

TEACHERS' DISCOURSES TOWARDS ELT TEXTBOOK IN THE EFL CLASSROOM
IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL IN LA UNION, ANTIOQUIA.

By:

Ana María Bejarano Marín
Universidad Católica de Oriente

Julio 2019

Abstract

The materials that teacher uses in the classroom play an important role, not just in the development of the class, but also show how teachers understand their practice. This paper focus on knowing the discourses towards ELT textbooks in EFL classrooms, all of this from teachers perspective, as the mediator between textbooks and students learning. Using open interviews and participant observation, was possible to draft what are those discourses and how they form. Consequently, discourses towards the use of textbooks could change according to the context in which they are being used, this paper concentrates on identifying teachers discourses towards textbooks in EFL classrooms in a public school in the urban area of La Unión, Antioquia.

Resumen

Los materiales que los maestros usan en el aula juegan un papel importante, no solo en el desarrollo de la clase, sino que también muestran cómo los maestros entienden su práctica. Este documento se enfoca en conocer los discursos sobre los libros de texto ELT en las aulas de EFL, todo esto desde la perspectiva de los maestros, como el mediador entre los libros de texto y el aprendizaje de los estudiantes. Mediante entrevistas abiertas y observación participante, fue posible esbozar cuáles son esos discursos y cómo se forman. En consecuencia, los discursos sobre el uso de los libros de texto podrían cambiar de acuerdo con el contexto en el que se están utilizando, este documento se concentra en identificar los discursos de los maestros sobre los libros de texto en las aulas de EFL en una escuela pública en el área urbana de La Unión, Antioquia.

Key words: Discourse, regime of truth English Language Teaching, materials, textbooks.

Literature Review

Cultural content is incorporated into English Language Teaching (ELT) material to enrich linguistic content. ELT materials produced commercially are cultural artefacts with a variety of roles in education. They can be informative, instructional, experiential, eliciting and exploratory in nature as seen in Stec (2017) research study. Stec mentioned that all children use English textbooks that include cultural content; they participate in the intercultural process from the very beginning, as any language learning requires social interaction, comparing, and connecting cultures. It is well known that language is a part of culture and culture is encoded in the language itself. For instance, the aim of Stec project is to identify the most important multimodal aspects of cultural content offered in English textbooks for early language education by the analysis of nine course books currently used in teaching English to young learners in Polish primary schools. The data was collected during the evaluation studies, which there are both quantitative and qualitative in nature.

Stec (2017) theorized that there are three dimensions that can be identified in English materials concerning cultural content, namely, a focus on the learner's own culture, the target language culture of the countries where English is spoken as the first language and, finally, the international culture where English is used as a lingua franca. Therefore, it was concluded that ELT materials designed for early education include a selection of the cultural topics mainly limited to festivals and celebrations, each section of the cultural content includes the core modes of image, language, sound, and music in different degree and it may have implications for the design of teaching materials produced for the local or international market.

Xu (2013) found that students that learn English are exposed to linguistic and cultural expressions and values that they did not have first-hand experiences with, and they could not

have the opportunity “to challenge the knowledge or put it to use in their immediate contexts”(Xu, 2013. p.2). His hypothesis was extracted from different analysis of English textbooks adopted nationwide for senior secondary schools in China, these textbooks have been collected as data and they have been analyzed.

It is important to consider that globalization and culture, and the analysis of the textbook data have implications for ELT textbook writers as well as teachers and learners of English in a global English as International Language context. Xu (2013) also found that the notions of globalization and culture can be interpreted differently in different cultures. The selection and composition of English texts for EIL instruction should be based on the current conceptualizations of globalization and culture. As a conclusion the author said that the ongoing globalization and multicultural awareness, alongside the paradigm shift to teaching English Language in the Chinese context have engendered desirability for incorporating multicultural and multimodal ELT materials in China. It is, therefore, as the current secondary English textbook data analysis testifies, not only feasible but also natural and timely to focus on the local learners as the legitimate users of English in ELT materials, and this has significant implications for textbook writers and editors, as well as learners and teachers of English.

On the other hand, Siegle (2014) speculated that the authenticity of textbooks content may be questionable due to the difficulty Japanese students showed when it came to engaging in conversation using English, and the lack of inclusion of the topics presented in the textbooks. Her research, qualitative in nature, draws attention to ELT textbooks authenticity outside the classroom context. Furthermore, she argued that the analysis of textbook centres on language itself, leaving aside the topics authenticity; meaning, the discussions people actually have in real life. Her study’s aims were to identify the kind of English conversations

Japanese and non-Japanese English speakers have outside the classroom, and to better connect textbooks topics use in EFL classrooms. To do so, data was collected from conversational topics from a selection of commercially published books, and conversations between Japanese and non-Japanese English speakers, to finally be compared and categorized.

The lack of authenticity in EFL textbook's conversational topics influence the use students have of the actual English language in their daily lives, as those contents then to be superficial or more universal, leaving out cultural components. Being so, teachers could play the role of mediators between those topics and students by bringing to the classroom discussion topics that are more suitable for their particular context, supplementing standard textbooks.

Now, as mentioned before, the role of textbooks in the ELT classroom does not limit itself to be the tool throughout learners approach to the English language, but also seems to determine the kind of relationship they forge with it. And this is why recent studies focus on the critical analysis and evaluation of those materials. A study conducted by Litz (2016) calls to consideration the importance of teachers and students evaluation of textbooks, particularly around the idea of textbook representation (gender, language, and cultural representation), and textbook layout and use. It should be noted that the reason why the critical evaluation of textbooks in need is because these materials a widely accepted point of reference to which standards and levels the learner should accomplish regarding the English language.

Litz (2016) aimed attention at textbook evaluation through textbook evaluation questionnaires applied to teacher and students at Sung Kyun Kwan University, in South Korea, as well as a student's needs survey, in order to determine if textbook answer to those needs. His findings showed that the textbook analyzed have discoursoning gaps referring to

identity representation but teachers still founded appealing and possible to use with the appropriate audience. Asserting that, textbooks should not be the measure of the goals in the teaching and learning process, that role should be fill by teacher and learners as they are the ones involved in the use of the language, they understand and recognize the needs and the context in which these surge. Textbooks should be at the service of learners and teachers, no the other way around.

In that order of ideas, teachers role as intermediaries between textbooks and students claims greater relevance, as are teachers who negotiated the position textbooks take in the classroom. Forman (2014) has argued that as EFL textbooks are largely an import from western English speaking countries, its content is plagued with Anglo-American cultural values, and use of the language, even though it is used mainly by non-Anglophone speakers. Nonetheless, the pedagogical use teachers do of textbooks is what makes the difference when it comes to how students language perception, meaning if they acknowledge English language as being difficult to learn, or useful, or even the kind of approach learners take to learn it. Forman's study in a Thai university recognized the importance of teacher voice in a EFL textbook centre curriculum; by observing and interviewing English teachers he got a glance of the use and perception they have towards the textbooks content, and the interaction of students with it.

As a result, he concluded that for that particular context the textbook content seem irrelevant, due to students needs and realities, therefore it was not significant for them as a tool for learning; on the teacher side, even when they expressed how difficult teaching the language can be due to the out of context and significance the textbook can be, they felt tied to use of it. This situation can motivate a more intertwined work between producers and users

of the material, meaning publisher and teachers, or encourage teacher to modify the content in order to be more contextualized to the students needs and realities.

In conjunction with the prior argument, teachers contributions in the subject of their craft is one of the most relevant points to research, as they are the ones actually in the classroom dealing with the realities of the practice. National language teaching policies have to take into account teachers input when regulating the teaching practice; these policies more often than not formulate a curriculum that ignores the realities of the classroom, either by demanding out of context language objective, or by binding them to English teaching to certain materials. Therefore, understanding what are the discourses around those policies takes central stage. Escobar (2012) study focused attention on the discourses emanating from the language national policies in Colombia, where he point at a critical analysis of the logics underneath the goals of such policies. Language policies in Colombia steer their purpose to being bilingual, therefore being successful, and being Colombian in a global context.

By performing a Critical Discourse Analysis to the language policies, all the guidelines it is bound to, Escobar (2012) concluded that those policies discourses respond to inner power dynamics where being bilingual seems to mean learning English only, being successful equals to be more productive, and being Colombian in global environments refers to being limited to stereotypes that characterize Colombian citizens as the underdogs which serve international needs without taking into account their own. Bearing this in mind, educational systems crumble under the market demands of those imposing the policies.

As mentioned before teachers discourses towards the topics which influence their practice seem to be a neglected research area specially in Colombia; the most visible exception being Mendez Rivera (2018) study, where she embarked on the task of identifying teacher discourses and logics regarding Colombian bilingual policy (Colombia Bilingüe), in

particular Bogotá's public policies of bilingualism (Bogotá Bilingüe). Teachers' role goes further to teach the subject in matter of their practice, it also tackles human interaction and the shades that it take; but sometimes that practice gets limited by economical, State, cultural, and social forces. Among those forces public policies are highlighted by the author as the ones that set the pace for teaching practices and teachers' discourses.

Moreover, the studies presented before show either, discourses or material effect of the aspects which are involved in English language learning and teaching; however, Mendez Rivera (2018) study shows that material effects, meaning use of teaching material, learning results, ways of learning and teaching, do not come from nowhere; they're based on discourses form from individual and collective logics or even political and sociocultural demands; therefore it makes sense to look at material effects as lived experiences and practices *in light of* discourses, as they shape one another. Her main concern is to know teacher discourses towards bilingual policies, and how those discourses carve the classroom practices and experiences.

Consequently, she proposes archaeology as a methodological resource, meaning the use of historical, political, and philosophical reflections as tools to understand the multiplicity of angles with which an object can be study. To do so regarding teacher discourses a thorough document analysis was conducted; from legal documents to specialize journals, going all the way through experts and institutional documents and national press news statements. All of which gather reflections, positions, statements in relation with linguistics and bilingual policies, as well as English teacher's considerations and social assessment. Mendez Rivera (2018) has concluded so far, first that language teachers call for a more inclusive bilingual policy, even if Colombian bilingual program focus on English they signal for the acknowledge of other possibilities, mainly towards indigenous languages;

second, the generalized nonconformity with social assessment of native English teacher vs. Non native English teacher, since English does not belong to just native speaker, being an international language, there is a defence to make in favor of the majority of users and teachers outside of the inner circle of English. This research is still in progress and more result are yet to be published.

In conclusion, as it is evidenced, in recent times research regarding textbooks content analysis has risen interest, as well as Critical Discourse Analysis of teachers discourses and practices in and out the classroom. Regardless, teachers discourses and logics towards EFL textbooks in the classroom does not seem to be a topic well explored in Colombian context. In light of that, this paper intends to identify what are those discourse and where they come from.

Statement of the problem

In several moments of history there has been a language that intended to be a bridge among humanity, either for commerce, ideas, philosophy, in short to bring communities together and make human interaction easier between borders.¹ Moving to recent history, after World War II, English is the language which takes the lead in academic and economic fields, making it the most studied language in the world (Bennet, 2013). To respond to the globalized tendency several countries interested in participating in the global trade have adopted education policies that are expected to allow their citizens to learn and be part of the economic globalized world. It is for that reason that ELT practices and communicative approaches take relevance in the classroom interaction.

¹ Known as *linguas francas*, this languages have serve an important role into the development of societies and commercial and cultural exchange. From the renaissance until late XIX century Italian and French were the most spoken languages among diplomats and merchants. Global turmoil during the world wars change that and make German and English the dominant languages, the latest being the one use today as *lingua franca* (Cogo & Dewey: 2012, p.10)

Teachers and students all around the world work with English teaching materials which are designed to help them achieve the goal of acquiring the language and making them fit within the global tendencies. These materials play a key role in ELT practices; in fact, Tomlinson (2008, p. 6) asserts that today's ELT learning materials can help students to become independent learners, as well as the notion that some materials are well designed enough for students to be attracted to the language and the different culture experiences that they offer. Moreover, the use of the materials in the classroom is a practice that is ultimately mediated by the teacher; how the teacher approaches the materials and the use of its content will influence the learners' interaction with the language and therefore to an extent to the culture it represents.

Now, Colombian classroom practices are not the exception, even though the national laws² and language policies talk of bilingualism in a open matter allowing room for other languages different from English, National Education Ministry (MEN) has a program called "*Colombia Bilingüe*" that sets the pulse on what students should know in a communicative level in a foreign language. The program focuses on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and has a guide to present the basic competence standards that students should achieve in each grade or level (MEN, 2006). Furthermore, as the guide centres on communicative competences, it does not actually mentions materials usage in the classroom as a specific topic or item, meaning that teachers has autonomy with how they use material, and what kind of material they use. In that other words, teachers in Colombian ELT classrooms have the freedom of use materials as they see fit to accomplish the communicative standards which their students require.

² Ley 1651 de 2013.
Decreto N° 3870 de 2 de Noviembre de 2006

That being said, the particular material that draws attention to this paper is English learning textbooks and the use and discourses that around them. All of this from teachers' perspective, as the mediator between textbooks (sociolinguistic context, content, purpose, etc.) and students learning. Considering that these discourses, and the way in which they are formed actually affect teaching practices by reproducing and modifying the content to be taught and the possible methodologies to put in practice in the classroom, unpacking these discourses (and practices) becomes an important question.

Consequently, discourses towards the use of textbooks could change according to the context in which they are being used, this paper concentrates on identifying teachers' discourses towards textbooks in EFL classrooms in a public school in the urban area of *La Unión*, Antioquia; it could even be possible to contrast those discourses with the practice and use of textbooks in the classroom.

Context

La Unión, Antioquia is a town in Eastern Antioquia characterized for its cold weather (13°C average), its green landscape, and its kind and welcoming people. It is 56 km from Antioquia's capital city Medellín. It is a town where agriculture is the main source of income as well as mineral mining; the people there say that the town has the higher number of tractors in South America due to potato growing, the most representative product in La Unión. Even the local festivities are dedicated to potatoes called "The Potato Festival" (*La fiesta de la Papa*). The town has agriculture and mining as principal livelihood deriving in a culture of country people in their way to transitioning to more urban ways of living.

Having that in mind, in the urban area, La Unión has one private school and two public schools having under their charge twenty schools localities, both in the rural area and

the urban area. This study was interested in one of those public urban schools, as it is a suitable ground to explore some possible variables that discourse and practice have. As said, the transitioning nature of the culture, where agriculture as main source of economic development has been slowly replaced for formal and informal employment, like stores, supermarkets and industry employment, mimicking a more urban form of economic scheme, allows for a mixed interest when talking about the goals of the school program. The school inserted English in the program bound to national policies, but since there are approximately 1013 students, between primary and secondary school grades, to covert every student individual needs and goals for learning English can proof to be a difficult task. The school has three English teachers, a female teacher for primary school, one female and one male for secondary school, these teachers have to cover the two hours that each group receives in average of English per week.

Research Question

What are the discourses of English Language teachers, in a public school in La Unión, towards textbooks in the EFL classroom?

General Objective

To identify English Language teachers discourses, in a public school in La Unión, towards textbooks in the EFL classroom.

Specific objectives

- To compile English teacher discourses towards textbooks and their use in EFL classrooms.

- To explore how English teachers discourses towards textbooks in EFL classrooms, are formed.
- To place the regimes of truth behind the English teachers discourses towards textbooks in EFL classrooms

Justification

Teachers discourses in the classroom influence the practices and realities they experience with the learners and the contexts they live in. Taking into account that most teachers consider materials, and particularly textbooks, an indispensable tool in ELT, the manner to which the teachers approach those material takes relevance to determine their practices. Textbooks bring sociolinguistic backgrounds that have an impact in the process of learning and teaching the language, either if the textbook is local or international, it will show what is not learnt and how it should be learnt. It is here where the teachers leading discourse takes relevance, considering that she/he is the mediator between the content, use (how) and purpose (why) of the textbook, and the learners.

Global tendencies regarding market and academia have opened a gate for English to be the primary foreign language to be taught at schools, therefore there are national policies, materials, institutions, etc. whose goal is to make it possible for learners around the country to have access to English, and the possibilities the language can provide; but likewise, the idea of learning English loses its purpose if teachers' input is left out of the equation. Teachers are not just a source of information to be delivered in a systematic manner following guide requirements, they are active players in the process of learning, their discourses and realities stage the actual path of learning.

Furthermore, teachers' discourses towards textbooks and the use they have in the classroom is not limited to the internal practice, as discourses do, it tends to replicate and reproduce into the learners and their contexts, meaning that the purpose and the outcome of learning is affected by the reflection teachers do toward the knowledge and how it is presented.

As a future teacher, my main concern is the role teachers play as mediators in the learning and teaching process, more important the discourses which are created towards the tools they use in their practice, how those tools present the language and its purpose, and how teachers use them to achieve learners' goals.

Conceptual references

In the world of learning and teaching English there is plenty of information regarding procedures, methods and approaches, step by step on how to learn and teach the language; even though there is a great deal of information regarding content and methodology, teachers voice and real practice seems to be in a second place. This paper wants to make an attempt to know what are the teachers discourses towards the use of material, particularly textbooks, in English Language Teaching (ELT) contexts; bring to light some of those discourses could show some light to actual practices, beliefs, and information in Colombian language learning and teaching context. To do so, it is necessary to go deep into concepts that will help to approach the core matter of the paper.

In that order of ideas, Brown (2002. p 14) puts ELT in the post-method era of language teaching series of methods and approaches, referring to it as the approach in which non-native speakers learn English language. He proposes that ELT is based on the idea that the goal of language learning is to develop communicative competence, to do so it uses

concepts, techniques and methods in the classroom to identify and handle the communicative needs of the language students. As it is a post-method approach, it shifts focus from product-based methods towards more constructive process-based theories of learning and teaching. Corbett (2003. p 5) points to the notion that a communicative approach has as ultimate goal the acquiring of the language in a native speaker competence, all in a “natural” development of the linguistic skills through an integrated teaching and learning process.

Materials play a big role in that process being the tools used to get closer to the intended information. In that regard, Tomlinson (2011) points out that materials are anything which is used to help students to learn; materials can be textbooks, Internet, newspapers, photocopies, etc. Material can have four qualities, they can be instructional, experimental, elicitive, or exploratory. This means that they can inform about the language, they can provide experiences with language use, they can stimulate language use, or they can help to make discoveries about the language (Tomlinson, 2003. pp. 1-15)

According to Sheldon (1987 cited in McGrath 2002) there are ELT materials that try to develop overall language competences, while others focus more on specific skills; some are intended for use as central coursebooks over extended periods of time; some for short, intensive revision courses and still others for reference/resource purposes. At the end of the day it is the teacher who must give value or not to the materials taking into account the particular needs of her/his learners.

As mentioned before, textbooks are an important part of ELT classrooms because as a learning tool textbooks “tell us something we do not know; they contain interesting content; they provoke a reaction. They are multiply exploitable because they lend themselves to tasks which are interesting as well as useful” (McGrath 2002, p. 107). Sheldon (1987 cited in McGrath 2002) says that a textbook may be defined as a published book that it is sometimes

produced for commercial gain and its explicit aim is to assist foreign learners of English in improving their linguistic knowledge and/or communicative ability. The textbook tends to be used as the foundation of language courses by the fact that it is designed to combine all the linguistic functions. McGrath (2013) mentions the reason why it represents the visible heart of ELT programs, those being:

1. It reduces lesson preparation time;
2. It gives a coherent program to work;
3. Textbook gives support to the teacher;
4. It is resource for learners;
5. It makes possible standardized instruction;
5. It is visually appealing; and
7. most of the time it contains extra material.

However, there are detractors of that spearheaded and optimistic view of textbooks, McGrath himself points out that coursebooks do not take into account the whole person, arguing that these materials do not take adequate reference of differences in learning preferences (2013, p.149).

In addition, Gray (2013) argues that textbooks are cultural and curriculum artefacts, meaning they are key classroom tools (curriculum) that can facilitate language learning, but also they can be which meanings (cultural) emerge from language being taught in association with particular ways of being, particular language varieties, and particular cultural values. In the same way, Gray proposes that textbook can be an ideological tool as well, as they tend to create, reproduced, and sanction existing power relations, race perceptions, and gender determinisms. Gray referred to these particular aspects as hidden curriculum, what meanings

and cultural trades are inside the content of textbooks, and by extension all materials, the kind of information that could shape learners “beliefs and behavior outside the classroom. The hidden curriculum could be illustrations in the textbook that show women playing with dolls and men playing with cars or practicing sports” (Gray, 2013. p 3-17).

This brings the conversation towards discourse, as Taylor (2013) proposes discourse as the language used as evidence of a system or formation of meanings, and the connections of those meanings to society, which includes power relations. It explores the “what it is said”, “how it is said”, and the where it comes from; regarding a particular idea or mind set. In the same vein, Schiffrin (1987) equates language and discourse, not without saying that language (discourse) always occurs in a context and it is context sensitive; this means understanding that discourse is not just what is being said (structure), but also, the social values, the psychological mind set of the speaker, and the sociolinguistic contexts to which the speakers belong.

Furthermore, the concept of discourse sits in line with Foucault's (1991) concept of “regime of truth” which establishes that “truth” is only produced by virtue of multiple forms of constraint; the regime of truth is the types of discourse which each society accepts as true, it is the result of different forces of power like scientific discourse and institutional discourse, and it is built up by the education system, the media, and the movement of political and economic ideology. Several discourses (logics) establish “regimes of truth” based on power interests and realities, the same way that those regimens form discourses, is a two-way dynamic which moves in circles and shapes the perception of the context. Nevertheless, the concept does not refer only to power as it is understood, meaning as a constraint were some hold the advantages and influence over others, and the impact that it holds on social discourse, but also it invites us to make,

“allowances for the complex and unstable process whereby a discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart” (Foucault 1998, p. 101)

In light of the previous concept, Matín Rojo (2010) calls attention towards the discourses and narratives happening in the classroom; teacher-student, student-students, and teacher-teacher relationships shape and create discourses that alter the daily classroom practices. The school rules, the syllabus asserted, the demands students make, etc., seek to influence or keep those discourses, in other words it seeks to reproduce those discourses. Martín Rojo operationalizes a Foucauldian concept of discourse, stating that discourse is a social practice, it establishes a two way relationship between a discourse event and the situation, institution and social structure which frames it (Matrín Rojo, 2010).

Finally, teachers discourse towards textbooks and their use in the classroom, play the role of mediator between the content in the textbook and learners' way to learn and perceive that content. EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms are subject of curriculum planning that responds to institutional goals, either National goals or institutions focus ones, but even though the regulations on “how and what” to teach are suggested in the policy, is the teacher's one and one relationship with learners and materials what will actually determine the shape and meaning of the discourses in the classroom. According to Walsh (2013) the prime challenge in front of teachers is to identify the “obvious” in their classroom and the not so “obvious” within themselves and their students, this to get a grasp of how those dimensions shape the dynamics of the classroom and the learning and teaching process.

Methodology

This paper was approached under the qualitative research design, on the ground that Denzin and Lincon (1994 cited in Pinnegar & Daynes 2007) describe as qualitative research, an approach that studies things in their natural context to understand phenomena with regard to meaning. Pinnegar and Daynes (2007), in addition, mention that qualitative research thinks throughout ideas of interpretation and human actions, meaning that, instead of being about prediction and control, it is more about possibility of understanding. Now, the understanding this study was pretend to be descriptive in nature not action based, the research just wanted to know what are those discourses, there was not intention of intervening or changing the previous mention discourses.

Ethnography was the methodological approach chosen because as stated by Guber (2001, pp. 11-14) it encounters the core of an aspect of human reality based on observation and participation of that aspect, building a narrative constructed of the participant differences and the researcher interpretation. The participant chosen for this research were three English teachers of a public school in La Unión, Antioquia.

These participants were chosen because they work in a public school, being that one of the first alluring factors for this study; there is also the nature of the population they work with, that is to speak of the transitional nature of the town from rural to urban, which reflexes with the context of many towns in Antioquia, and Colombia. Bearing that in mind, the recruit of the participant was made through “snowball sampling” which according to Atkinson and Flint (2001) is a technique for finding participants in which one subject gives the researcher the name of other subjects and so on. Seeking “advantage of the social networks of identified respondents to provide a researcher with an ever-expanding set of potential

contacts” (Atkinson and Flint, 2001). It was also use “Friend of a friend” relationship as the researcher has access to the school and its administrative staff.

Now, to get to the core and fulfill the objective of the research the methods used to collect data were participant observation and non directed interviews. on one hand, participant observation as expressed by Guber (2001, pp. 55-58) as a collection method consist on observe the activities taking place in a systematic way along with taking part of some of those activities; it refers more to the idea of behaving as one of the participants. On the other hand, non directed interviews allow participants to express their discourses in a more informal way. Talking about their experiences, opinions and ideas will be favorable to obtain a much honest response from the participants (2001, pp.75-84).

As for how the data was analyzed, narrative inquiry as a research methodology is the study of experiences, narratives and imaginaries. According to Clandinin (2007, xv-xvi), memory and imagination are the central concepts in a narrative inquiry research, meaning that it creates a story as the narrative explanation of a phenomena. The present research took narrative inquiry as chosen methodology because it pretended to find English teacher discourses towards textbooks, understanding discourse not only as what is spoken but how it is said and where it comes from, to do so it was fundamental to listen to the subject and observe their interaction with the story that they formed around that particular teaching material.

Data analysis

Narrative inquiry shows a schema that structure the way to conduct in a non directed interview, storytelling enables participant to give more details and small but significant parts of their experiences enriching the results of the ethnographic research. Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000) point to the schema as a self-generated characteristic of the way stories are told.

This scheme is:

“1. DETAILED TEXTURE This refers to the need to give detailed information in order to account plausibly for the transition from one event to another. 2.RELEVANCE FIXATION The story-teller reports those features of the event that are relevant according to his or her perspective on the world. 3. CLOSING OF THE GESTALT A core event mentioned in the narration has to be reported completely, with a beginning, a middle and an end.” (Jovchelovitch & Bauer 2000, p. 61)

In that order of ideas, the participants involved in this study were the three English teachers of an urban school in La Unión, Antioquia. With each of them four interviews were conducted, in each interview a different topic was address in the following order: 1. Education background, 2.Teaching experience, 3. Textbook as a tool, as resource, or a main planning strategy, 4. Textbooks content and classroom materials creation. These teachers are two females and one male. The female primary teacher has worked in the education field almost 15 years, all of those years she has been teaching to young learners and very young learners, in fact, she is graduated in elementary school teaching. The female teacher in secondary school has been a teacher for 13 years, she is a Modern Languages graduated, her teaching experiences has focus mostly on teenagers in public schools. The male teacher works with secondary school, he has been a teacher for around 9 years and has experienced in both public and private schools. Now, none of the English teachers in this school are from the town, as a matter of fact, two of them are from outside Antioquia region.

Regarding textbooks, in the storytelling exercise, they all agree that those particular materials are a useful tool when it comes to class development and curricula planning, the male participant is the coordinator of the English language subject in the school and he says that the pre-given order of topics that are in textbooks make sense as conductive thread for

the practical planning in class. The two remaining teachers agree with him and follows directions in the planning and curricula building. When asked to talk about the content of the textbooks, whether if it is completed, contextualize and appropriate for their students, they seem to have differences in their answers.

Female primary teacher sees the content a bit advance for her students, and sometimes outside the reality of the context which (according to her) does not help students to relate to the language, this situation stresses the need for her to create different materials beyond the textbook such as billboards, games, photocopies, role plays, videos, etc. Female secondary teacher says that ELT textbooks are supposed to show the context from which they come from as the whole point of learning a different language is to put students in touch with different cultures and contexts; she diverts from the activities in the textbook only when strictly necessary and more as a way to get deeper on the topics. As for male secondary teacher he sees the textbook as the only tool necessary for the development of the class, for him the activities included in those cover all the language skills and provide further work at home.

As for participant observations, Laurier (2010) exposes that there is nor a formal step by step to follow when being introduced to the context intended to observe, this method of collecting data relays on the researcher impressions and experiences with the participant. This research used a simple form created for the researcher to help follow the classes in which she was being part of The observations show great deal of agreement between the answers obtain from the interviews and the actual practice in the classroom; the researcher even had the chance of reading aloud from the textbook and complete the questionnaires proposed in the material.

Discussion

As discussion, it is indispensable to highlight the importance of including teachers' discourses in the argument of education, as they seem to be overlooked when it comes to create policies and curricula that they are supposed to follow, their experiences and practice are part of the core of education. As well, it is central to emphasize that this course of research could be wider since this was a very small group of participants and it is possible that with a bigger group the discourses vary as the context in which they are being used vary as well.

Conclusion

In conclusion, as the purpose of this research exercise was to know teacher discourses towards ELT textbooks in EFL classroom, it was shown that there is an agreement on the importance of the material when it comes to talk of how practical and simplifying is to plan class and activities, as well as its value as a tool for students to get in touch with the other contexts, cultures and realities. Teachers' educational backgrounds play a key role on how they perceive ELT textbooks, it was observed that teachers with English language educational background seem to rely more on the material and show more confidence on its use during the classes, even to the point to centre their class planning on it. In contrast the teacher whose main background is not English language sees the textbook as one of the many possible tools for the practice of teaching the language.

The context of a public school does not seem to affect the use of the material, as students in this school actually have access to the material as it was provided with the intention of strengthening English teaching and learning for the students. Although, not all of them can pay for the textbooks, they have access to photocopies of the material and tend to work in groups.

Finally, it is important to state that this was an small group of participants that work in an articulate matter regarding planning projects and curricula, they follow directions given by the language coordinator teacher and the national language policy, which involves the use of the material given by the state as well as the personal experience of success of the leader teacher using it.

References

- Atkinson, R., Flint, J. (Summer 2001). *Accessing Population: Snowball Research Strategies*. *Social Research Update*, Issue 33, pp 1-5.
- Brown, D. (2002). Methodology in Language teaching. *Methodology in language teaching, An anthology of current practice* (pp. 9-14). Edited by: Richards, C., Renandya, A. USA: Cambridge University Press.
- Bennet, K. (2013). English as a Lingua Franca in Academia, Combating Epistemicide through translator training. *The Interpreter and Translator*, vol. 2, pp. 93-169.
- Clandinin, D. Jean (2007) *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry, Mapping a Methodology*. (xv-xvi) Edited by: Clandinin, D. Jean . USA: SAGE publication
- Cogo, A & Dewey, M. (2012). *Analyzing English as a Lingua Franca, A corpus-driven investigation*. London, England: Continuum International Publish Group.
- Corbett, J. (2003). *An Intercultural Approach to English Language Teaching*, Great Britain: Cromwell Press Ltd.
- Escobar, W. (2013). *Identity-Forming Discourses: A Critical Discourse Analysis on Policy Making Processes Concerning English Language Teaching in Colombia*. *Profile Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, vol 15, pp 21-29.
- Foucault, M. (1991). *Discipline and Punish: the birth of a prison*. London, Penguin.
- Foucault, Michel (1998) *The History of Sexuality: The will to knowledge*, London, Penguin.

- Forman, R. (2014.). *How local teachers respond to the culture and language of a global English as a Foreign Language textbook*. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, vol 27, pp 72-88.
- Gray, J. (2013). *Critical Perspectives on Language Teaching Materials*. UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Guber, R. (2001). *La Etnografía: Método, Campo y Flexibilidad*. Colombia: Editorial Norma.
- Howatt, A.P.R., Widdowson, A.G (2004). *A History of English Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Jovchelovitch, S. Bauer, M. (2000). *Narrative Interviewing in Qualitative Researching with text, image and sound: Practical Handbook*. London: Sage publications.
- Laurier, E. (2010). *Participant Observation*. (pp 116-122) Edited by: Clifford, N., French, S. & Valentine, G. London: Sage publications.
- Litz, D.A. (2016) *Textbook Evaluation and ELT Management: A South Korean Case Study*. The United Arab Emirates. University Al Ain.
- Martín Rojo, I. (2010). *Constructing Inequality in Multilingual Classrooms*. Germany: Walter de Gruyter & Co.
- McGrath, I. (2002). *Materials Evaluation and Design for Language Teaching*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- McGrath, I. (2013). *Teaching Materials and the Role of ELT/ESL teachers: practice and theory*. USA: Bloomsbury

Mendez Rivera, P (2018) *Voces de los Profesores de Inglés sobre Bogotá Bilingüe*.

Presented at ASOCOP, Cartagena, 2018, Colombia.

Ministerio de Educación Nacional (2006) *Guía N° 22*. Colombia: Imprenta Nacional

Pinnegar, S. Daynes, J.G. (2007) *Locating Narrative Inquiry Historically*. In:

Clandinin, D.J., Ed., *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry: Mapping a Methodology*,

Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, 3-34.

Siegle, A. (1 October 2014). *What should we talk about? The authenticity of textbook*

topics. *ELT Journal*, Volume 68, Pp 363–375.

Schiffrin, D. (1987). *Discourse Markers, Studies in interactional sociolinguistics*. UK:

Cambridge University Press.

Stec, M. (2017). *Multimodality of Cultural Content in ELT Materials for Young*

Learners. University of Silesia in Katowice and Cieszyn.

Taylor, S. (2013) *What is Discourse Analysis?* USA: Bloomsbury.

Tomlinson, B. (2003) Introduction: Are materials developing? *Developing Materials*

for Language Teaching. (pp. 1-15). Edited by: Tomlinson, B. London:

Continuum

Tomlinson, B. (2008) Language Acquisition and Language Learning Materials. *English*

Language Learning Material: A critical review. (pp. 3-10) Edited by:

Tomlinson, B. London: Bloomsbury

Tomlinson, B. (2011) *Materials Development in Language Teaching*. Great Britain:

Cambridge University Press.

Walsh, S. (2013) *Classroom Discourse and Teacher Development*. Edinburgh:
Edinburgh University Press.

Xu, Z. (2013). *Globalization, Culture and ELT materials: a focus on China*. Monash
University, Melbourne, Australia.