence, as teachers from the Global South, we recognize that we had overprivileged the knowledge coming from the Global North (The academic work and ways of knowing from white-upper class-patriarchal North American and European scholars) and had been ignoring the knowledge constructed in the Global South (i.e, Latin American, African, and Asian marginalized and subalternized thinkers). We understood that it was necessary to document and share these knowledges⁵ that have remained unknown or subalternized in a way that we could start overcoming the coloniality of our beings or our own perspectives based on the idea that the knowledges produced in the Global South are less valuable.

This reflection article is the product of a collaborative work aimed at feeling-thinking, theorizing and sharing our initial attempts to develop decolonial thinking in ELT research. De Sousa Santos (2018) explains that Northern Epistemologies favor writing over talking to express knowledge, as writing gives knowledge a sense of being precise, stable, and perpetual. Meanwhile, the EOS foreground that knowledges can be a collective, oral endeavor; they are in collective memory; they might flow orally even in the most mundane of conversations and can be partial and localized. As well, oralizing knowledges works as a strategy to *demonumentalize* science⁶ (De Sousa Santos, 2018) and build knowledge collaboratively. That is why the three studies we introduce here integrate verbatim thoughts expressed either by us or the research companions-collaborators.

In our view, it is impossible to separate the concept of decoloniality from the EOS because the latter provides a theoretical background to carry out research projects with decoloniality as a walking path. De Sousa Santos (2009) suggests

5 We have intentionally used the word knowledges to make reference to the plurality of knowledges that have been constructed in the Global South.

6 By demonumentalizing science, we acknowledge that, as with any other thing, science is a social- human construction shaped by broader and deeper understandings of social, cultural, racial, and political views and cosmogonies from those who live in the Global South, and whose knowledges have not been recognized.

finding the absences (the absent knowledge, the absent practices, the absent perspectives) that the Western canon of thought has generated. Similarly, we should turn the absences into emergences (i.e the comprehensions that *emerge* as a result of digging into the absences). In particular, we found three important absences in research in the ELT field that are discussed throughout this paper.

The first absence encompasses the analysis and questioning of the straightforward views of the English Language Teaching Practicum in the current agendas and educational policies, as well as the multiple understandings of the teaching practicum through the experience and interrelations of the subjects involved in it (Samacá-Bohórquez, 2020). The second absence concerns the issue of community that in initial teacher education has been conceptualized around modern concepts of Target Communities (Higgins, 2012), Imagined Communities (Norton, 2013), and Communities of Practice (Wenger, 1998). The third absence deals with an understanding of knowledge for English teaching that does not exclusively relate to cognitive or socio-cultural perspectives (e.g. Johnson, 2009; Freeman et al., 2019) but that embraces knowledge for teaching as incarnated, situated and bodily experienced. We bring these research topics to the fore in the following sections because by using the lens of decoloniality and the EOS, we can introduce fresh perspectives on topics that appear not to have further discussion (Anzaldúa, 2000, 2009; Rendón, 2009).

The three individual sections of our manuscript will focus on our interpretation on what it means to carry out non-extractivist relational methodologies, by which we mean, paths walked and shared with knowing subjects who are recognized within the research processes and experiences. We highlight the co-construction of knowledges that provokes more horizontal perspectives through the research experiences and the understanding of learning together. The first section will focus on the use and analysis of *relatos*⁷, and what they can teach us about

7 *Relatos*, for the purpose of the study, are descriptions and reflections of experiences in the pedagogical practicum.

the pedagogical practicum in ELT. The second one focuses on the use and analysis of autobiographies to comprehend the concept of community for ELT future teachers. The final part will delve into testimonial narratives to make visible in-service teachers' knowledges and practices rooted in their realities and experiences. The three experiences have used decoloniality as a background while appropriating some tenets of the EoS in terms of theory, methodology and praxis.

Yolanda: Demonumentalizing Research. A Huge Rock to Crack Out

Demonumentalizing is a very challenging word that sometimes scares, worries, and destabilizes me, for what it might imply. The responsibility is huge to understand its meaning when entering into a critical self-reflective process about doing research and interrogating both the rational and critically-situated comprehensions of doing research. The former maintains the status-quo, and the latter calls to represent our world in our own terms (De Sousa Santos 2018; Mignolo, 2007). *Demonumentalizing* might contain several meanings: On the one hand, to rupture the static concepts of research, brought from a universal paradigm that has to do with the forms through which objectivity, validity, and reliability, methods, subjects objectivization, world's view naturalization through unique homogenized views have been framed; to break boundaries to understand and do research in ways that claim for more horizontal views with those who work with us in a project; to discontinue the mandates of traditional research frameworks; to fracture the universal paradigm that validates knowledges. On the other hand, *demonumentalizing* might interrogate the possibilities of situating research as a lived experience; to confront our understandings of research and the ways we learned about them; to self-value the knowledges that we have constructed through our personal and professional lives, which have developed personal, pedagogical, research, and contextual growth; to acknowledge the contributions of those who share with us their understandings.

De Sousa Santos (2018) has brought the term *demonumentalizing* to the discussion in an attempt to interrogate the codified views and the subjects' objectivization in the Western rationality of knowledge. As I mentioned above, *demonumentalizing* sometimes scares me because what I used to know and do regarding research stemmed from the Global North. However, through the personal and academic encounters with family, students, friends, peers, colleagues, professors, and sources of inspiration about life, the system, education, the economy, the 'must-be discourses, I have developed a deep context-sensitive-emotional critical- consciousness on my positionalities, and passionate responsibility that, as a language educator, have allowed me not to feel afraid of the unknown, for which I do not have an explicit answer.

On the contrary, I think that this has shed light on the person and teacher I am still becoming and the alternatives students and teachers might have to envision critically-situated English language teaching processes through our dialogues and experiences and with the communities we are involved in. These conscious and unconscious conversations and doings are liberatory expressions of knowledges because sharing not only the stories of success, but also those of struggles, difficulties, and concerns ruptures the homogenizing system. It is undeniable that valuing a more sensitive-political human being dimension in our daily encounters will give room for those lived knowledges to be born in our contexts, with our people, interrupting the hegemonic ways to research in English language teaching.

Then, *Demonumentalizing research*, becomes an act of resistance provoking learnings, unlearnings, more uncertainties than certainties, more reflections, and ethical responsibilities. It becomes an act of contestation where we experience epistemological displacement transformations. Likewise, it becomes an act of advocacy for research paths and praxis, interrogating the forms and ways of doing research in order to visibilize our subalternized knowledges and ways of doing as valid and the right for social, cultural, epistemic, racial, and linguistic justice,

understanding that our realities imply our subjectivities, detaching from static traditions. It is worth mentioning that the ELT Colombian research praxis has gone through deep transformations, situating and constructing collective understandings that are more consistent with our realities, bringing to the conversations what is lived in our contexts and communities, a praxis that not only recognizes the coexistence of paradigms, approaches and the voice of the expert, but also the plurality of voices in the Global South. These transformations have to do with questioning the instrumental vision of the language and claim for a social cultural vision that interrogates not only the didactic dimensions of ELT, but also the fields of Applied Linguistics, critical applied linguistics, critical pedagogies and decoloniality, which culturally, socially, and politically inhabit our praxis, our people and our contexts.

Mapping Hybrid Narratives, a Decolonial Research Path

Demonumentalizing in my doctoral research, whose purpose is to unveil the senses of the pedagogical practicum from the experience and interrelations of those subjects involved in the process (pre-service teachers, school teachers-mentors and university mentors), encompasses several and unresolved momentums that are individually and collectively constructed with the teachers who have voluntarily accepted the invitation to be part of this research project. A first momentum has to do with establishing dialogical relationships with students and teachers, with whom I have shared between three and five years of pedagogical- experiential work. These encounters have nurtured both pedagogical and research views of ELT. My political consciousness about who we are as teachers, learners, researchers has grown as well.

These experiences have taken me to situate a more horizontal feeling and reasoning on the teaching practicum, where all research companions' knowledges are valued and dialogued. Understanding that we are subjects with non-universal conditions helps us decolonize our stories, placing our objectivity and subjectivity in localized and delocalized

interrelationships (Balash & Montenegro, 2003, as cited in Díaz, 2015, p. 57). In this research experience, I am also actively involved as a university mentor because I am part of all what I want to understand, I am where I think, (Mignolo, 2000). I recognize myself as a teacher researcher who feels passionate about language education and understand that as language educators who recognize the plurality of visions of languages, we might transcend the instrumental practice of teaching a language in this era of standardized education (Magrini, 2014).

Mapping a decolonial path in this research experience has caused me to think about hybrid narratives (Díaz, 2015), which are also complemented by Walsh (2013) and Haraway (1995) as ways to respond to our experience in the teaching practicum. Thus, a second momentum copes with the different ways in which we could start sharing our experiences and thoughts. Hybrid narratives are constructed through dialogues, texts in an individual and inner freedom to share; but also, they are constructed through a collective dialogue. This entails a flexible process which gives us the freedom to share what we want with the right to maintain, change, or expand on what we have listened to, read, and oralized. These *relatos*, constructed through daily conversations and texts some of them wrote, situate our time, placing us simultaneously inside and outside of what we are living in the teaching practicum, contrasting, for example, the dominant views in ELT with our own realities. *Relatos* place us in a participative collective dialogue that intends to compose multidimensional narratives that go from the individual to the collective and go back to us.

A simultaneous third momentum deals with developing sensitivity towards understanding *relatos*, being aware that they might take different forms through which we start sharing our stories. They are told to understand that "there will always be things that will be forgotten because the perspectives from which we interpret the world and our relationships, cannot be named and questioned". (Merchán et al., 2016, p. 129)⁸. Thus, the partialities of our views

⁸ Translated by the author.

in everything that we express and analyze indeed recognize the need to interact with other partialities (Haraway, 1995), in order to understand that our *relatos* are not only about giving voice to those who are invisible. Accordingly, these *relatos* may have a *responsive* character; they do not speak to us about the subjects themselves but speak to us through a network of stories arising from the relationships and partial connections of those who write them. The following momentums in this methodology are still in dialogue and co-construction.

The subsequent extract, for example, portrays our discomfort with the realities of the school system. This is a dialogue between Ernesto, a pre-service teacher, Stella, the school teacher and Yolanda, a university mentor. Stella comes from her classroom, greets us, and we start talking about her students' attitudes and behaviors in the class which just finished:

Stella: ...They are good students, but these are high voltage classes (meaning that students' attitudes and behaviors are sometimes rude) and this is our reality... When I read journals, everything seems to be the pedagogical perfection... So, I say no... I was given my degree just by chance. Reality is quite different from what is presented in journals. So, I think is the school wrong, or am I the one who is wrong?

Yolanda: most of the times we idealize our work. Don't you think the same?

Stella: It is that it seems everything is perfect. All children learn, all behave well... This doesn't happen here. In 6-3 (way to call a particular school class) I have 5 good students, see what I can do with the other 25. Some of them try, but there are others who don't know why they are coming to school. Literature sometimes works, but not in the ways it has been stated.

Yolanda: I don't know if this has happened to you when dialoguing with pre-service teachers... It looks as if the teaching practicum seems to be reduced to the classroom and the validation of theories, but if it has to do with other dimensions... then. It is not the practicum. This is as

if we don't recognize those other encounters with students... The conflicts, the situations that emerge in our daily life.

Stella: Learning to handle conflict... There are complicated students. Those who think they are not allowing anyone imposed ideas on them... One has to start teaching them how they're going to be people, when leaving school, they are going to crash into realities, they have to learn to be people.

Yolanda: We live in times of absences and turbulences and high voltage classes.

Ernesto: I think about what I want to be... I have always questioned ethics in everything, it became so abstract that one does not see those moments, what is ethics in our daily lives?

Yolanda: Hey, we have a dialogue pending. Our students do not want to teach at schools... Our future teachers.

Stella: God willing, talk to them, they want to work at institutes, universities, where they are going to be paid better and have less pressure, because in terms of well-being associated with us, we are below the lowest for society. In *El Tiempo* (a national newspaper) an article dated about two months ago, mentioned that if parents don't respect teachers, their children won't either. Parents don't love us... (September, 2019, originally written in Spanish)

By Way of Closing

This short but powerful dialogue might represent a confrontation with the homogenizing ideologies constructed about ELT, the should-be, the struggles we go through when contrasting this literature with our realities. A confrontation that provokes feelings of dissatisfaction and despair when it is expected by our societies that everything should work properly at schools, when and where the responsibility lies on teachers with no regard to the specificities and particularities of our school contexts and our people. Also, there is a confrontation that provokes discomfort when we see that our work is neither respected nor visibilized. Likewise, such discomfort becomes

a social endeavor with a deep relation to that sense of locality (Pennycook, 2013), advocating for the right to be wrong, to embark on the unknown, and to name otherwise.

Starting to walk a decolonial path in the pedagogical practicum entails the recognition that pre-service and in-service teachers' knowledges and practices are underlined by personal, professional, and situated co-constructions of our realities and our contexts; they bring with them several knowledges and several inquiries about be-being and becoming a language teacher. The singular, collective and polyphonic comprehensions pre-service teachers, school and university mentors have about our profession are valorized to understand not only the *what-how*, but more importantly the *why-where* we teach, and how our knowledges also come and belong to our local histories. Therefore, dialogue(s), interaction(s), communal immersion within the school contexts unveil our feeling-thinking-doings that transcend the endless instrumental visions of language and second language pedagogy. In the following section, Julia will argue for a vision of community that her doctoral study has revealed, walking a decolonial path as well.

Julia: From the Eye of Providence to the Eye of Horus: Changing the Gaze in Educational Research

The Eye of Horus is one of the oldest amulets in Egypt that represents prosperity, protection, nature, male and female forces (Refaey et al. 2019; Mackey, 1982). It was replaced in the Western culture by the Eye of the Providence, a symbol that portrays an eye, often enclosed in a triangle, and surrounded by rays of light, meant to represent divine providence, whereby the eye of God watches over humanity. This symbol can be traced to the Greek classics and represents divine watchfulness (Kopel, 2021). The symbol can be seen in the US \$1-dollar bill and on the reverse side of the US great seal. I think these two symbols are interesting because the eye is related to the gaze, and there is a close relationship between gaze and scientific paradigms (Montaño, 2021). For

example, the gaze is evident in the Research Ethics Committees that some universities have and that supervise that the research groups comply with ethical research processes and procedures.

According to Kovach (2018), we need to see beyond the totalizing and homogenizing Western "gaze" that has ruled academic and research practices to challenge them and assume responsibility for what we look at, what we look for, and how we look at it, when seeking to understand a culture, subjects, phenomena, as well as facts, and then say something "new" about them (Montaño, 2012). That is, to move away from the Eye of the Providence, in which the researcher is the one who has control over the whole research process and above all they are the ones who produce "new knowledge" to the Eye of Horus, in which the participants' knowledge also counts, and they are active members in the research process and not only respondents. This is a fertile territory to create a new view of research one in which the researcher's process becomes meaningful for everyone, where the researcher learns from the participants and the participants learn from the researcher in a reciprocal process to make or any other perspective that makes our research less extractivist (De Sousa Santos, 2018) and more relational (Chilisa, 2012; Ortiz-Ocaña and Arias-López, 2019). In my doctoral dissertation, I implemented a non-extractivist research methodology that included a relational ontology, epistemology, and axiology based on the Indigenous Research Paradigm (Chilisa, 2012). This methodology allowed me to address a colonial situation related to the fact that in initial teacher education, the term community has been conceptualized around modern concepts such as Target Communities, Imagined Communities, and Communities of Practice.

In this way, Target Communities are understood as a mostly cohesive group of people who speak a (standard) language in relatively homogeneous ways, and whose cultural practices likely differ significantly from those who study the target language of that community (Norton, 2017). This view of community constructs the English language preservice teachers through the dichotomy of

Native Speaker of English vs Non-Native Speaker of English. Imagined Communities refer to groups of people, not immediately tangible and accessible, with whom we connect through the power of imagination (Anderson, 1983). Within this view, the world is a global village where everybody shares an affiliation by speaking English (Guerrero, 2010). Communities of Practice entail processes of learning within communities by developing certain competencies (Wenger, 1998). People who seek to affiliate with communities usually try to adapt to the community norms of that community. In this sense, the English preservice teachers would adapt and seek to be accepted by the target community by adopting the role of apprentice.

The concepts explained above appear in the most recent literature in English Teacher Education. Nevertheless, what about the communities the English preservice teachers envision for themselves?

I must confess that at the beginning of my doctoral study, I was following the modern framework previously mentioned. However, derived from the readings about the anti-essentialist philosopher Roberto Esposito (2009; 2012) and the Latin American sociologists Liceaga (2013), Rivera-Cusicanqui (2015; 2016), and Esteva (2016), I proposed an alternative framework. In this alternative framework, I conceptualize Community as a struggle. This concept is dynamic and integrative; dynamic because it refers simultaneously to the past, present, and future, and integrative because it includes not only relationships with people but also with nature. Through this concept, it is possible to understand the struggle the English Language Preservice Teachers go through in their interplay with the different communities during their coursework and that they identified during the interaction to exchange and generate knowledge (the way I named the process of data collection and analysis). During that process, I learned that young people want to build a good life, that is, a different model from that of development and consumerism. Building a good and beautiful life in which we can all be heard, and we all have value and are valued. Let us remember that The *Buen Vivir* is the alternative

discourse proposed by indigenous people to contest the neoliberal developmental and economic growth discourse and to resist a system that is destroying nature and therefore human beings themselves.

Community as immunity represents the way we are positioned within the matrices of power and entails a political aspect of community. When the governmentality of community prevails, such community rejects or excludes anything that threatens its identity. This is a defensive aspect of immunity. At the same time, a community offers the opportunity to become a member, and that membership becomes a privilege. It is a privilege to be a university student, for example.

Community as a commodity has to do with the dominance of the market economy that has reached education and, of course, Teacher Education. The English Language Teacher Education Programs become communities governed by standards and competencies that English Language Preservice Teachers should reach to graduate. We know that standards and competencies are part of the neoliberalist project, where education becomes a commodity. Teachers and students become marketable products. Fortunately, due to the characteristics of the program where the researchers and collaborators of this research project were enrolled, they did not see education as a business.

About Non- Extractivist Methodologies

According to De Sousa Santos (2018) “[e]xtractivist methodologies are geared to extract knowledge in the form of a raw material —relevant information— that is provided by objects, whether human or non-human” (p.130). Because of the fact that extractivist methodologies privilege the relationship subject-object, they share some common characteristics as follows, 1) They are unilateral: the researcher can extract information, but no information can be extracted from the researcher; 2) The researcher controls the whole process including the right to speak for the others (Alcoff, 1991).

The extractivist methodologies prevail because positivist and post-positivist paradigms have been

positioned as those authorized to do science and have colonized the intellectual world and knowledge to replicate forms of control and production of knowledge. However, according to Chilisa (2012), there is a new transformative paradigm that denotes a family of research designs influenced by various philosophies and theories with a common theme of the emancipation and transformation of communities from within. This family includes critical theory, feminist theories, Freirian theory, critical race theory, decolonial theories, and postcolonial indigenous research methodologies. It is to the latter that I would like to resort in order to show the possibility of thinking about research methodologies that include other worldviews that can boost transformation in the way we teach and carry out research in teacher education programs, and especially to promote a less extractivist approach to research.

At the end of the twentieth century, adopting the indigenous perspective of doing research in universities was rare, and there was a need to consolidate an indigenous research approach. This concern gave birth to the Indigenous Research Paradigm (IRP, hereby), whose principle and relationality, involve three key components: an ontology, an epistemology, and an axiology (Arevalo, 2013; Wilson, 2008).

According to Chilisa (2012), relations with people, with the environment/land, with the cosmos, and with ideas are immersed in a relational ontology. The author also pinpoints that within the community life of indigenous people, affiliations with them are quite valuable. Therefore, one important role of the researcher is to establish the proper conditions for the participants to relate with one another. Due to this, as a concerned researcher, I created such relationships for my doctoral research study by incorporating autobiographies that the participants wrote. They agreed on the topics for this exercise beforehand. Following the writing process, I held meetings with these four future language teachers, to read those autobiographies aloud and add more relevant details to them. In addition to this, I created a blog where the autobiographies were published and open to comments. As a researcher, I also shared my autobiography with everyone, becoming another member.

Within the IRP, the relationship with the environment plays a fundamental role, according to Chilisa (2012). Hence, to produce knowledge the place where the research is carried out must be carefully chosen. Thus, I met the preservice teachers in a yoga room, which was a calm and relaxing setting where the preservice teachers were able to expand their grasp of each other's experiences. As for the cosmos, Wilson (2001) contends that it has to do with our own connection to the universe, a closeness to a superior entity, humankind, or the natural world. For that reason, I intended to activate the cosmos by doing mindfulness exercises and in this way, bridge knowledge with mind, body, and universe.

Unlike the individual ways of knowing, proper of Euro-Western epistemologies (Chilisa, 2012), relational epistemologies entail social practices in which people make sense as one (Romm, 2015). Consequently, I and all my research participants contributed to the comprehension, analysis and categorization of the information covered in our autobiographies, complying with the relational methodology. For Arevalo (2013), the emotional and cognitive experiences are inseparable; also, a research study should recognize the diversity of the researcher and the participants' subjectivities.

Approaching relationality holistically during the research process is paramount in the IRP. This stance gives research a unique feature that positions the participants as part of a process that collectively constructs knowledge in a close connection with the natural world, the universe, and their predecessors (Chilisa, 2012). I followed a relational research methodology involving an inter-epistemic dialogue (Parra & Gutiérrez, 2018) between Narrative Inquiry (Barkhuizen, 2013; Barkhuizen et al., 2004; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), Narrative Pedagogy (Goodson & Gill, 2011) and IRP (Arévalo 2013; Chilisa, 2012; Smith, 1999, Wilson, 2001; 2008).

The interepistemic dialogue explained above was possible due to the intersections and resonances among Narrative Inquiry, Narrative Pedagogy, and the IRP, being one of them, the use of narratives to

understand people's experiences and what they learn from them, and their interest on privileging the participants' voice. However, Narrative Pedagogy and Narrative Inquiry belong to the Western tradition and the IRP honors ancestral knowledge (Posada, 2020). I would like to clarify that, although I used IRP, I did not work with indigenous students; in that way, I used it because it resonated with me, and I think it is a non-extractivist methodology because of the characteristics I mentioned above.

The relational methodology I used as part of my doctoral dissertation was developed into three stages. During the first stage, I looked for some pre-service teachers who wanted to take part in a study that sought to comprehend the senses of 'community otherwise'. I explained to them the purposes of the research project; they signed a consent form and then, we decided that we were going to write autobiographies to publish in blogs. Afterwards, we carried out five sessions following a protocol that in the IRP is a way to show respect towards the participants. By the time we started these sessions, I was granted academic leave. This diminished my authority figure, I guess. Then the participants asked me to teach them how to analyze data. We did follow Bandura's autobiography and Miles, Hubberman and Saldaña's (2014) process of coding and pattern coding. Then, we had a group session to work on the participants' autobiographies and finally, one to one session mainly with the purpose of understanding each participant's analysis.

During the data analysis sessions, that I called interaction, to exchange and generate knowledge because we co-constructed knowledge, I asked the preservice teachers if they had any ideas for us to represent the data, and they said they did not have any as they were in the sixth semester, I explained to them about Poetic Representation (Leavy, 2020; Richardson, 2001) which is a way to represent data away from the academic discourse that names and categorizes people. As the four participants liked literature, they agreed to use Poetic Representation, and we re-presented the data through narrative poems taking extracts from the sessions and blogs. Two of the participants wrote the poems on

their own, and I wrote the poems on behalf of the other two as they had started to work. These two preservice teachers granted me permission to do it. Therefore, the resulting poems had a dialogical character (Bakhtin, 1984) since they contain my perspective and the preservice teachers' words.

Poetic Representation (PR) is a form of Arts Based Research that poses serious challenges to qualitative methods' conventions. It can be used to collect data or to represent it through the use of poems (Leavy, 2020). I used to in the representation stage, as stated earlier. The use of PR is aligned with relational methodologies since it offers new directions in the process of data analysis. Data analysis is usually carried out by the researcher. However, PR permits the confluence of different voices. There is the voice of the one who writes the poem, the one who interprets it (the reader, the researcher, and the writer themselves). The use of poetry "has the potential to shift the researcher's perspectives, to take alternative stances, and to view research fields more critically" (Chawla as cited in Naide, 2014, p. 3). I would like to state that I was not sure at the beginning that using PR would echo the doctoral studies. Nevertheless, I found the support of my tutor and evaluators, who not only found PR innovative, but also valid and, above all an opportunity to acknowledge the role of the participants in the construction of knowledge.

I would like to close this part sharing a poem by Luna, one of the participants who identified her English Language Teacher Education Program as one of the communities she belongs to and thus invite the reader to interpret Luna's poem:

X⁹

The Education Program is good,
They make great teachers there,
They make you reflect,
About your culture
And other cultures as well.

9 This poem was written in 2019. It was originally written in English.

Languages and cultures relate
Along the process
I have wanted to quit,
But then I stop and think
What does be an English teacher mean?
Is it about the language?
Is it about research?
Is it about giving grades?
An answer I get,
Change yourself
And then change the world,
Be with the ones
Who contribute to
To make the world a better place

Inconclusive Remarks

In sum, resorting to an epistemic dialogue that takes into account the intersections and resonances between Western research and ancestral practices that privilege the participants' voices and experiences is a possibility to bring about different voices in the comprehension of learning experiences within academic contexts. The inclusion of those participants in data analysis is another way to approach research, and it constitutes the emergence of possibilities *otherwise* (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). Finally, problematizing the hegemonic concept of community makes it possible to imagine English teacher education beyond the global designs, since it is a way to acknowledge the voices of the Global South scholars whose view of community differs from the modern concept of community. Now, we would like to share how Yolanda used the Epistemologies of the South to research teachers' knowledge.

Adriana: Using the Epistemologies of the South to Research Teacher's Knowledge

Beginning my PHD coursework, I was not aware of what it entailed to be geopolitically/epistemically located somewhere. Despite that, as a woman-

teacher-researcher epistemologically located in the Global South, I have received the effect of such a geopolitical location, but I had hardly reflected upon it. Pursuing a doctoral degree in my own country, within a program that embraces the EOS, eventually meant that my former taken for granted truths underwent re-shaping. I think-feel that our profession will keep on being re-thought as we are moving ahead with toppling the statue of a single knowledge hierarchy as taught through Western approaches to research. In the remainder of this section, I will explain how I used tenets of the decolonial turn to research teachers' knowledge in ELT, and how I dissociated myself from previous research traditions in such endeavors.

Having carried out a literature review on the issue of knowledge to teach English with a decolonial lens (Castañeda-Londoño, 2019), I noticed that historically such knowledge has mostly revolved around skills, beliefs, cognition, and accumulated experiential knowledge, as observed through the lens of cognitive, socio-cultural or poststructuralist perspectives. However, conceptualizations about teachers' knowledge from a critique to Western modernity were missing; previous perspectives of knowledge for teaching English did not include the junctions of body, mind, emotion, geopolitical location, or intersectionalities (gender, class, race) in explanations of teachers' knowledge —much less of teachers located in the Global South.

Another puzzling theme referred to the cliché types of research questions asked to investigate teachers' knowledge. Normally, they revolved around what knowledge was necessary to teach 'well', how teachers should proceed with such a repertoire of ideas, practices, and experiences, how knowledge increased or decreased as time went by, but not around how teachers experienced their relationships to knowledge, or even how we could think of knowledge as thinking-feeling in a particular body that is physically present, in a certain time and space, and with a particular family history, personal and social struggles, certain social class, and privilege —or lack of it.

Knowledge for ELT had been investigated via questionnaires, journals, in situ observations, teachers' lesson plans or narratives. Yet, because I wanted to understand how teachers related to knowledge from a more, let us say, visceral perspective, I was not convinced that ticking items, writing reflections, or analyzing lesson plans could lead me to unpack experiences of knowledge. Reading about and embracing the decolonial turn tenets also opened a window to learning about complementary currents of thought, such as Latin feminist theory. I felt compelled by Castro Gomez & Grosfoguel (2007, p. 17) when stating, "we need to look outside of our paradigms, approaches, disciplines and fields of knowledge". That is what I did by adopting the use of testimonial narratives as understood in the Chicana Feminist tradition (Benmayor, 2012). This type of writing and talking entails preparing the mind/body/emotion to write about the experiences that have made us grow personally and professionally while using free writing, memory recall activities, dialogue with other teachers so that stories can be enriched.

Research in ELT has explored storied knowledge (Golombek & Johnson, 2004) to cognitively understand teachers' practices; narratives are normally used as tools to document teachers' development or as cognitive vehicles to inner cognition, though. Still, I was more interested in storied knowledge hardly documented in ELT: the stories that hurt, changed, or stuck in the mind/body/emotion for their meaning. Similarly, the EoS made me reflect that I had to tackle the issue of not considering research participants as mere informants in the data collection process. Therefore, the teachers who participated in the study were also invited to communally interpret and analyze their own testimonial narratives.

My aim was to re-think the knowledge *needed* for teaching English. I was interested in finding out *absent* knowledges or experiences of knowledge that had not been documented in mainstream ELT research. Such *absence* of studies about the theories in the flesh (Anzaldúa, 2000, 2009) is mainly because, in my view, ELT research is meant

to document the stories of success but not those of failure, fear, and despair embedded in teaching. I wanted to advance the concept of knowledge for English teaching beyond socio-cultural or cognitive perspectives by locating knowledge at the emotional and bodily levels of our teaching personas as bodies located in the Global South. Hence, my argument is that we experience knowledge in our mind, our emotions, and our body at once.

To conduct the study, I taught part of a course in second language acquisition to a group of teachers doing M.A degree in Applied Linguistics to TEFL with a strong critical theory component. A part of each lesson was devoted to critically analyzing our own teaching experiences through the lens of vivid memories. I Marveled at the use of testimonial narratives in Chicana Feminists studies of Latinos' life stories, I understood that such writings 'in the flesh' (Anzaldúa, 2009) could document teachers' professional lives. Saturated with 'how to' approaches (i.e., how to teach strategies, how to teach grammar, or how to use CLIL) to knowledge for English teaching, I resorted to more holistic concepts of knowledge that considered body, emotion, and cognition (e.g. Rendon, 2009). The teachers who participated in the study also read samples of this type of writing from the Latino Life Story class of Benmayor (2012) to see the epistemic potential of this kind of knowledge production practice.

To produce testimonial narratives, memory-recall activities were used. Teachers found moments of despair along their professional lives that, for some reason, stuck in the mind, and that simultaneously opened a window to the unsaid, to the so-called tacit knowledge. They shared their initial ideas and drafts with other teachers. The last step was developing communal interpretations of teachers' own narratives to enrich perspectives and have a more collaborative research process following the tenets of the EoS. Testimonial narratives as the following one could be thought of as *narratives of despair* in which teaching episodes that are stored in our bodies, hearts, and minds can have a way out to be shared, and communal meaning-makings

are foregrounded in an overt attempt to oralize experiential knowledge. Hence, different levels of meaning-making can be reached; co-interpretations or communal meaning making talks are used to dismantle the view of researchers as the (lonely) finders of truths via research.

Josue's Testimonial Narrative and Communal Interpretation with Other Teachers

Josue: "What I did is part of my passions. I hope you can enjoy it..."

(Josue sang a rap song he had been preparing for at least a month based on his grasp of the concept of testimonial writing. Other 8 teachers were listening to him, including me):

RULE OF THREE

That morning I prepared my bag.

It was full of certainties and confidence.

when I came back home, I felt I was dragged

by panic, trying to seek for sense.

A 21-year-old guy assuring knowing it all.

A 21-year-old guy eager to cry

when these guys didn't care but kicked a boy on the floor.

No one told him what to do, he just tried.

Students without break time, shouted and mistreated

felt his disappointment and fragility.

He wanted to make them reason thoroughly,

all he got was whisper and laugh about it.

Chorus

When you open that door and see their faces,

a bunch of emotions come to me on the spot.

I see myself as rising from the ashes,

I see myself as doing something more than just using my throat.

Six am, tired of monotony I make up the stratagem.

Employing their discourse, I rescue the root,

I feel like breathing more than oxygen...

rough and tough but there we are, challenging the plot.

Six of them, often times fewer,

tell me how they feel, what they do,

how often they dream, and what they remember.

They look at me as the expert,

I show myself just as a dude.

Pressed and overwhelmed by the standards

and the role of clerk rather than of educator.

I visit my texts, my classmates, and professors,

and I convince myself that I am not that braggart.

Chorus

When you open that door and see their faces,

a bunch of emotions come to me on the spot.

I see myself as rising from the ashes,

I see myself as doing more than just using my throat.

Sitting down on my years, I see myself valuing my tears.

Every breath, every risk and every sacrifice

will have been worth it all, and I'll be going beyond the advice,

I'll have beaten the anxious, low-esteemed and full of fears:

Changing selves and breaking chains, including mine...

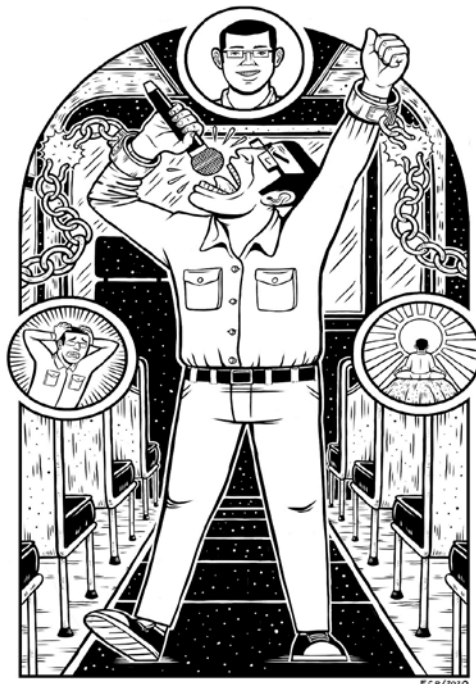


Figure 1. Testimonial narrative illustrated by artist Felipe Camargo Rojas.

Source: Felipe Camargo Rojas, (2021).

At the end of the course ‘theories of second language acquisition’, two sessions of four hours were devoted to sharing and interpreting aloud what the read stories inspired. They all listened to these recorded sessions to reflect on what they had written, shared, and learned from themselves and the others. Below an excerpt of communal interpretation of the previous testimonial narrative:

Josué: ... The three things I talked about were: first of all, frustration; then, happiness; and finally, hope...

Alex: For me, the first part... It is like a reminder of a past experience. Probably, when you were doing teaching practicum. If I’m not wrong at 21, I was also doing my practicum. I could relate it a little bit with me... That university prepares you to teach, gives you the tools how to do it, but when you enter a classroom as a student-teacher reality is totally different, right? Sometimes we assume that because we have an excellent lesson plan the class is going to be excellent but sometimes, we have, like shocking experiences... In this first

part, you are retelling a very shocking experience of violence or physical aggression...

Javier: ...He feels pressed by the system itself... When he mentions education as a business, right? when he says: “the role of a clerk rather than of educator”. When he says: “visit my texts, my classmates”, he is recognizing the value of continuing studying as a way of liberation. Something that Freire would affirm as well. Probably, somehow, he feels oppressed by education, but he himself believes in the role of change... Breaking the chains...

...He needs this discourse of education as a liberating tool, in order to continue... To... To cope with frustration... At the beginning he had such a shocking experience, but he still believes in the power of education... “They look at me as an expert, I show myself as a dude”, he is trying to break down that top-down model of education.

...Josue recognizes himself as a subject, right? What I have perceived so far in our readings...Is the condition of teachers as objects and how we, in certain practices, even make small changes, we can show agency, we can see ourselves as subjects.

...He is being a subject, not just being a clerk but a subject.

Adriana: ... It’s been seven years since you last rapped, you said, what motivated you to come back to this?

Josué: ... It was not easy because somehow there is an inner feeling; it comes from my childhood; I didn’t know how to handle certain situations. Then, I kept that for years and years. Every bad situation... I stored and stored this feeling. When I entered the classroom, the first classroom was the opportunity like for a critical moment. I was alone in that classroom, there was no homeroom teacher. They were not even teens, they were kids. They were in second grade. They threw papers, telling each other rude words. I thought I would have their attention: “please listen to me, it’s important”, they didn’t care. They were kicking each other. Five of them started to kick one on the floor. I dragged him, and one of the guys kicked my leg. I did my

practicum in Palermo, close to my parents' home. I used to smoke. That day I was walking home. That distance I walked, I smoked like five, six cigarettes. It was so shocking for me. [Approaching Javier] Now that you talk about the subject, I'm subject now in terms of language. Somehow, I can do things, but I am subjected to an epistemology, to a vision of reality. I am subjected still today.

Adriana: ...How did you transition from the image of the expert to the image of the dude?

Josué: It is because of an international exam I took last year... IELTS. I saw the job market and with a C1 level in terms of this framework... I would have a good salary; I wanted to get married. I wanted to do many things. So, I knew that if I wanted to make that happen, I would have to look for this opportunity. In XXX institute, you have different salary scales. I was put at the very beginning in the highest. My partners said: "Wow you took academic IELTS", "C1", I was... Wow, there... In the clouds. It was also a discourse I self-imposed, the expert. I started touching the ground again; I realized I am not a braggart. I had an egotistical part because we are complex beings like Bakhtin said replicating... replicating like a ventriloquist.

Adriana: It was not your voice?

Josué: Exactly, it was not my voice. I started detaching from that. That's why I mention you guys and my professor. I came back to my roots.

(... Dialogue continues). (2019)

Knowledge Experienced through Emotions, Reflection, and Resistance.

If Josué's words were examined with a frame of content knowledge or disciplinary knowledge, what he expressed would pass as something abstract not related to knowledge at all. It would not fit any categorization as analyzed by normal ELT frames. However, from a decolonial lens, it could be said that Josué's knowledge experience is first approached through emotion and feelings as observed in descriptive, physical, and emotional verbs such as: 'cry', 'shout', 'whisper', 'laugh', 'see faces', 'breath', and

'see oneself'; as well as adjectives such as: 'pressed', and 'overwhelmed'. Also, He experiences knowledge within a sort of tension of what he expects: being a dude, as opposed to what the knowledge society expects from him: an expert, a discourse he felt he self-imposed to thrive in the system.

Teachers are constructed in the Western canon as experts and such expertise, at least in the ELT case, is to be demonstrated (via IELTS), enacted (within institutional frames), sustained through economic perks (having different salary scales, depending on competency level) and hopefully praised through social mobility for the most outstanding teachers so that personal goals can be achieved (getting married). Josué experiences knowledge in a conflicting tension insofar, as not wanting to be constructed as a braggart as the system pushes him to be. The current system of language education as thought of by language institutes constructed him as a language expert, and he abides by it, but Josué feels he is more than that; he wants to be seen as an educator.

The distress relates to the concept of knowledge with market value and knowledge without market value; teachers value knowledge that is not usually traced in test-taking practices or standards, but the kind of experiences that lack validation because they surpass what is of most worth in the knowledge economy. Therefore, what it feels like to experience school violence, deprofessionalization, subject positions (a braggart, a dude, or an expert) are far less important to what counts as knowledge of teaching currently. The phrase, "I see myself as rising from the ashes", tells us that a constant re-birth is needed to keep on being a teacher in Global South classrooms. Josué seems to experience knowledge through emotion, reflection, and social practices such as resistance. Resistance that can be observed in his written reflection: "I draw on these dominant discourses to intend to revert what they do". Drawing on dominant discourses to revert them may to some extent challenge Lorde's (1984, p. 1) seminal thought that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house", because Josué actually uses the master's tools to dismantle the master's house.

Ideas such as “sitting down on my years, I see myself valuing my tears”, “Five of them started to kick one on the floor. I dragged him, and one of the guys kicked my leg” or “That day I was walking home... That distance I walked, I smoked like five, six cigarettes. It was so shocking for me”, Josué reminds us that his experience of knowledge is lived in his very flesh. As a teacher-researcher engaged with a decolonial perspective I align with Diversi & Moreira (2009) when “refusing to erase the flesh from the study of humans” because “humans... experience the world through a very specific physical location: their bodies...bodies are physical, psychological, social, cultural, and political, all at once always.” (p. 32) Therefore, our bodies also hold the experiential knowledge collected along the process of living teaching experiences.

Based on the critique of the colonality of knowledge (Mignolo 2009), I bring to the fore that Josué is not a delocalized, disembodied, and universalized knowing being, but a person that experiences knowledge in particular local Colombian contexts, being them public schools or language institutes that have unique impacts on his teaching persona: through school violence or epistemological subjection. Within an epistemology of wholeness (Rendon, 2009), Josue dives into dehumanizing knowledge practices such as the survival of the fittest (i.e having better perks due to higher competence levels) recognizing himself as a subject of knowledge while feeling bound to a modern epistemology. He made evident his constant cognitive, emotional, and bodily struggle of maintaining his status of “expert” that can secure him economic stability without having to resort to turning into “a braggart”, a dehumanizing identity of a language teacher for him.

Provisional Coda

Probably, we have taken for granted that the knowledge required to teach ELT should be found in lectures, books, articles, methods, approaches, strategies, and discourses, to name but a few. Knowledge, therefore, appears to be something pure: free from conflict, gender, race, class, emotion, body,

or geographical location. Drawing on the EoS, there are absent epistemologies that need to be rescued, that is, they do exist, but they have been made invisible by the Western canon. Such awareness led me to enquire: How do ELT teachers experience knowledge? Comprehending, appropriating, and adapting a few tenets of the EoS have allowed me to walk new paths towards a decolonial horizon in ELT. The process is worth being experienced, for it leads to much needed localized and context-bound experiences and interpretations of our realities. Still, there is a long path to walk.

Concluding charla:

Adriana: How do you think this paper may inspire readers?

Yolanda: Well, more than inspiring our readers, I think we are advocating for collective work that recognizes teachers and learners’ knowledges that have been constructed through their experiences, practices and deep introspections on who they-we are be-being and becoming. In this vein, developing sensitive-critical and political consciousness and doings, we are challenging and resisting the modern, technical colonial rationality of research.

Julia: I like that metaphor by Corona Berkin (2020, p. 33), who suggests seeing research as “quitarle el micrófono hegemónico a la investigación regida por criterios científicos” (taking away the hegemonic microphone to research ruled by scientific criteria). We have to start thinking of research as something worth doing for everybody not just for professors to get points. More than giving research recipes, the former ideas are ways to invite to see research differently. By the way, we have been questioned on why this paper was written in English?

Adriana: Well, English... because we want to reach a larger audience, and decolonial projects abound all around the world. So, it is not a discussion of the code per se, but one related to the tenets of Western epistemology being produced in colonial languages. We just can’t help that.

Julia: You're right. What is that author you mentioned when we were discussing why we wrote this article in English?

Adriana: Ah it was Audre Lorde. Dismantling the master's house with the master's tools.

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