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**INFUSING CULTURALLY RELEVANT PRACTICES AND MULTIMODAL
STORYTELLING IN AN ENGLISH ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM**

BY

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AFFIDAVIT

I, Ana María Preciado Monsalve, hereby declare that this master's thesis has not been previously presented as a degree requirement, either in the same style or with variations, in this or any other university (Article 92 Advanced Education Student Code, Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana)

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Abstract

This qualitative study intends to describe how infusing CRP and Multimodal Storytelling through validating diverse contexts, interests, personal insights, and culture encourage students to develop language skills and at the same time become more aware of others' reality. The findings of this research are the result of a pedagogical experience in a fourth-grade English Elementary language classroom. The teacher-researcher based on the theories of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (Ladson Billings, 1995, 2014) and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (Gay 2002, 2010, 2018; & Herrera, 2016) aimed to provide students an English language environment to reflect toward culture validating differences in the classroom.

This study aims to provide spaces where students endorse their culture and learn English through multimodal storytelling and CRP. The data collected were class audio records, class videos, students' artifacts, surveys, and semi-structured interviews. Findings show that through infusing multimodal storytelling and CRP language learners can achieve academic language learning, culture validation, teamwork, and autonomous development of skills. This research in the Colombian context is a referent to apply CRP theory and multimodal storytelling to fulfill the demand of the current policies in language teaching. Future research could go beyond students' outcomes in literacy and multimodality guided by CRP.

Keywords: language learning, elementary education, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, multimodal storytelling, children's literacy.

*This study is wholeheartedly dedicated to my family, my colleagues, and students:
Open your heart to talk about your story, to conquer souls with the experiences that have
made you alive. Be proud of your roots, your language, and the authentic ways you use
multiple sources to make meaning with others. Empower yourself, wonder about society and
other cultures to know the world that surrounds you.*

Love, Teacher Ana

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Chapter One: Exploring Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Multimodal Storytelling in an Elementary English Classroom in Colombia

The process of teaching and learning a second language throughout the years, has emphasized learning comes from the cognitive and cultural perspectives influenced by the society humans live in. Nowadays, in the Colombian context, sociocultural approaches are applied to English Second Language classrooms (ESL) considering daily life experiences as a source of knowledge that happens in social and cultural situations mediated by language as the main mean in sociocultural- interaction (Gay,2010, MEN, 2016). Sociocultural theory contributes to paying attention to learners inside their social, cultural, and historical context to provide pedagogical strategies and solutions that allow critical thinking development. Hence, language learning is the result of “action in defined social contexts in which speakers exchange knowledge, opinions, emotions while they strengthen skills and abilities that go beyond communication” (MEN,2016, p.24). Therefore, teaching and learning in a second language classroom must concentrate on how culture and language discourse perpetuates the acceptance of identity and diversity to promote social agency, language empowerment, and active participation in different communicative situations.

To support the previous ideas, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) looks for the improvement of teaching strategies, materials, and learning encounters that consider beneath a culture of caring to validate the cultural difference in the classroom (Chiquito, 2021& Gay 2002,2014,2018). This research intends to describe how infusing CRP and Multimodal Storytelling through validating diverse contexts, interests, personal insights, and culture encourage students to develop language skills and at the same time become more aware of their own and others’ reality. The findings of this research are the result of a pedagogical experience in an English Elementary language classroom intended to surpass the notions of

literacy that go beyond reading and writing by connecting the word and the world (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011).

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) is an empowering approach that enables students to be better humans, to appropriate and implement sense-making daily. Teachers and schoolchildren engage in critical and cultural awareness processes that could pounce on critical reflective practice using knowledge, judgment, and experience to scaffold critical thinking and creativity. As an English teacher, I have noticed elementary students are eager to participate in different situations where they can interact and understand their cultural nuances which influence the ways of thinking, speaking, and meaning-making process as a result of their experiences inside and outside school (Howard, 2018).

My students and I are from different municipalities, departments, even countries. I was raised in a town, which makes my ways of thinking and understanding of the world and reality different than my students' reality. For that reason, to approach my students' lives, I foster being a culturally relevant teacher who comprehends that meaningful learning and teaching mediates endorsement and understanding students' backgrounds in terms of culture, identity, racial ethnicity, and life events into the classes (Sobel & Taylor, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Byrd, 2016). From my position as a teacher, knowing about my students' historical, economic, and racial backgrounds, my goal is to create a pleasant environment where they feel comfortable. Thus, I see it important to care about my students and give them opportunities to learn English bridging language learning with their personal traits and context.

As an English student and teacher, I have dealt with situations where the usage of a second language has helped to strengthen my identity, to wonder about the reality that surrounds me, and also to see diversity as a feature that helps to expand knowledge. I have

been preparing myself to communicate effectively with other cultures that do not speak my native language. Among different communicative situations, I have seen that throughout the interaction with my cultural competence I can appreciate even more my language, my culture, and my traditions as elements that have set my perspective and teaching style. Now, I have been thinking about how to provide students with experiences that encourage them to care toward their own and others' cultures. Researchers affirm teachers require time to reflect on their pedagogical moments, actions, instructions, teaching objectives, approaches and materials referencing students' cultural experiences and the learning environment they rather (Irving, 2009; Howard 2018).

The English class in the private school where I work is developed among four hours per week, we count on resources such as tales and content students' books that intend to reach the national and international standards of the Common European Framework of reference (2001). The syllabus of fourth grade contains some topics such as family, hobbies, and favorites that allow students to reflect on themselves. Some themes are recognizable for learners, but they do not feel a real connection and validation with their cultural reality. Students' activities proposed in the textbooks sometimes are isolated from students' culture, they do not let students use their repertoires to respond and reflect about their literacies in and out of school. There is a need to see and understand diversity from cultural lenses in the language classroom to let students know "...that they are valued and respected for their cultural agency and that their experiences outside of the classroom are equally as important as their experiences inside the classroom" (Skyes, 2018, p.31) In fact, Fourth graders have asked for spaces where they can interact, wonder, and talk about their immediate context, preferences, ways they see and understand life events to appreciate society and to be understood by their peers.

The class engagement in fourth grade, I have taught this year, has been more meaningful when they can connect in and out school literacy and previous knowledge with the latest information they have been learning in the English class (Cañas & Ocampo,2015). To support previous ideas, knowing how students' cultural funds impact their literacy skills is an example of successful culturally relevant practices in a classroom full of diversity. According to the policies at school and the English program teachers and students are not allowed to use Spanish in the English class. However, in order not to force students to speak English, but use it most of the time I needed to look for a strategy that help them to gradually become independent users of English as a means that established the participation of multiple voices. I expected to find out students thinking needs by culturally relevant practices as permitting English learners to utilize their mother tongue to convey meaning and validate understanding of new knowledge (Herrera, 2016). Foster (2016) stands:

In classrooms of diverse students, linguistic and cultural flexibility is significant in creating an atmosphere of trust and understanding. Students are more likely to express empathy and understanding if they can see the origin of their thoughts and ideas as well as and their classmates' thoughts and ideas. (p.39)

I want to increase my student's self-esteem by proposing a classroom climate where they feel confident to talk in English and feel they can achieve academically without pressure, (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings 1995, 2014; & Samuels,2018). My students are growing up in Medellin and Envigado, two municipalities where the English learning process can be enhanced with an expanded variety of resources such as libraries with books written in English, conversation clubs from different universities, the transmission of movies in English at the cinema, and exposure to the language since there are a lot of tourists who use English to communicate with locals. Additionally, some relatives of my students speak English. Some

of my fourth graders travel to English-speaking countries. However, some students do not have the same possibilities, some who are not fully interested to learn English or are afraid to talk using English.

On the other hand, due to the execution of hybrid classes because of the current times, my students lack moments and spaces where they can work collectively or talk about their immediate context. As Gao (2020) states, “In a culturally relevant classroom teachers can share power with students by letting them invent gestures for story guide words or phrases and then making agreements together to adopt a set of class gestures for related words.” (p.65). With this intention, I realized if I wanted to give my students meaningful learning and empower them to talk about their stories, I needed an approach that “enables students to be better human beings and more successful learners” (Gay, 2010, p.35).

I have been fascinated by young learners’ stories, especially those stories focused on their cultural background and how they see their context. Ladson-Billings (1995, 2014) expressed, culture in the pedagogical moments counts because CRP “empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes” (p. 382). Particularly, I have used multimodal storytelling to bring stories to my classroom and allow students to tell their own. Multimodal Storytelling helps my fourth graders to unite their experiences from their house backgrounds and their social interaction between families, teachers, and the classroom while they learn English. I mean to include culture in my pedagogical instructions, so my students empower themselves by giving their opinions, analyzing their contexts, and solving problems. I apply multimodal storytelling in my classroom to enrich my students’ literacies experiences.

Once, when we were reading aloud *The Three Little Pigs* during one of our literary picnic sessions. Students show excitement for the pedagogical encounter but were without

interested in listening to the story because according to some of their comments “it was a story that they have heard since they were babies.” After noticing this, I decided to challenge them to retell the same story using different modes. I played the video and stopped it when one character was narrating the story. I asked some students to perform distinct roles, some of them were the wolf and the three little pigs, other students did sounds- as the knock on the door and when the wolf blows down the Pigs houses, while students read, I used gestures to explain the words they did not understand. This experience changed their thought and awoke fourth interest in stories worked in spaces like literary picnics. Students felt it was interesting to tell stories using different modes.

Aronson & Laughter (2016) state affluent research has reviewed the way teachers’ experiences respond to cultural diversity in their classroom, pedagogical tools offer guidance on practicing cultural responsiveness. I recognize ESL teachers are called to reflect on ESL students’ backgrounds to see that diversity is a reality in the classroom. For instance, policymakers, teachers, students, and the community, in general, are asked to be aware of issues that can be found in interactional practices with ethnic, racial, and linguistic communities, such as inequality and socio-economical gaps. Quality education requires teachers to rethink their role in instructions and see themselves as agents who belong to society and can learn from students.

Considering Colombia and its diversity in culture, ethnographic groups, folklore, dialects, and ways of thinking, I believe CRP can be part of my English classes. My research looks to describe language learning through infusing CRP and multimodal storytelling in an elementary English Classroom in Colombia. On the benefit of research, I reviewed the policies in Colombia to see what factors related to CRP are mentioned and if the English guidelines recognize the existence of CPR. Studies that have examined multiple dimensions

of Colombian policies have found there is a challenge for the National Ministry of Education and all stakeholders to regulate the policies by connecting them with the reality and priorities of the school and social communities in various parts of the country including urban and rural settings (Peláez & Usma, 2016); the same reason is presented as one of the failures results in proficiency exams (Bonilla & Tejada- Sanchez, 2016; & Usma, 2015)

According to Usma (2015), Colombian policies show the government's concern to raise, advance, and control the processes of language learning and teaching in the country to attract investments from abroad at the current globalization and competitiveness. Colombia counts language policies from 2004 such as Nacional Bilingual Program 2004-2019; the National Program for the strengthening of Foreign Languages 2010-2014; the National Law of Bilingualism in 2013; the National English Program 2015-2025; and Bilingual Colombia 2014-2018. The MEN envision the development of the communicative dimension from preschool to university level. Children are asked to flourish in new forms to express their ideas, relate with others, and participate to accomplish the demands of globalization. As an example, the MEN (2014a,2014b) claims that the aim (PFDCLE for its acronym in Spanish) launched in 2010 consisted of favoring the inclusion of Colombian human capital in the global economy knowledge and the international job market.

Correspondingly, Mora et al., (2019) did a deep analysis of the Bilingual education policies in Colombia proposing CRP as a bridge to fulfill the gaps between Colombian policies and community through CRP. These scholars assert there is a discrepancy in the sources about the learning English purposes and appropriation of methodologies. Some researchers have expressed there is a lack of consideration of necessities and positionality of minorities, marginalized, such as blind, deaf, and immigrants' communities in Colombia that reflect the presence of inequities that CRP intends to counter. CRP has been used to teach

diverse learners and underachieving students effectively different school subjects (Ladson Billings 2011,)

Regarding teaching, it is necessary to propose transformative pedagogies and strategies that fit with the students' reality. Gómez Sará (2017) through the review of Colombian policies, mentioned there is a requirement of research carried out to discover "the most suitable methods to teach English to Colombian students while considering local conditions" (p.152). Teachers are asked to pay attention to aspects such as the number of students per group, accessibility to resources, usage of the target language in the near background, and everyday life events, among other diverse Colombian students' characteristics.

Likewise, some concepts related to CRP such as interculturalism, and culture are brought up from the MEN. Interculturalism has been identified as the base of language teaching in Colombia. Research in CRP has asked teachers to create climates that are respectful, inclusive and that help students value, validate, and understand their culture toward the culture of their peers (Byrd, 2016). In terms of culture in the policies such as Colombia Bilingüe, it has been seen that working culture in English classrooms is a challenging task. There are countless definitions of the term culture, a variety of teaching approaches that depend on school settings, and the interests that make these policies create an inconsistent discourse (Fandiño Parra, 2014).

Further, those policies have transformed teachers' perceptions in the processes of teaching and language learning in Colombia to construct significant learning environments through CRP (Chiquito, 2017). Then, I intend to improve my teaching practices in language teaching, enhancing culturally relevant practices to foster a closed relationship with my students. As result, my teaching experience is enriched through CRP by knowing my

students' personalities, where they come from and live, preparing them to build their own identities, to have a voice, and be active participants of the society (Gay, 2010).

I implied to execute a strategy that would connect their reality and culture with the English Class. At the same time, an approach as CRP risks learners to engage in more ways of knowing and thinking through individual and collective experiences. Some researchers as (Herrera, 2016; Ladson Billings, 2014; & MEN, 2016) claim language learners observe their perceptions of other cultures from a multicultural and global society. My goal in this research stands “all students to be winners” (Gay, 2010, p.39) academically speaking and strengthening teamwork- awareness- by helping each other to get the best of their skills (Ladson- Billings, 2014; Gay 2010)

On the other hand, based on studies such as (Kalantari & Hashemian, 2016), there is an urgency to use storytelling as an approach to teach English in young language learners' classrooms. Children can learn through different formats and sources for telling the story such as nursery rhymes, read aloud, sequence order, songs, and illustrations that catch their attention and afford “[...] mechanisms for understanding their world, expressing themselves to others, and connecting with their culture as well to other cultures” (Atta Alla, 2012, p.1). Developing culturally relevant encounters where multimodal storytelling empowers my students to enhance their identity and promote teamwork.

Through implementing CRP and multimodal storytelling in my classes, students have enriched their identity and know others. Multimodal storytelling has permitted fourth graders the acquisition and reinforces language aspects. Repetition, the anticipation of the facts of the story, vocabulary revision, and children's exposition to familiar and meaningful context enrich students' ideas and speech (Ellis and Brewster, 2014; Shing and Crandall, 2014; Kalantari & Hashemian,2016; & López-Landino,2017). For example, in some moments

where story- time has been part of encounters, students have used chunks such as “what’s the meaning of...; how do you say in English...” to understand better the context of the story.

This study holds the idea applying culturally relevant pedagogy in young learners’ classrooms is important for the primary sociocultural evolution and academic success in the future for children (Durden et al, 2015). Sociocultural approaches as CRP have allowed researchers to see language experiences enhance knowledge building, the transformation of skills, and understanding the influence of culture, prior knowledge, values, and beliefs to achieve academic performance, cultural competence, and critical awareness known as the main tenets of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (Ladson Billings 1994, 1995a, 1995b; & Gay 2000,2002, 2010)

Therefore, considering that CRP since its beginning has allowed students to communicate in authentic ways (Ladson Billings 1995a, & Gay 2010), and the benefits of multimodal storytelling, the aims of this study are 1) Providing elementary English learners spaces to highlight their own identities, values, interests, cultural competence, and beliefs to promote culturally relevant practices 2) Intertwining multimodal storytelling and culturally relevant practices in an English Classroom to enhance language learning 3) Describing how English language learning is mediated when culturally relevant practices and multimodal storytelling are connected in an elementary classroom. I will fusion culturally relevant pedagogy and multimodal storytelling to answer the question: What does language learning look like when infusing culturally relevant practices through multimodal storytelling in an elementary English class?

Defining the Pillars of This Study

The main concepts I used for this study are Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, multimodal storytelling, ESL learning. I will link CRP and multimodal storytelling, as means to facilitate

language learning through culturally relevant practices in the classroom. CRP and multimodal storytelling are intertwined because both concepts facilitate teachers to interact directly to students' literacy and cultural experiences. CRP students are asked to empower themselves, share with other cultures, and reflect about their surrounding while they advance academically.

Culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP)

CRP is a transformative pedagogy that empowers students in the human dimensions such as intellectual, social, emotional, and political by using cultural referents to convey knowledge, abilities, and mindset (Ladson-Billings 1995, 2014). CRP aids stakeholders in the school to distinguish their role in the world as social agents, who make policy and enhance participation in different social activities. Therefore, in view of inequities associated with diversity and improvement of teaching practices, scholars around the world (Howard 2012; Paris 2012; Ladson Billings 2014 & Gay 2010) have dedicated their efforts for equity and social justice approaching tenets and encounters from CRP (Peña Sandoval, 2019). This pedagogical approach can contribute to a transformation in different contexts. Transformative researchers call upon the creation of learning opportunities that defiance the current generation and execution for knowledge (Banks 1995, 2001; Pirbhai-Illich, et. al., 2017)

I clarify that there are some approaches and instructional procedures funded on cultural backgrounds, race, linguistics, ethnicity, class, and gender that are used in pedagogical encounters to familiarize the learning procedures with students' experiences and knowledge. Due to the experience and theory of different researchers culturally relevant pedagogy has been called in different titles such as *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy* (Howard 2012,2018; Gay 2010), *Culturally Relevant Education*, and *Sustaining pedagogies approaches* Paris (2012). For my research and personal preference, those pedagogical and cultural styles, that

have some differences, will be named as *Culturally Relevant Pedagogy* (from here as CRP; Ladson-Billings 1994,1995a,1995b,2014; Gay 2002, 2010) since students' cultural competence, prior knowledge, and experiences are relevant in the learning process of language learning.

CRP is a pedagogical approach that focuses on the acknowledgment of cultural references considering students' backgrounds, Ladson-Billings (1994, 1995a, 1995b, 2014). CRP assists teachers-in my research English teachers- to acknowledge their pedagogical and cultural criteria, to encourage students to be aware of their own culture, others, and the reality of their surroundings. According to Ladson-Billings (1994, p.16; 2014) CRP "empowers interculturally, socially, emotionally and politically using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes." The aim of providing CRP practices is to bring a meaningful student-centered approach that inspires my students and me as their teacher to build a relationship where cultural heritage, collectivism culture, and reflection about the reality, roots, and ways of constructing meaning are integrated into the classroom to grant academic learning through scaffolding.

Previous research in CRP has shown culture as the main concept (Gay, 2010). Culture has been understood as a system that allows individuals to give meaning to life and determine their behavior. As a language teacher, I recognize that culture is one of the main tools in language teaching that facilitates my students to reinforce their identity and make sense of the phenomena and events that happen around their and others' worlds. In this research, culture is a process that helps humans to make meaning and construct their identity through the interaction of multiple factors such as values, identities, interests, beliefs, tastes, and behaviors. Culture as (Gay, 2010 p. 19) has claimed is "the heart of all we do in the name of education." Therefore, it is a factor that has permeated how students upgrade language

learning based on sharing about divergent backgrounds, stories, and instances that shape their identity and way of thinking.

CRP encloses a social consciousness principle that enables students to comprehend how we live in a community with democracy, research history, recognize the economic, social, and political events having a better relationship with the community. For instance, as an educator, I aim to create the conditions to achieve meaningful learning and a trustworthy relationship between students and teachers. During my research and after it, the classroom will be a place where students are the center and through collective experiences such as deciding what topics they are interested to talk about, listening to stories, elaborating narratives, and discussing the outcomes students feel that can go further on their learning of English as a second language.

Mora et al. (2019) based on CRP propose three principles to be considered in advanced review and implementation into the Colombian context (a) developing knowledge-based toward ethnically and culturally diverse initiatives, (b) expressing cultural caring when communicating with diverse audiences, and (c) building culturally- congruent instructional practices. Responding to the last principle, I fusion CRP and multimodal storytelling can be implemented into instructional practices. multimodal storytelling as a tool to connect students' life outside the classroom with the school.

Bridging community background recognition with academic development. CRP contributes to the learning process developing a shared responsibility among teachers and students through teamwork, and mutual understanding. Hence, CRP “requires a combination of curriculum content, school and classroom learning climates, instructional strategies, and interpersonal interactions that reflect the cultures, experiences, and perspectives of different ethnic groups of colors” (Gay, 2010, p.249). Especially with my 4th graders, I have created a

class environment where diversity is a plus in our learning process. All students have participated actively in the classes, they have been able to talk about celebrations that are based on family traditions, their favorite books showing variety in interests since some like Colombian but also international writers.

As their English teacher and believer on the impact of CRP, I think English language learners can feel they are part of a classroom culture when I create spaces to see how their personal stories told or written in English are related to their cultural identity. As a classroom teacher of 17 students of diverse contexts, I wanted students to be the center of culturally relevant practices by formulating, reshaping, and questioning the learning and teaching processes in an integrated way. It is significant to them when they know that as their teacher, I am interested in listening to one's perspectives and views and then constructing knowledge together. Sobel and Taylor, state (2011, p. 3) "teachers who make themselves aware of learner's backgrounds and life experiences are better prepared to adapt instruction in responsive ways and demonstrate that they can teach like their students' lives do matter." CRP learners not only recognize themselves as individuals who have a place in the world but also as being who are brave and dwell in a multicultural world individually and collectively. When teachers are planning culturally relevant practices, they need to apply students' preferences, capabilities, drawbacks, and connected meaningful experiences (Gay, 2010; Kieran & Anderson, 2018).

Likewise, listening to each other and using different means to transmit their ideas and thoughts base on their culture allow a better understanding of themselves and others (Byrd, 2016, Cañas Mejía & Ocampo Castro, 2015). Teachers can validate English language students' cultural identities in the classroom by bringing into the images and practices familiar to students to benefit from strengths students bring to school gaining a chance to excel in their

studies since they are immersed in a comfortable classroom where they are not pressured but guide to learn step by step. Culturally relevant practices consider inequities and pay attention to students' strengths, redefining as prominent students those who work hard and ask questions. They can honor their cultural heritage, entry to an expanded culture, and they can improve their socio-economic status by making demanding decisions about the lives they wish to follow (Johnson & Elliot, 2020 & Ladson Billings, 2006)

Culturally relevant practices bring effective teaching based on the statements that academic performance and skills come out from life events. Sobel and Taylor (2011) & Howard (2012) extend this principle claiming ESL students' potentiality is reduced when the educative processes are not contextualized when their cultural backgrounds and life encounters are omitted and not appreciated in the teaching process; removing teaching and learning from their social context does not offer a realistic view of education.

Multimodal storytelling

Multimodal storytelling is defined as “the fusion of storytelling and multimodality” (López Ladino, 2017, p.4). Multimodal storytelling promotes English learners the development of new forms to express their ideas, create connections with others, and participate in communicative situations finding diverse ways to create a message using “audios, videos, prompts, written words, textures and smells” (p. 12). Multimodal storytelling in L2 contexts is used to engage expressive language practices through short building sentences and vocabulary enhancement.

Using multimodal texts helps students to suit individual learning styles, concerns, and interpretations. Callow (2011) mentions multimodal texts give students the chance to engage with literature, visual and written language and appreciate “... the rich visual culture we live and learn in” (p.8). Therefore, texts presented in print, screen or live performance utilizing

different means such as images, sounds, music, movement, video, interactive and realia elements show the educative position assumed by Callow (2011, p.3) “we are interested in not only how meaning is made, but also the skills and roles associated with meaning-making.” Hence, setting multimodal storytelling and CRP in an elementary English classroom demands have a well-prepared plan to bring flourishing storytelling experiences (Shing & Crandall, 2014; López Ladino, 2017).

I have applied multimodal storytelling in elementary English classrooms in meaningful moments such as the literary picnic because it is a strategy that allows language teachers to characterize the story in an understandable way for children since senses can be included to build meaning from a multi-sensorial perception (López Ladino, 2017). Besides, they have used “language as an act” (p.3) creating a network with their peers to enhance their identity, critical thinking empowerment, and academic success in their learning process acknowledging their surroundings.

Language learning and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in ESL classroom

Colombia in its Suggested Curriculum (2016, p.15) explains “English is the foreign language to which the national government has committed to having a bilingual country that is competitive international level”. Then, schools around the country have focused on teaching English as an additional language. From the Colombian government curricular proposal language is seen as a divergent system that permits the representation, interpretation, and comprehension of the world. In contrast, The Collins dictionary (2021) defines Second Language as the language a person learns and uses after his / her native language.

ESL learning from the sociocultural perspective has brought up culture, negotiating, and interaction as important components. Depending on the input students receive, their learning is meaningful. Foster (2016 p.32) stresses “[...] the English Classroom allows teachers to

guide students in how to understand, utilize, and appropriate their cultural identities to better make meaning of themselves and therefore their worlds” So, CRP encounters allow students to bridge their houses with social and academic situations meaningfully (Gay, 2010, Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). Moreover, scaffolding English language learning through CRP in pedagogical environments aids learners by immersive processes to achieve academically in contexts where the norms are different from students’ cultural diversity (Samson and Collins, 2012.)

***Chapter two: Reviewing Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Multimodal Storytelling in
Research Literature in ESL settings***

This chapter aims to develop a literature review in CRP and multimodal storytelling. I reviewed the literature on research during the last 10 years and its foundations using references of early years as I felt they were relevant for the research. I used databases such as EBSCO, JSTOR, ERIC (Education Resources Information Center), Scopus, Springer Link, Taylor & Francis, Scopus, Research Gate, and Academia.edu. Using the keywords *CRP, multimodal texts, multimodal storytelling in ELL/ESL/L2*. My purpose was to narrow down wider research international and local literature written on Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Multimodal storytelling as main concepts to learning contexts, especially for elementary English language learners.

I present commonalities among methodologies, data collection procedures, findings, and pertinent characteristics that allowed me to understand the implementation of CRP and multimodal storytelling better. I discuss the need to analyze language learning infusing CRP and Multimodal Storytelling in elementary classrooms.

CRP research and its foundations

There are a lot of terms intertwined with culturally relevant Pedagogy (Thompson, 2017) some examples: culturally relevant teaching, culturally responsive pedagogy, culturally sustaining pedagogy to name a few. Ladson Billings (1995a) in her research journal *Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy*, describes ELL teaching experiences and research about CRP during 6 years with African American Students K-12 taught by white female teachers.

Ladson Billings (1995, 2014) describes CRP as a “good pedagogy” where learning outcomes are better when materials and teaching practices are congruent and meaningful to students’ home and community culture. According to the researcher, CRP demands teachers focus on studying needs, aiding students to elect school success, and developing skills to participate actively in democracy. CRP is a commitment of teaching research to rethink the definition of good teaching promoting the success of an entire community following three independent criteria of CRP: academic success experience, cultural competence, and critical consciousness.

Years later, Gay (2010), describes a personal experience and case study in CRP classroom considering K-12 schools that could belong to marginalized groups such as African Americans, Latinos, and Hawaiians. Gay focuses on teaching to favor equitable learning and academic success and cross-cultural communication by using cultural features and students’ experiences. Gay also mentions students’ concerns to become social agents and how teachers wonder about teaching differently to enhance learning from diverse backgrounds. Genova persuades on the inclusion of CRP abilities to empower teaching to reinforce meaning-making, cognitive processes, and self-assessment to commit cultural competence, individual and collective learning on professional development programs that can be considered in elementary settings. The findings of the study showed one of the

hypotheses I would like to study the learning outcomes in language are better when the teaching is based on the students' culture.

Equally important is the work of Heflin (2002) who uses CRP through African American Children's literature in an urban city located in the East of the USA. The school was comprised of 300 students in grades K-8th. It describes two classrooms' interactions using students' cultural contexts. The framework is about the parts of the lesson including activities before, during, and after reading based on a set of principles relating the content to students' lives representation, cultural knowledge, and background developing CRP. Findings revealed some views from Ladson-Billings (1995a, b) supporting meaningful learning from ELL culturally diverse students when the materials are related to students' cultural context and experiences. Furthermore, teachers need to include diverse cultures and wider perspectives into the teaching encounters, considering the world and students. The conclusion of this research designates looking for strategies to instruct all students, meaning teachers can and must be trained with tools that provide learning. CRP could be practical to direct research about the lack of coherence of particular groups with the pedagogical system.

CRP is a pedagogy that connects home with school

Sobel and Taylor (2011) during their time as assistant professors in US public schools and universities and Mexican private and public schools, were interested in studying teachers' cognition and behaviors to work with students from broad cultural backgrounds. The main goal was to understand how teachers shape their methodology and curriculum with their beliefs related to multicultural, multilingual, and inclusive classrooms that aided successful learning. Their findings assumed some teachers' beliefs that can support some ideas such as culture is the core of learning and it influences teachers and students' decisions in life and mutual interaction; children go to school with social backgrounds, life experiences, and cultural knowledge; multilingualism promotes understanding.

Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011) gather a conceptual framework of CRP and culturally relevant teaching. The purpose of this study was to understand the role of culture in school and the fusion with race. CRP is defined by the authors as an approach that enables bringing into the classroom students' cultural backgrounds, principles, experiences, and knowledge. CRP seeks to appreciate the family community of learners and to reintegrate knowledge with a sensitivity to cultural nuances. Then, the principles of CRP were used to point out 5 topics related to identity, achievement, excellence, integrity, and pedagogic relationships.

CRP in language learners' classrooms and as a student-centered approach

Sturdivant and Alanís' (2019) study was conducted in a preschool to collect culturally relevant teaching practices through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. The findings reveal that the teachers used intentionally the integration of culture in their lessons considering students' interests and family's involvement in the curriculum. Also, Schrodt et al. (2015) through an article presents culturally relevant texts from the family backpack project showing stories as a source of the meaning-making of experiences and remarkable events where teachers learn from students' cultures, their divergent experiences, and familiar and personal relationships. Additionally, stories were used to empower participation, enhance language and literature teaching in Pre-K classrooms. Families and students could talk about their stories in English and their native language recognizing the family, acquiring multimodal meaning-making and instructional school concepts based on globalization, diversity, and culturally relevant pedagogy from the stories. This research concludes when teachers intertwined culture and literacy, families experience power, acceptance, and academic achievement (Schrodt et, al. 2015; & Sobel & Taylor, 2011)

Byrd (2016) explores Culturally relevant teaching and school racial socialization from students' perspectives and CPR practices. The student sample was through 6th – 12th across the United States. Participants answered surveys related to cultural elements, learning

about other cultures, and racism. The main authors cited in this research were Ladson-Billings (1995), Gay (2010) to explain the qualities of CRP teachers. This research also used a quantitative methodology considering a diverse sample of the asses. Findings demonstrated using real-life examples through constructivism helps students to engage with the school, teachers, and classmates. Also, that CRP is a “good teaching” based on Ladson-Billings’ conception and racial socialization is fundamental to developing ethnic-racial identity.

Teachers’ role and CRP as a transformative pedagogy across the curriculum

Culturally relevant practices aim to drive teachers to evaluate how students can connect to diverse settings. Jia and Nasri (2019) from a systematic review, analyze articles about CRP of teaching in Malaysia. These authors wonder about the competence in CRP from teachers, showing that educators require to expand their knowledge about CRP making sure all diverse students (from all contexts) can learn something. These scholars state CRP should be practiced by teachers being sensitive to cultural references and previous experiences that can alter students learning. Results from this study show teachers’ acknowledgment and self-assurance are components required by CRP teachers. Moreover, findings evoke the lack of training in CRP implementation in diverse classrooms.

Despite the recent interest in models in CRP, STEM education address instructors about the implementation of a cultural transformation and mentoring. Johnson and Elliot (2020), through an article, propose the promotion of an inclusive culture in an undergraduate course guiding the department transformation in areas such as biology, physics, math, and science. The authors mention the article is not a result of a research study but is an outcome of systematic qualitative research and Systemic program evaluation. Their guidance comes from dialogues between both researchers and activists’ inequity in science, participant observations, interviews, and note-taking in 2015. Academic success, development of cultural competence, and critical consciousness, principles mentioned by Ladson-Billings (1995a),

were the center of this model. This study suggests that curricula should incorporate cultural knowledge and let students be themselves. Results found professors need to develop a higher level of critical consciousness to provide an inclusive transformation; some professors adopted new policies and teaching approaches that were inclusive and open participation.

Ganesan (2020) presents an educational research literature review of eight research studies identifying widely Culturally Relevant Education in science. Ganesan from Ladson-Billings' perspective, understands CRP as an approach that includes cultural references "in all aspects of learning" (p.3). Therefore, helping students to relate with the content of the classroom - in this case, science- through the incorporation of data, pictures, and research from diverse cultures to brace multiculturalism and scaffolding. Ganesa categorized diverse studies pointing to similarities, differences, and limitations, the author considers the teaching practices shifted and benefited by using CRP in different scenarios such as science and ELL classrooms. Additionally, CRP can change students' minds understanding the importance of knowledge as science in their real life and can change society. As pointed out by the literature review, students will come about with new insights, have higher critical thinking, and have in mind a scientific career.

Regarding teachers' strategies in CRP, Laughter and Adams (2012) and Samuels (2018) carried out a case study where strategies were based on CRP. The student population was racially diverse from schools in the USA, teachers were preservice teachers who taught in groups k-12th. The teachers' strategies incorporated the issues of bias and social justice in the classroom. Both studies findings reveal the lessons directed by the teacher in training proved academic achievement, cultural competence, and socio-political critical consciousness. Also, findings show the importance of providing spaces to reflect on teaching and self-esteem.

Research about CRP in Colombia

Chiquito (2017) studied the Colombian policies in English education, and about what theoretical concepts were implemented in 8th and 9th-semester pedagogical practices of preservice teachers in a university from Colombia through structured interviews. Some findings exposed that the concept of culture, central in learning is not contemplated into practice and it was proposed to include CRP in the BA curriculum. Additionally, CRP, CL, CP, and interculturality are important in the practices because they are the beginning of the process of reflexivity and awareness intending that the educative system is formed by context, practices, people, norms, and creating Colombian culture materials to benefit school children through the development of cultural awareness and consciousness becoming social changers.

Furthermore, following the stance of embracing the conceptions of interculturalism and multiculturalism, Ramos Holguin (2013) shares a pedagogical experience conducted in a Colombian public university. The aim of the research pretended to reveal how intercultural abilities came up after applying interculturality in research class for preservice teachers. Data was collected by field notes, discussions, and students' artifacts. Findings uncovered common patterns by coding demonstrating that developing interculturality includes life experiences and several cultural areas from own country and background what allows one to know about their cultural nuances and the world. Additionally, the literature review of Ramos Holguin's research emphasizes teachers of languages are conscious that language learning requires one's own and others' culture through the creation of a variety of strategies. Ramos Holguin's observations support one of the pillars of this research that most the learners built up an environment that permitted them to understand different communicative events and compare them with reality, which allowed them to convey meaning and to value and respect cultures.

Finally, Olaya and Gómez Rodríguez (2013) report outcomes from qualitative research that analyzed teachers in training beliefs regarding culture and intercultural competence at three universities in Colombia. The participants were students who were in the 5th-semester level upper-intermediate from the Common European Framework of Reference. The instruments of research were questionnaires, documentary analysis of the syllabus of the courses, and semi-structured interviews that were transcribed, the questions were based on cultural themes discussed in the class, opinions, and cultural diversity in the classroom. Findings show the need for teachers' training deeply in the culture and intercultural competence. Researchers review how to intertwine culture and language considering scholars such as Byram (1997) who express the restriction of cultural content in language, meaning the lack of development of cultural competence in students. Participants perceived culture as a key factor to negotiate meaning in different experiences based on real situations. However, half of the sample needs to see the power of culture as a means to communicate with diversified groups, understand the otherness, and power situations to create a tolerant environment between the community and the classroom.

CRP and Storytelling

In this section I reviewed the concepts of CRP and storytelling, seeing it as a foundation of multimodal storytelling. I analyzed how both were intertwined to develop enriching experiences for language learners. As multimodal storytelling is a new concept, I carried out reading literature about storytelling to broaden research and highlighted how it was implemented as a tool to engage culturally relevant practices.

Stories as a tool to empower language learners to talk and connect with others and other subjects. Gay (2010) emphasizes communication as a core of the quality during the pedagogical moments. Culture is displayed considering the ways people build and express

their ideas orally or written and influence conduct, positioning teaching and the “cultural communicative styles” (p. xxi) can enhance academic success. Narratives, or stories, are the tools human beings have used to enrich their experiences. Therefore, they can delight, embrace memories, reflect cultural nuances, and connect themselves with others.

CRP challenges teachers and students to create an environment where teachers provide a space where communication is essential, students can reflect and construct knowledge collectively. Acuff et al. (2012) share their experience of an African American teacher applying CRP in a History of Art Class to challenge the idealistic narratives that do not have space for others’ voices such as African American voices. Scholars found active engagement in the course from students because they were the center and could see themselves reflected into the story. This study promoted critical consciousness, cultural competence, and academic achievement, principles of CRP based on Ladson Billings’ work (1995,2006,2014). Furthermore, the findings on this research claim that enhancing literature related to students’ context, journals, class discussions, and others’ points of view endorsed the visualization of the pupil’s identity in history within multiculturalism.

Besides, CRP allows teachers and students to acknowledge students and the importance of interaction in the process of sense-making. Gao (2020) demonstrates through an article his experience as a teacher of TPRS (Teaching Proficiency Through Reading and Storytelling) in a classroom of Chinese students. The main concepts developed in this study are CRP based on Ladson Billings (1995,2006,2014) and Gay (2002,2010). Gao’s study accents CRP teachers need to recognize students’ knowledge, life encounters, and voices to influence sense making in a “caring, supportive, and cooperative learning environment, which lead to students’ academic success” (p.64). The conclusion of this article permeates the idea of CPR is a practice for self-recognition and others are empowered as the main agents of learning. Gao’s research is important for this study because it identifies CRP as an approach

that prepares students to be global citizens with cultural competence, academic success, and consciousness of their power. Also, from the perspective of multimodal storytelling, the findings showed how some methods used in the TPRS classroom such as gestures, movements, acting out, retelling the story, and CRP materials “help students become more engaged in comprehending texts, improve language proficiency and develop empathy and respect for diversity.” (p.68)

Storytelling based on CRP increases critical thinking and promotes academic achievement. Georges (2020) highlights by a brief, the demand of carrying instruction that fosters academic achievement through storytelling. Using storytelling as a practice to promote learning within diverse groups- marginalized groups- is presented and analyzed through a variety of studies conducted in diverse fields such as ESL, and science classrooms. Some of those investigative procedures found storytelling effective to increase critical-thinking abilities connected with previous knowledge and real life. Hence, the characteristics discussed, and the results found in the research recount Gay’s (2010) description of teaching as effective when “prior experiences, community settings, cultural backgrounds and ethnic identities of teachers and students are included in its implementation” (p.23). Moreover, the author presents recommendations to practice and constitute CRP throughout storytelling such as providing a comfortable learning environment where students can talk without feeling judge or interrupted, a classroom where educators conceive storytelling belongs to the curriculum and can be a tool for answering questions critically and understanding positions of power.

In contrast, Hunter-Doniger et al. (2018) initiative planned as a 6-hour pathway for teachers who thought about students’ needs and saw storytelling as the “hook” (p.p.48) to help students to connect through art, technology, and CRT (Culturally relevant teaching) as a multimodal approach. Results showed participants infused their skills, knowledge, and

culture to tell a story achieving Ladson Billings' principles since language learners created academic meaning, related pertinent cultural information, and promoted awareness about the sociopolitical context. STEM teachers were recruited during 2010-2020 and created the STEAM movement where art was included in the subjects to enhance students see learning from their lenses and home community.

Multimodal Storytelling and Language Learning

While searching electronic databases such as Eric, EBSCO, Taylor, and Francis, I noticed the term multimodal storytelling has been used in young learners' classrooms as a means to enhance multi-literacy and writing processes. There are some studies developed by the application of digital storytelling (Eisazadeh & Rajedram, 2020; Liang, 2015; Vasudevan et al., 2010; & Yang 2012) that describe digital storytelling as multimodal. This shows restricted comprehension of multimodality only associated with technology (López Ladino, 2017)

Digital storytelling is an approach that allows learners to create meaning using technology and different modes (Bran, 2010.; Kress, 2009). DS is beneficial because it catches young learners' attention and engages them to oversee creating a story where they recreate their experiences and knowledge (Eisazadeh & Rajedram, 2020; & Macleroy, 2016). Eisazadeh and Rajedram, (2020) carried out case study research to explore teachers' role in a DS activity. The participants of this small-scaled qualitative research were two children in grade one from private schools in Canada. Through data collection such as participatory observation, field notes, interviews, students' narratives, scholars found out students with the tutors' aid can represent, plan, create and celebrate stories encouraging reflection on their writing abilities being multimodal composers. Moreover, this research supports research that point out children represent meaning in ways that are important, authentic, and valuable for them (Brain 2010; López Ladino, 2017)

The aforementioned study describes four sequential steps to use DS: “preproduction; production; post-production and distribution” (Eisazadeh & Rajedram, 2020, p. 80). The first step proposes posing authentic scenarios; exploring the themes in the information; creating a script and involving peer review; accomplishing storytelling orally and creating an artifact such as a story map, and storyboard. The second stage involves the integration of the story with images, students’ voices. The third step demands a story edition. The fourth and fifth stages involve students performing their stories. For the context of my study, I will use these steps as a guide.

Relative to the research of multimodal storytelling in the Colombian context, López Ladino (2017) carried out qualitative research to sightsee children’s literacy in multimodal storytelling and critical literacy (CL) in a bilingual private school in Medellin. The teacher-researcher described how multimodal storytelling could be used as an approach to engage ESL Pre-K students through connection with their real world. Students had cultural and social debates in the classroom and created critical acts about their world. Through multimodal storytelling, L2 learners saw and read the world using different modes. The research teacher collected data from audio records, class video records, children’s production, and teacher’s journal. The conclusions of this research explored an effective connection between CL and the ESL Pre-K program by designing lesson plans where children can retell stories; create collaborative compositions and represent their reality in the texts. These findings permitted students to start believing that they can write composing critical literacy artifacts and multimodal texts for the community. In addition, during the research students used L2 naturally and were engaged in participating in English.

Storytelling as a Foundation of Multimodal Storytelling

During the process of looking for research about multimodal storytelling in ESL classrooms, I found it convenient to learn from previous studies about storytelling. I figured

that storytelling and multimodal storytelling have been used in language classrooms to enhance language, including L2 development and cultural awareness.

Storytelling Engages Cultural Awareness. Baldasaro et. al, (2014) explores the points of view of the members of a storytelling center in Ontario Canada, the researchers looked for opinions about stories, storytelling, and leadership through interviews and focus group methodology. The findings of this inquiry uncovered storytelling used to teach cultural awareness. Baldasaro's research supports stories that help content recall and language acquisition through Blanket exercise, a project that addressed story teaching as multiple dimensional on history, culture, and the featuring positions of humankind. Scholars use a talking feather as a collective encounter to enable students to speak and have turned to say their beliefs and understandings. The Blanket exercise is considered in this research an equivalent of multimodal storytelling that creates receptive attitudes to recognize stories, cultures, and history that never make their way in textbooks.

On the other hand, Enciso (2011) studies storytelling in critical literacy pedagogy in a twelve- and thirteen-year-old immigrant and non-immigrant youth in the U.S (United States) (United States) attracting self-stories and about others in the literature, drama, videos, and compositions to share their voice with school partners and the wider community. The main target of this study is based on storytelling, cultural acquaintance, and identity documentation adapting power relations in the different students' backgrounds such as society and classroom. Thus, "to create conditions for meaning and mobility of students' stories in formal literacy education requires a convergence of students' knowledge, new poetic ways of using and listening to their own and others' words" (p. 38). Also, cultural norms and multiplicity can produce tension and empower stories that give them voice and cross barriers.

Interactive experiences and making meaning from stories. Kestha (2013) investigates a descriptive-analytical methodology, about the usage of storytelling as a

technique to teach English in Palestinian public and UNRWA schools considering teachers' opinions, and challenges. The instrument for research was an interview looking upon gender, academic and professional experience. Findings revealed teachers lack a definition of storytelling, it is not often used in the classroom because storytelling can create noise. The concepts worked on in this study are stories, defined as a way people communicate and create rapport between peers and the teacher. Another concept is storytelling, the author explains it as an encounter that enables meaningful participation in the English Class and life in general, humans are constituted by stories that can help to identify the world and its place on it. On the other hand, it was evident that the learning space shift to an active and participative environment evoked better scores, helped students to remember and associate information, builds positivism dealing with reading. These findings intertwined CRP principles: academic achievement, cultural competence, and critical consciousness. The recommendations asked to include stories that require different abilities, increase teacher's beliefs and materials about storytelling and transcend from traditional methods to new such as telling stories.

Storytelling Enhances Language Learning. Sulistiawati (2014), throughout qualitative research, estimates teachers' ideas about the implementation of storytelling into the classroom and how those beliefs intertwine in the teaching practices. Teachers answered a semi-structured interview that questions teachers about the stories, types of stories, and characteristics. Storytelling was a concept developed by the researcher who finds benefits to enhance language learning, promote improving listening skills and creativity. Discoveries revealed using the native language can help schoolchildren to learn new words and understand the story. The researcher points out the selection of the stories should be concerned about students' needs, simple language, and positive impact. The study leaves the question of how teachers implement storytelling into their teaching practices.

Regarding English vocabulary, Kalantari & Hashemian (2016) researched storytelling as an approach that increases the vocabulary of young EFL learners reviewing empirical studies carried out years earlier. Participants were selected and distributed by 2 groups-one experimental- and were between 8 and 14 years old on a language center in Iran. Teachers modified and showed the stories through visual aids such as slides, gestures, and pictures. They applied some stages to their teaching what upgraded students' motivation and vocabulary. Outcomes of the investigation claim young learners who learn through storytelling aids students in amending academic performance, imagination, and oral abilities since they receive meaningful input. Moreover, by implementing storytelling creative thinking flourishes and the capacity to exchange knowledge diversely. Researchers interviewed parents who claim students expanded their participation. This research has concluded as previous studies mentioned, the application of storytelling shifts the classroom to a positive scenario that augments students' involvement, attention, and production.

Mart (2012) indicates the role of storytelling for young learners as an optimal source to promote effective learning since narratives can provide a learning environment full of happiness and facilitate exploring the world, having access to vocabulary in context, feeling part of the story through interaction with characters that conceive students' cultural features and empowering their imagination.

Storytelling in Colombia

The purpose of using storytelling in the classroom is to motivate the learning of L2, vocabulary acquisition, communicative skills improvement, and literacy skills development. Porras (2010) achieves one research in Bucaramanga where young children received benefits through using stories as a means to learn English as a second language. The researcher discovered that the selection of appropriate methodology using stories and ludic made the learning process fun. Additionally, students showed their understanding and learning since

the stories were designed considering students' likes and dislike being surrounded by meaningful, interesting, and comprehensible input that is familiar to them.

There is a considerable number of reasons to use stories inside the classroom. Due to globalization communication has a profound impact on pedagogical encounters where language, ideas, relationships, persuasion, and creativity are applied minding the sociocultural bias, but also the consideration of the difference in the classroom. Gómez Combariza et al, (2013) to analyze storytelling and its social values carried out qualitative research through action research in a third-grade group at a public school in Bogotá. The findings on this research claim by storytelling students became conscious about their role in society as members of a school, a family, and a community. The instruments used by Gómez Combariza and colleagues were structured and unstructured interviews, questionnaires that were reduced by charting, grounded theory. The categories that emerged in this study recognize the significance of contexts such as family where students build social values by reflecting by stories about daily experiences. Additionally, in the school context children convey understandings by interaction with peers what helps them to reflect upon the values they have learned.

Regarding the implantation of storytelling in marginalized communities in the country, Flórez Aristizabal et al. (2017) carried out a case study with four deaf children in Popayán- Colombia. The students were in a multiple grades program acquiring sign language as their native language, and written Spanish as a second language. In this research storytelling and technology were used as main tools to help students in reading and writing. Findings in this study revealed meaningful learning of vocabulary, and usage of grammar correctly when they create a sentence in Spanish. Moreover, students could connect life experiences in a communicative context gradually structured to achieve cognitive

development what reflects the scaffolding process in CRP contexts (Gay 2010; & Ladson Billings, 2014)

What I learned from this review

After exploring culturally relevant pedagogy and multimodal storytelling, as I learned that even if CRP has been part educational process a long time ago, and has evolved during last year, there is a need to include this approach into the Colombian context. I also found a need for further research in multimodal storytelling in all settings, including diverse classrooms where multimodal storytelling can be used as a tool to engage culturally relevant practices in young learners' ESL classrooms. In terms of methodology, the most common research approach was qualitative research. Auto ethnography, action research, and case studies were the most founded research methods carried out during previous studies. The data collection described in the literature were checklists, semi-structured interviews, audio recordings, teachers' journals, class observations, videos and audio recordings, and students' artifacts such as multimodal texts. For data analysis, researchers used mapping, coding, and charting.

In presenting this literature review and concerning CRP I sought the concepts Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy to find sources about pedagogies that commit empowerment and strength identity not only into the classroom but also outside the academic context. I analyzed the inquiries from a holistic perspective (Science, Math, and Arts) seeing teaching and pedagogy. Gay (2002,2006,2010); Ladson Billings (1995a,1995b,2006,2011,2014); & Howard (2003,2012,2018) are the sources that are referenced most in the theoretical framework and literature review from other studies.

Studies have in common a broader understanding of CRP as an approach that has been used in the last years to give voice to the students, helping them to achieve successfully

and academically. Overall, studies have argued to reach these purposes critical pedagogy and critical literacies have helped teachers to work with marginalized groups of students and give them power. There is some research done internationally where the use of CRP has increased students' participation, academic success, and engagement with their own culture from teachers and students (Ladson Billings 1995; Gay 2010; Sleeter, 2012).

Regarding the Colombian context research in CRP, some research related to the use of culture in the English class as a means of learning. These findings exposed a sign that teachers and preservice teachers are giving their first steps to relate Culture, meaningful learning, and social change as positive results of pedagogical interactions; meaning that CRP is part of the teaching processes, but teachers are not aware of this pedagogy (Chiquito, 2017 & Ramos Holguin, 2013). Unfortunately, during my investigation so far in the Colombian context, I did not find investigative processes that use CRP as a concept, which shows teachers lack conceptualization.

In terms of investigating the influence of CRP in students' classrooms, scholars as Sleeter (2012) state there is a need for evidence in research that documents the connection of CRP and students' outcomes. On that account, educational stakeholders need to understand what CRP is and how its principles of academic achievement, cultural competence, and Critical Consciousness are applied into the classroom. Some authors such as (Thompson, 2017) have questioned the importance and benefits of using students' cultural nuances into the curriculum and pedagogical experiences.

On the other hand, while looking for studies about multimodal storytelling it allows acquisition of new vocabulary in native and second language contextualized learning. Those studies utilized case studies and ethnographic approaches. For collecting data researchers applied checklists, semi-structured interviews, audio recordings, surveys, students' artifacts. Their findings showed me some trends: benefits in L2 when applying multimodal

storytelling, teachers' role in the classroom, strategies implemented to tell stories and engage students in the creation process, kinds of multimodal texts, interference of native language into second language learning. Likewise, studies have in commonality that children use multimodality to tell stories depicting their reality and to fulfill the gap they have in English language learning when they are composing a message cooperatively or individually (López Ladino, 2017; Eisazadeh & Rajedram, 2020). Educators should go beyond language teaching promoting a holistic education as human beings. Lopez Ladino (2017) suggests further possibilities to improve teaching practices demanding a wider view of the national system, through the implementation of multimodal storytelling in early childhood education.

Chapter three: Infusing Culturally Relevant Practices Through Multimodal Storytelling in an Elementary English Class: A Qualitative Research Study

This research is a systematic and rigorous inquiry to describe what language learning looks like when culturally relevant pedagogy and multimodal storytelling are infused. In this chapter, I present the methodological features and the approach that guide this study. Moreover, I set out the research question, the participants and research context, and the instruments used for data collection.

Research Design

In this section, I will present the methodology I carried out to analyze the possibilities multimodal storytelling can bring into the classroom engaging culturally relevant practices in an Elementary English classroom. I used qualitative research because it allows a research teacher to look up data that describes individual experiences into a specific situation, considers time, place, artifacts to be categorized (Stake,2010). The qualitative approach I implemented during my inquiry process was action research since it helps me as a teacher to address my experience and to merge theory and practice (Clark et al, 2020). Additionally,

action research permits me to collect information systematically, to establish dialogues with my students, recognized as a meaningful source of information (Ulvik, 2014)

My role in this research is teacher-researcher. I bridged multimodal storytelling and CPR to enrich my young student's second language learning experience meaningfully. As Hamm (2014) declares, teachers who pay attention to diverse experiences can design meaningful learning for students. Consequently, numerous approaches exist to transform the pedagogical procedures to fit in the real classroom atmosphere to see the children as social agents from their possibilities, hopes, dreams, aspirations, and potentialities rather than the skin color, language, neighborhood, or social status (Gay, 2010). At the same time, I reflected on the outcomes that students could get through the process. Teacher research embraces instructors to investigate into the classroom to understand the professional identity fostering real conversations with students concerning their interests, learning experiences, and requirements (Mockler, 2014).

Research Question

To guide my research process, I proposed the following question to be answered: What does language learning look like when infusing culturally relevant practices through multimodal storytelling in an Elementary English class?

Sub questions. What considerations should the research teacher bear in mind when enhancing Culturally Relevant Practices through multimodal storytelling?

-What children's literacy practices demonstrate English language learning engagement through CRP and multimodal storytelling?

Research Setting

I conducted my research in a private school in Envigado, Colombia. The school is divided into three sections: preschool, elementary school, and high school. This learning community has developed different processes to analyze and construct a curriculum that facilitates L2 learning through communicative competence, differentiated pedagogy, and culture-based learning. For instance, it means that around the necessities, interests, problems, students backgrounds programs are found in cultural investment and on current educational demands and policies of the country.

The levels I teach during this research are an elementary and high school. I want to clarify my research was carried out in a group of primary schools. Spanish was the native language of all students. In this school, English lessons are performed 5 days per week, 1 hour per day., classrooms are recognized due to the diversity students bring into the school. Then, the English classes are student centered to engage language learning from experiences. CRP is a student-centered approach that includes cultural references and experiences that would affect schoolchildren learning (Ladson-Billings, 2014; Gay, 2010; Byrd, 2016). As a teacher and researcher, I saw it convenient to teach English through multimodal storytelling to engage culturally relevant practices that can promote personal academic achievement in language learning. I collected most of the data during the literary picnic and English class. During these classes, my students and I told and read stories using different modes such as gestures, sounds, images. This granted schoolchildren spaces to affirm the power to raise their voices from their own culture, building knowledge from interculturality and promoting collaborative work.

Participants

The Elementary level had thirteen groups from first grade to fifth. All grades were divided into groups of around 15- 20 students. However, my research study participants were English learners from 4th grade whose ages were between 9 and 11. The group consisted of 17 students, 5 girls and 12 boys that had distinct levels of English proficiency from basic to advanced. My 4th grade teaching group was diverse, meaning some students were born in other countries, lived their first years abroad in Colombia, or have parents who were originally from foreign countries, and departments and municipalities different than Medellin and the Metropolitan area.

My students were eager to learn English with the purpose of understanding and explaining what happens around their context. Most of them were part of privileged groups in the city whose parents have worked in fields such as medicine, business, entertainment, and engineering. My group especially had gone through a process of adaptation using English as the only language inside the classroom, for the same reason they found it challenging but entertaining to express their thoughts and understandings as part of their stories. The children had also shown a good response to listening to stories during “The Literary Picnic,” a program that enhances learning English learning through communicative competence.

Recruitment procedure and Ethical Matters

Shawa, L. (2017) states that society has become careful with the protection of rights, especially to those who are vulnerable. As the context and subjects of my research were kids, I needed to be careful with the procedures I led during my research process. First, I explained to the English program and the principal the purpose of my research. I told them my intention to improve my teaching practice using a tool that would help me to enhance culturally relevant practices. I highlighted student-centered as one of the program goals of its approach

and my interest in having with my students a closer relationship that went beyond the academic procedures.

Then, I wrote the school director a letter of consent (See Appendix A) to explain my research proposal. Then, I sent parents a letter presenting my study proposal and I answered their questions through individual meetings and emails. I asked them their allowance to collect from their kids' data to develop my master's degree thesis.

Selecting a sample

I carried out the recollection of data in the English class during the third and fourth terms. The school year is divided into four terms, ten weeks per term. I used a purposive sample considering students as participants (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004; Sueter, 2012). I considered the characteristic that allowed me to collect meaningful data. The characteristics were: students who are originally from other countries, students whose parents are not from Colombia, students that are from different cities of Colombia, or those who are raised by parents of different departments, towns, or cities. Those students have different proficiency levels (basic, intermediate, and advanced) according to the English Program.

I selected a girl with an advanced level and a boy with an intermediate level who is originally from different countries. Finally, a boy and a girl who are at the basic level, 2 boys and a girl who are advanced, and 2 girls and a boy who are intermediate. They are originally from Medellín, or other cities from Colombia, some of their parents are from towns that are near to Medellín. To keep confidence with my students' names, each student with their parents chose a pseudonym for their data collection.

Multimodal storytelling engages CRP and Language Learning

Multimodal storytelling has been the tool I have used to engage CRP in an elementary ESL classroom. As was mentioned in chapter 1, I wanted to promote student-centered

pedagogical endeavors that considered pupils' personal interests, background, cultural nuances. As my students are developing their English vocabulary, sometimes they have found it hard to express their messages when they want to talk about their culture, or they do not find some topic related to them. I saw multimodal storytelling as a means that my students can use to convey meaning using different modes. Students have been reading and producing messages, decoding symbols, and various modes that interact in multimodal storytelling. "Multimodal Storytelling became a closer way to interact with the story, making it comprehensible" (López Ladino, 2017, p.58)

Connection with CRP and the English Class

The English curriculum is divided into pilots (the plan of classes) that are composed of two units per term, indicators, and learning objectives to promote listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Additionally, as the promotion of culture is part of the program, each other week, students listen to a story on a "Literary Picnic," a project proposed by the English program. Seven English encounters were the scenario of my study. Multimodal storytelling was the mean I applied to enhance CRP practices to engage students to use their knowledge, interests, and questions. Furthermore, multimodal storytelling aided me to know about their culture and others, it offered them a moment for meaningful learning. Students told their own multimodal stories highlighting experiences and interests that have impacted their lives.

I needed to guarantee that my English classes were mediated by multimodal storytelling and CRP. In so doing, I constructed methodological bridges that included cultural diversity into the subject matter, students' values, and beliefs to promote academic performance. I observed, listened, and documented my students in action to create opportunities to learn from what they knew, thought, and applied. According to Herrera (2016) when teachers give chances to students to say what is going on in their lives, understandings are authentic

resources to bring culture and knowledge from home and match it with what is being taught at school.

Therefore, including into teaching knowledge through socialization “helps our teaching to be culturally and linguistically relevant to the student.” (p.79). To provide my students with meaningful learning, I considered some matters in terms of context, Culturally Relevant Practices, and multimodal storytelling. I also planned lessons considering stories that were relatable to students’ contexts and experiences. Based on a survey, I also selected some topics like Greek mythology and the quarantine to discuss in class.

Curricular components and CRP in the English program. In this section I examined the curricular components detailed in the English syllabus of the school of my research. I identified how CRP principles such as academic achievement, cultural consciousness, and socio-critical components are reflected in the learning objectives, Standards from Colombia, indicators, competencies, and methodologies. This part was translated by me since the information was in Spanish and for further readers, it would be more comprehensible.

Table 1

Curricular components and CRP in the English program

CRP principles recognized	Curricular components	English program
General objective for fourth grade		Fourth grade: to recognize English as a communicative means allowing the identification of own and English speakers’ context from the acquisition of structures, vocabulary, and communicative strategies.
Special needs attention: Universal Design for Learning (UDL)		The school of my research, located in the municipality of Envigado Colombia, is a place where providing learning and individuality are considered through the recognition, valuation, and proper response to the diversity of characteristics, interests, possibilities, and students’ expectations. Applying UDL engages an institutional culture that provides equity in the pedagogical encounters understanding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each student perceives and comprehends the information differently. - Students have individual metacognitive

	skills to express their knowledge.
	- Feelings and learning motivation are different for each student.
Problematizing question for fourth grade	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why is it important to know other cultures? 2. What is my role as a member of my family? 3. Why is it important to know about the food from my country?
Competences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Being able to react autonomously and efficiently in situations where students should express and ask for personal information in English. 2. Being able to express thoughts and feelings to fulfill basic needs.
Standard components	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I can identify the main characters and events from a tale told by my teacher, supported by images, videos, or any visual aid material. 2. I can comprehend personal information given by my classmates and my teacher. 3. I can identify objects, people, and actions that are known in a short text. 4. I am able to follow a simple conversation with a partner when an activity is being developed in the classroom. 5. I am able to ask and answer about the characteristics of familiar objects. 6. I am able to identify some cultural nuances from other countries.

*Source: Plan de área general de inglés

The previous chart depicts the items related to CRP that are implemented in the curricula. As an ESL teacher and student, I have noticed it is essential to develop strategies that facilitate learning and support cultural factors. Culturally relevant teachers and pedagogical encounters look forward to understanding personal and students' backgrounds. I am interested in knowing my students and using that knowledge to connect new concepts and experiences that have been taught through everyday language. CRP endeavors aim to find relevant connections within students, the curricular content, and the community in general.

Bridging Multimodal Storytelling and CRP components

Stories, in the case of my research multimodal storytelling, are a “[...] powerful vehicle for experiencing culture, values, concepts of culture that are embedded in myths and folktales” Curtain and Dahlberg (2010 p.266). Multimodal storytelling was the bridge that aided my 4th graders to mediate the reality of the world with their daily experiences through the enjoyment and understanding of stories. Students used different elements such as gestures, pictures, sounds, smells, objects, and visual aids to enhance literacy; since “students become readers and tellers at the same time.” (López Ladino, 2017, p.5).

In contemplation of bringing culturally relevant practices in my classroom through multimodal storytelling, I envisaged activities that asked English language learners to analyze facts, organize ideas, and discuss topics that permitted them to go beyond their skills. These culturally relevant practices encouraged children to make comparisons within themselves developing critical thinking, participation involvement, and creativity (Jia & Nasri, 2019, & Kata. Furthermore, while my students intertwined stories with their reality, they reached a level of comprehension. They examined cultural information. So, they developed their intercultural skills using English as a means to communicate. Choosing the right story and strategies provided them with a comfortable atmosphere to tell their own narratives was the first step in successful culturally relevant practices in elementary ESL learners’ classrooms. By engaging the use of multimodal storytelling as a tool provided my fourth-grade integral and meaningful learning of ESL; enrichment of their own identity and culture; recognition of other cultures and what critically happens around the community.

Through table 2, I highlighted the multimodal storytelling and culturally relevant components that will be contemplated to develop my lesson plans. I based on storytelling and

multimodal storytelling principles in Jia & Nasri (2019), López Ladino (2017), and CRP from Herrera (2016).

Table 2

Multimodal storytelling and CRP

Multimodal Storytelling	Culturally Relevant Pedagogy
<p>Teachers should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider their young learners' characteristics and use techniques that are meaningful to them. 2. Use of different voices to tell the story. 3. Tell the story using theatrics such as "gestures, body movements, dramatic pauses, facial expression, speaking slowly and clearly (Jia and Nasri, 2019. p. 215) 4. Storytellers can use visuals, masks, costumes, finger puppets, storyboards, and slides to tell their stories. 5. Information can be written in cards to be organized and remembered easily. 6. Show illustrations of books. 7. Adapt the script to students' levels. 8. Distribute roles for students to play. 9. Integrate songs and places for questions and predictions. 10. Incorporate new and known vocabulary. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Connect stories to students' lives. 2. Teach keywords or structures introducing the context and relate it with students' backgrounds. 3. Ask students to make predictions. It will help to see and understand their backgrounds and experiences. 4. Give and ask students for a purpose of listening this will help them to be more engaged with the process. 5. Students can tell the cultural version or a story similar to the one they listened to see their cultural and personal backgrounds. 6. Students can create stories that reflect and relate to their life providing authentic information for students to share what happens in their homes and life. 7. Explore the context of multimodal storytelling and go beyond making connections with reality, places, the author, and the character. 8. Make sure the environment and curriculum reflect the lives of students. We should advocate lifestyles to enhance a positive and substantial classroom community. 9. In ESL classrooms performance is enhanced when teachers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Create relaxing opportunities with minimal risk for students to disclose their knowledge. *See and transcript students' discussions to analyze how they process the information and construct meaning. *Should be aware of cultural aspects mirrored on what they think. Nieto (2011) points out the connection between the thinking process and its

influence by cultural backgrounds.

* Provide learning situations that are an insignificant risk but challenge students to higher levels of understanding.

10. Students' production helps to advance the learning of the class.

Selecting Stories, Resources, and Strategies to Engage CRP and multimodal Storytelling

I planned to create a unit that was based on the recognition of my students' own culture by using multimodal storytelling as a tool to enhance CRP. This unit was developed by several aspects that were scaffolded step by step considering culturally relevant criteria mentioned before. First, I looked at stories that could be culturally related to my students. Then, in different classes in activities such as literary picnics, the stories were read and retold by the teacher and students. During these encounters, a variety of activities were applied to make connections between me as an English teacher, students, and families. Students created a story using different modes presenting their names, family traditions such as celebrations, hobbies, and places where they were born. Then, students explored the Colombian culture by retelling stories about food, myths, and the social reality of other communities. Also, students observed school as a place to know others and reinforce culture through fusing Colombian and Greek myths. Finally, students promoted autonomy but also teamwork, asking questions about their own lives, classmates, family, community, and school and sharing their insights using different semiotic modes to convey and transmit meaning. In table 3, I described the resources I planned to use multimodal storytelling as a tool to engage Culturally Relevant Practices.

Table 3

Stories, Resources, and Activities to Engage CRP and Multimodal Storytelling

Story	Description	Activities and resources
Kevin's dream (Comic)	Kevin is a boy who has a dream of being at school. This comic is a good start to introduce	St will describe one of their last dreams using images, sounds, colors, and comic vignettes. St

	multimodal storytelling to students' reality.	can use different tools such as canvas and PowerPoint.
Saturday Sancocho by Leila Torres Read aloud Saturday Sancocho (From YouTube)	A girl called Maria Lili prepares Sancocho, a Latino American traditional chicken soup, with her grandparents. One day there is nothing in the house except eggs and Maria goes to the market with her mother.	Students will create a plate of their favorite food. They will mix two dishes and will draw. Students will present their plates in front of the class
Waiting for the Biblioburro by Monica Brow, Illustrations by John Parra Read aloud Waiting for the Biblioburro (From YouTube)	Ana is a little girl who meets a traveling librarian.	Students will have finger puppets to describe the story that they read together, they will use their voices, sounds, and gestures to talk about that story. St will describe the book they like through illustrations, sounds, and representation of gestures.
Juana and Lucas, by Juana Medina	Juana describes what she likes and dislikes including her city Bogota, Juana discovers why learning English is important for her.	Students will create a scrapbook where they will talk about their city and community. They will create a book including previous exercises.
It's too Noisy, read aloud taken by Joana Cole YouTube. (Canvas presentation)	A farmer who is annoyed by his noisy family. To solve this problem, he decides to visit a wise man who gives him some silly advice.	Families and st will read at home the story and talk about a family moment during the lockdown. In class st will have a circle time conversation where they will retell the story with images, sounds, gestures, and space. Then, they will talk about what they discussed with their families.
Colombian myths-legends and Greek myths	Considering one of the answers that students shared in a survey, this is one of the topics they were interested in. Students will enhance their cross-cultural skills through the recognition of La marimonda, El hombre caiman, Poseidon, and Athena.	Students will create a new character considering features of Colombian and Greek Myth characters.

Note. These stories were selected for Elementary Students, student's context and similarities of the stories help to use multimodal storytelling in the classroom.

Data collection

To develop my research and achieve its purpose, I selected class audio recordings; semi-structured interviews, and surveys for homeroom teachers of 4th grade in the school, students, and parents of the students who are participants in the research. I also used teaching journals, lesson plans, and students' artifacts as the main instruments to collect data.

Class audio recordings and observation

I collected the observation data from the class recordings, as a teacher-researcher I applied a detailed culturally relevant oriented lesson plan, infusing multimodal storytelling as the main tool to help students to learn ESL. Stake (2010, p.90) defines observing data as the “information that can be seen directly by the researcher of heard or felt”. Meaning, I applied participatory observation because I was involved in the practices and lesson plans.

Interviews and Surveys

These instruments helped me as a teacher-researcher to gather information regarding participants, school, and parents’ perceptions about their culture, the development of the English encounters, personal aims involved with English learning, and their backgrounds in general. Stake (2010) mentions interviews allow collecting singular information or point of view of who was interviewed. Interviews also permit to notice aspects the researcher did not foresee. For the same reason, a final interview was part of the data collection where participants could express their achievements. Surveys were instruments to connect with the families, they allowed students to know students’ roots and backgrounds by categories.

Children’s artifacts

Through students’ artifacts, I observed and demonstrated how infusing culturally relevant practices and multimodal storytelling engaged language learning. Artifacts were instruments that encountered students’ experiences and advancements during the process. I paid attention to my students’ understandings and productions avoiding that my assumptions do not influence their accounts. I collected artifacts in the forms of drawings, writing, and online books they produced to represent multimodal storytelling from a culturally relevant perspective.

Teaching journals

I kept a journal where I made notes about the realization of the lesson plans, students' interventions, risks, strengths, and reactions of the students related to the classes performed. Then, I crossed the information with other sources observing if my classes were culturally relevant designed and the benefits students found using multimodal storytelling into their L2 learning process. As a teacher-researcher, I was involved in the complete process of this study from start to end documenting and analyzing the dialogues and outcomes found during various classroom experiences.

Data Analysis: Categories

Culturally Relevant Practices in School and English Classroom

In this category, I included the ideas that students expressed, orally and written, that could provide inferences about their cultural background, values, beliefs, and interests. I included interviews and surveys students, teachers, and parents carried out. Also, the way dialogue was established by me as a teacher-researcher and students' interventions. This category was analyzed through the class recordings and the teacher's journal.

Multimodal Storytelling as a Tool to Convey Meaning

I wanted to focus on this category to be analyzed from students' creations. This category is based on observing how students use multimodal storytelling as a means to give and understand a message that they are eager to share using audio-visual, signal, and kinesthetic modes. I also included students' artifacts and interventions in the classroom that allow students to convey meaning and ideas through multiple semiotic resources.

Multimodal storytelling and CRP to engage language learning

This category was taken from the analysis and triangulation of the data collection. The intention was to highlight and identify variabilities expected as participation, and unanticipated categories such as autonomy development into my students' experience using multimodal storytelling and culturally relevant practices, as a means to learn English as a second language.

Data Reduction

Mapping out the information

I used mapping during my research process. I started creating a map of issues in the classroom of my problem statement. I analyzed concepts articulating similarities. I also broke down complex and wide research questions to establish the priorities to follow up in my study and represent the concepts that were abstract for me. I employed maps to gather information. Mapping helped my participants and me to externalize and visualize existent and new knowledge. Moreover, while collecting data I mapped possible stories that could generate culturally relevant practices, dates, and potential artifacts students could create. Later, those maps helped me to cross data.

Charting

I divided the information about the curricular components that reflect CRP principles. I also will do a chart that will include the multimodal storytelling principles and categories that will be analyzed in audio recordings data, teachers' journals, and students' artifacts which will let me have a wider perspective of my research process. I decided to make a chart where I could write the main ideas present in the data collection instruments as a base for analysis. Throughout the process of charting, I figured out there were some categories interrelated (Leavy 2014)

Narrative Analysis

To analyze multimodal storytelling as a tool to engage culturally relevant practices in ESL young learners' classrooms, it is also important to understand how people convey meaning in their lives as narratives. This method facilitated me to see how my fourth graders used stories to explain their world. Moreover, through the categories, data was narrowed from the transcriptions of class recordings and students' artifacts, interviews, journals, and multimodal storytelling production by students. The narrative analysis also allows knowledge of culture, understandings, and changes that could be gathered during my research process.

Coding Analysis

It concentrates on the systematic classification of the data using different codes. This method supported me to examine categories and goals making inferences about my research participants and their intentions. I used codes such as colors, keywords, and chunks to describe the data collected from the interviews, class recordings, and students' artifacts. At the same time, I highlighted and coded frequent words and commonalities (Creswell,2012) of the information related to sub-questions and the three categories that were considered for findings.

Ethical Consideration, Trustworthiness, and Pseudonyms

As a teacher-researcher, I wanted to contemplate ethics as a utilitarian, to make my research reliable, Shawa (2017) defines Ethics utilitarianism as a view that carries out the guiding principles being beneficial for most people. Therefore, I intended to make sure that, my students and community received important outcomes during the research process. Students chose pseudonyms. Following the school's confidentiality, I have not mentioned its name, and I have not included detailed information that could give clues about my students or community.

Furthermore, the activities that were part of the data collection were not graded, neither affected my students' academic process. I pondered some dilemmas that could emerge during my investigation. I wrote Verbatim quotes that helped me to support narratives in vivo codes (Saldana, 2011) and paraphrased some interventions to make ideas clearer. I collected data in Spanish, then I translated it to English since homeroom teachers and parents do not speak English.

Shawa (2017) declares that most of those dilemmas can be solved through agreements that carefully consider no harm to the subject of the research. For instance, I saw the research in terms of "questions of access, power, harm, deception, secrecy, and confidentiality" (p. 434) since I was working with children. Moreover, my intention as the researcher was to base my study on (Lindorff, 2010) ethical principles in research. Participants received equal opportunities; all my students were an active part of my research. However, considering the time I studied the data of a purpose sample (Stringer 2014).

Finally, there were some basic values I contemplated during my research such as respect for my students and their performances, confidentiality, honesty in the information that emerged in the findings. Additionally, I sent an informed consent guaranteeing parents and students the purpose of my research, that their artifacts and process were not graded, and they were free to withdraw from the research process. It allowed me to hold the research ethic as it concerns the voluntary permission of a guardian or parent to participate, to manage the data, and to show they are based on evidence and can be justified. I was careful to avoid manipulation on their answers, for this, students' work was shared with parents and teachers of the community.

Limitations

This qualitative research deals only with one group of participants to what extent the findings of the research cannot consent as general resolutions that can solve any situation in every classroom. Furthermore, as I have expressed previously CRP studies are reflected upon characteristics and backgrounds that can only be applied in a particular context-based on and adapted to students' cultural capital reality of the community and school in general. In addition, there were dates and time constraints that due to school schedule interfered with the realization of some lesson plans continuously.

As a novice teacher-researcher who applies CRP and multimodal storytelling, I felt there was a lack of literature research in culturally relevant practices in the Colombian context, especially from the perspective that CRP can be fostered in all classrooms. The literature described research experiences with minorities and marginal groups in CRP classrooms but leads the side of seeing diversity inside the teaching environments and how their outcomes reflect the advancement of cultural recognition and critical processes from students' perspectives.

Throughout my research process, there were some lesson plans where critical consciousness was left only if controversial topics arose discussions. My intention was not to avoid controversial topics in the classroom such as race and discrimination, or sexuality, but I felt I was not the right agent to discuss certain topics in class with fourth graders. Students and I had some interventions seeing every person in the classroom as someone important to whom we could learn something. Therefore, future research could emphasize students' outcomes in CRP and multimodal storytelling from a critical perspective dealing with policies from schools and families.

Chapter Four: Engaging culturally relevant practices through multimodal storytelling in an elementary English learning classroom

The purpose of this study was framed to describe how English language learning takes place when culturally relevant practices and multimodal storytelling are connected in English elementary classrooms. In this chapter, I will present the findings of an analysis of data such as class discussions, class observation in teaching journals, students' artifacts, interviews, and surveys. The study was carried out in an elementary English classroom of a private school in Envigado, Colombia. This study seeks to answer the research question: What does language learning look like when infusing culturally relevant practices through multimodal storytelling in an elementary English class?

Sub-question 1 was aimed to answer what considerations a research teacher should bear in mind when enhancing CRP through multimodal storytelling. The category CRP in the English Language learning class was studied to answer this question by interviewing different community members such as parents, documental analysis of institutional papers such as the English subject syllabus, teacher's actions to create CRP in the classroom, student interventions, and students' production in the English classroom.

Sub-question 2 was thought to observe what children's literacy practices show English language learning engagement through CRP and multimodal storytelling. To give response to this question the categories I used were CRP in the English classroom, multimodal storytelling to enhance CRP, and multimodal storytelling + CRP to open spaces for English language learning. I included students' artifacts created to give meaning after implementing multimodal storytelling, and emergent categories that describe moments of autonomy and of sharing knowledge in an Elementary classroom.

To answer sub-questions and findings that came out of this research I used students' pseudonyms to highlight narratives that helped me to find patterns in this study. Pseudonyms

were chosen by students and collected on the consent sent to parents to consider students' participation. I highlighted verbatim quotes in Spanish in English inside the classroom, pictures of lesson plan, and students' artifacts. Due to comprehension of students' interventions, I translated the verbatim quotes into English. Since students' artifacts and interventions are part of chapter 4, I introduce in Table 4 participants and their English level considered by the internal division in the English program at school.

Table 4

Fourth Grade Students' Participants

<i>Student</i>	<i>English level, institutional standards</i>
Alex	Intermediate
James	Intermediate
Comandiu	Advanced
Piter	Intermediate
Renegado	Basic
Ferney	Advanced
Jessica	Intermediate
Elisa	Intermediate
Angelo	Advanced
Flora	Advanced
Mia	Basic

CRP in School and an Elementary English Classroom

CRP was the teaching approach I used to facilitate English language learning in an Elementary classroom. I integrated the learning objectives of the English program of a private school and intended to implement culturally relevant pedagogy practices to consider cultural components, academic development, and socio-critical moments. Studies such as (Gay, 2010, 2014, 2018; Hunter Doniger et al, 2018; Ladson Billings, 1995, 2006,2014; & Sturdivant & Alanis, 2019) assert CRP teachers need to believe students are capable to use culture to share knowledge and achieve academic success considering their values, thoughts, beliefs, and backgrounds. This approach enabled me as a teacher to tailor my teaching style to know about students' needs, interests, and cultural learning experiences. In the following lines, I will present the findings when infusing multimodal storytelling and CRP to enhance English language learning supported by interviews, surveys, students' artifacts, and audio recordings.

Students' Rapport through CRP, school, and the English Program

To show that CRP can be applied in an Elementary classroom, it was essential to connect this approach with the learning goals and school perspectives. CRP allows teachers and children to build strong relationships and promote participation (Gay, 2002, 2010,2014, 2018; Hunter- Doniger et al, 2018; & Schrodt et. Al, 2015). The school where I did my research provides through recognizing and valuing the diversity of characteristics, interests, possibilities, and expectations to provide equity inside the classroom. I interviewed Spanish homeroom teachers and English teachers to have a bigger picture of students' relationships in school, ways of making meaning through stories, cultural identity learned by the different experiences, and interactions.

CRP looks forward to providing students with classroom ecology that relates learning conditions with opportunities to maximize meaningful experiences in the school, family, community, and a larger world context. Teachers recognized in fourth graders values of

empathy, respect, and effective communication, those values are part of the descriptions of equitable and caring classrooms that CRP fosters (Gay 2018; Ladson Billings, 2014).

Teacher researcher: How is the relationship between teachers and students?

HR 1: “First, 4th graders are sociable, respectful. I would say it is a very assertive relationship because in a certain way there is a good communicative act. I mean, as teachers we are always aware of them, each one of their roles, starting with respect. They are very respectful, and receptive children. They accept properly the observations and warnings. They defend their rights; they are fair when they are right, they make see those situations as they are. (Homeroom teacher 1, personal communication, July 22, 2021)

Equally, teachers have mentioned that empathy has been developed throughout the year. There is respect side to side (teachers and students) having in mind that students are kids and that they will behave such as on most occasions. (Homeroom teacher 2, personal communication, August 6, 2021). However, in some way due to the pandemic and blended learning the relationship between teachers and students were affected by the creation of emotional bonds (Homeroom teacher 3, personal communication, August 12, 2021). On the other hand, the English teacher described students and teachers have a close and good relationship that permit students to enjoy classes (English teacher, personal communication, August 4, 2021)

Spaces that Promote Own Identity Recognition and CRP

CRP recognizes and accepts differences by modifying teaching techniques, engaging in open groups, and creating a comfortable environment. CRP permeates institutional policies, teachers’ instructions, and spaces that promote understanding and connection of language with the world (Piazza et al, 2015). In my research, the learning spaces such as group orientations, bulleting reports, breaks, and specific moments of the class were

underpinned as enriching atmospheres that allow students to recognize themselves. In the teachers' interview and my teacher's journal, I found the following data.

The school where I carried out my research provides students scenarios to reinforce and encourage individual and cultural identity. Homeroom teachers uphold listening and caring concerning promoting fluid communication. Furthermore, when students can discuss their strengths, weaknesses, and thoughts it allows teachers and students to experience culturally relevant practices. Talking about the English Class specifically, throughout a survey held on August 9, 2021, 12 of 13 students attended that class, meaning 92, 3% recognized that the English class promotes everyone's culture in the classroom by asking about cultural backgrounds and experiences.

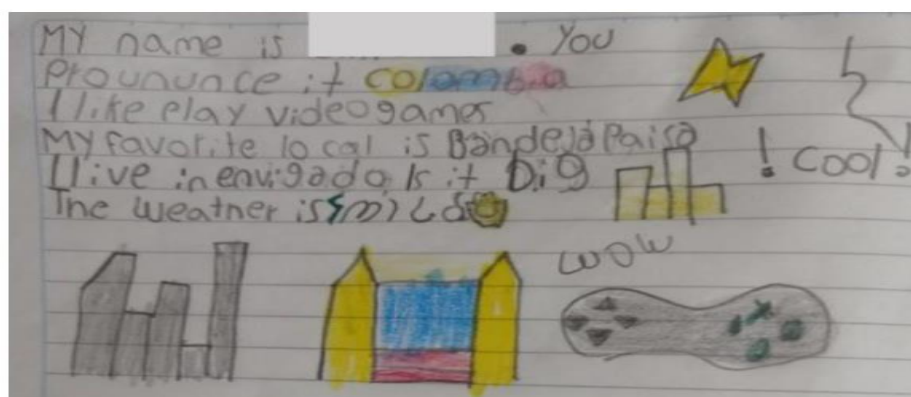
Teacher researcher: What spaces or activities in the institution and classes empower students to recognize their own identity?

HR 3: There are some school subjects- that allow recognition- mostly those where students feel that the teacher respects what they and their classmates say. When the teacher requests respecting personal interventions, they are more open to sharing their thoughts, even knowing that they could be wrong, or they doubt if the question is out the subject or "*es una pregunta bobá*" according to self- student perspective.

(Homeroom teacher 3, personal communication, August 12, 2021)

Figure 1

Children mistake awareness and recognition in multimodal storytelling



Note. students use drawings, colors and sounds as resources to communicate. In this picture we can observe students' misunderstanding of message, but how he makes meaning by representing the Colombian flag. In the presentation Piter was aware and corrected his mistake.

Additionally, spaces such as meeting with the homeroom teachers, bulleting reports, and activities out of the classroom enhance students to reaffirm their experiences with their families and friends. The break is considered another place for students to recognize their own identity since it is performed in a place different than the classroom.

HR1: Group orientations where we talk about our strengths and flaws. Another space is the bulleting report, it is a space where you get close to them (students) and there is good interaction. The bulleting report is important because there is interaction with the family. The breaks and I would say it is the most important and the one they enjoy more, why? Because their friends are there because they are in a different place than the classroom. Also, because during break students tell experiences, play games, and have the space to greet the teacher differently or to establish with the teacher a conversation different than the academic (HR1, personal communication, July 22, 2021)

HR2: Group orientations, retreats, activities developed by the psychology group perform in different classes, and sports activities led by P.E teachers. (Homeroom teacher 2, personal communication, August 6, 2021)

However, the breaks can also present moments where a student's idiosyncrasy is affected by their classmates, and their desire to be included and accepted in a specific group.

HR 3: "You would think that breaks are spaces to promote recognition of own identity because during breaks they are opened to the world, but it is not like that because it goes more with what the friends want. It is more about belonging and being accepted in a group or by a classmate. Then, it shows a perspective it is not own culture, but group culture." (Homeroom teacher 3, personal communication, August 12, 2021)

During the interviews with teachers was discussed how diversity is appreciated by students. All teachers agreed that difference goes beyond race, physical appearance, or ethnicity. Students appreciate diversity from economical standards, ways they raise their voices, interactions within games and classes. Students are curious to know about the world and their partners. However, it is difficult to see actions that show respect dealing with diversity because there are no students who belong to a minority. This research suggests students have more opportunities to interact with other kids and people from the community to exchange culturally relevant practices that enrich their socio-cultural experiences.

Teacher researcher: How is diversity appreciated within the classroom?

HR3: “It is a complex topic because if you see all of them have a similar socio-economic status. Considering ethnicity there is the same patron. It is difficult to meet students who belong to an ethnic group, who have native characteristics or are afro descendants. The difference can be seen in games when a girl can play soccer when it is not a girls’ sport. Also, when a boy is part of a group of girls. Students do not comment about the color of their skin, there are no xenophobic comments. We do not have a group that allows students to differentiate diversity. (Homeroom teacher 3, personal communication, August 12, 2021)

From the perspective of this research, I intend to see diversity as something that is real within the classroom. Every single member of the class was born in a familiar, political, economic context that shapes ways of thinking, believing, understanding, and reacting to different experiences. Then, teachers from a culturally relevant perspective reflect among students’ diversity and provide learners spaces to socialize and become active agents in society. In the school where I developed my research fourth graders are recognized because of values such as respect, tolerance, justice, and good teamwork.

HR 1: “students distinguish diversity from the economic and familiar contexts. One student who has a father and a mother, the one who only lives with a father or a mother, the one who lives with grandparents. When we talk about the economic differences they perceive and discuss who has more, the father who has the best car, the father who has a business. Something nice about fourth graders is that they are very respectful, they accept and tolerate each other. They recognize their weaknesses. They are united, they clearly understand that even if they have those differences there is no envy, if they have more they share with others. (Homeroom teacher 1, personal communication, July 22, 2021)

Figure 2

Multimodal composing as a mean to appreciate differences



Note. images, sounds, character representation, colors were used to tell student’s own story.

During discussions in class, students and I had the opportunity to see some differences and similarities. I conceive CRP is not only for those students who are part of minorities as it has been shown in the literature (Acuff et al, 2012; Byrd, 2016; Gay 2010, 2014; Kestha, 2013 & Ladson Billings 1995, 2014) it is an important teaching perspective that can benefit everyone. Teaching journals and students’ artifacts (see Appendix D) depict the diversity in

the classroom and how the promotion of equity and inclusivity in the English classroom is a reality.

Students' participation increased when they were asked to recognize different cities from Colombia and the places where they were born. We could see that we are from different cities, municipalities, even countries. Students mentioned they are originally from México, Barcelona, Pasto, Envigado, Sabaneta, Medellín. (Teacher's Journal, September 9th/2021)

CRP makes learning contextual

CRP practices appeared when children were able to connect their previous knowledge with the new information. CRP teachers should reflect and think about strategies and materials that encourage students to draw on their prior knowledge, frames of reference, and performance styles of students to enhance meaningful encounters (Gay, 2010, 2018). Additionally, culturally relevant teachers need to provide students the contact with stories that are familiar to them.

During this class, my students and I worked on a story that is closer to the Colombian culture. *Waiting for the Biblioburro* is a story about a mobile library that visits children in a faraway village. First, I wanted students to recognize by context using images and a video of the library of the school. Students felt familiar with that place right away. They knew they had been in the school library. They also started remembering the times they have visited this place. (Teacher's journal August 18th/2021)

Figure 3

Waiting for the Biblioburro, multimodal composing



Note. stick puppets, books, sounds, gestures, and special resources were used to retell the story *Waiting for the Biblioburro*

Teacher: Please observe this picture

Mia: Profe en mi casa tengo una biblioteca como esa

Teacher: how do you say that in English? / *Biblioteca*

Students: library

Flora: (while the video was being played) teacher that sound reminds me of the wind when you travel.

Students: I see chairs, computers.

Teacher: what do you feel when you see this library?

Alex: creativity and learn

[I showed another picture and students described they see donkeys and library.] James reminds the Christmas carol *Mi Burrito Sabanero* of seeing the donkeys. This action reflects students never left behind their context. (Audio recording class August 18th/2021)

Another strategy I applied was to infer from the title of a story what it was about. At this point, students were working on one of the standards “I can ask and answer about characteristics of familiar objects.” Through inferencing strategies, students could share their knowledge with others, and I could guide an effective and enjoyable learning experience. This kind of warm-up gave me the possibility to achieve one of the components of CRP as is intertwining previous knowledge. I provide an example when discussing the stories *Saturday Sancocho* by Leyla Torres and *Waiting for the Biblioburro*:

Teacher: What do you think when you listen to the word Biblioburro.

Student: A bible

Teacher: Ok a bible and a donkey.

Student: teacher, *una Biblioteca* (the Spanish word for library)

Teacher: How do you say *Biblioteca*?

Students: library

Teacher: Library, very good.

Comandiu: teacher I think it is about a donkey in a library.

Teacher: A Donkey in a library, ok. What else?

Flora: teacher a donkey with books.

Teacher: ok guys, excellent very good. Now, next question, do you like books? Why?

Ferney: (says in low volume) yes, because it's healthy, it is good for our brain.

Primavera: I like books because I can *Aprender*. (Class audio record August 18th/2021)

It was my aim as a teacher to make the class and the multimodal storytelling closer to them for students. For this reason, I was brought into classroom realia, and I made the text shorter to interact more with students. Labeling was used as a strategy to recognize learners' previous knowledge. "Using real media encouraged students to participate even more and show their knowledge. Students perceived and described words and situations without needing a written word. Furthermore, Students felt the story was closer to their reality since they knew the name of the ingredients that were part of it (the story). "Teacher, *Saturday Sancocho* is a story about *Sancocho*" I replied, "do you like *Sancocho*?" mmm "that looks delicious" (Flora used a gesture and a sound representing as she was tasting it)" (Teacher's journal August 4th,2021)

Figure 4

Multimodal composing and labeling



Note. images, size of word (big font means to raise the volume, small to whisper), sounds, realia and gestures were used to retell the story *Saturday Sancocho*

Furthermore, when students checking on students' previous knowledge through questions permits having a fluid conversation in class and to link their experiences with subjects of other areas and the English class. When working on Colombian tales as was requested by students on the survey carried out (August 9th/2021), I saw the opportunity to enrich the discussion. "St had the task to define the word myth and tell the class some examples. This strategy was applied thinking about checking students' previous knowledge and ways they can construct meaning in another language- in this case, English. Based on students' reactions and responses, I could infer and associate the fact that as Rychly & Graves (2012) reflected by associating students' knowledge context to new information and answering forms to natural learning opportunities, CRP counters the diversity of cultures inside the classroom." (teacher's journal September 22nd/2021)

Fostering Cultural Competence in an Elementary English Classroom

The meaning of CRP is linking learning with an appreciation and comprehension of the culture. From a CRP perspective culture affects and impacts teaching and learning directly (Ladson Billings 2014, Gay 2010, 2018). CRP permits teachers and students to learn from diversity and appreciate it having an investment in academic success.

According to homeroom teachers', interviews the social, cultural, and familiar contexts affect the learning process depending on the context. All teachers affirmed it is not possible to untie students' backgrounds. In general, when students have a problem with a family member or a friend, feelings and situations affect positively or negatively their learning and concentration span in class. During the interview with one of the homeroom teachers it was mentioned that culture and idiosyncrasy are reflected in the argumentation, sometimes students support points of view from the perspective of a relative or a friend, but

not theirs. This teacher also pointed out that students are not aware of the cultural processes and how to approach their culture. This research found it necessary to provide learners in the English class and other classes more spaces to construct their opinions above strong experiences where they can see every opinion is welcomed. In my teaching journal, I considered some perspectives.

Discussing the story, *it's too noisy*, students and I had the opportunity to compare different houses, families, socioeconomic status, and behaviors of human beings. Students from a reflexive perspective could appreciate the context of the story, a farm could tell it was different from their reality. Students were also astonished by the fact that the family had 9 kids. It was meaningful from this conversation that students brought to the table the word *culicagado*. Through discussing the meaning of this word, children had the opportunity to expand their English vocabulary and used the language to explain a word that is common in some Colombian contexts and is understood by all ages. (Teacher's journal November 2nd/2021)

Teacher: guys, what's the meaning of *culicagado*?

Piter: Teacher is a meaning; how do you say *significa que es muy desobediente*?

Teacher: it means naughty

James: teacher significa que es muy irrespetuoso

Teacher: disrespectful

Mía: está diciendo que la casa es muy desordenada

Teacher: Aja, he is saying that the house is a mess (Audio recording class November 2nd/2021)

In this discussion children reflect their understanding of the situation comparing their context and experiences from the immediate context to one of the stories: *It's noisy*. Students applied the knowledge they have gotten from experiences of interaction. Children use

different strategies to accomplish their objective of explaining a word that is common and open spaces to use English as a means to communicate. Hence, learners incorporate their life experiences to understand and systematize moments of a story in a meaningful way.

Teachers in the interviews also believe that the academic moments contrast the beliefs at home, but sometimes teachers' conceptions can be different and there could be academic misunderstandings. Additionally, one of the homeroom teachers expressed that not only the cultural background affects the learning process, but also the maturity. Fourth graders are looking for the acceptance of parents and they also want to validate if what mother and father said was true. Then, cultural competence is a key factor that educators need to consider. Seeing students' cultural nuances and features enable English teachers and instructors, in general, to be effective with students that belong to a different culture, it increases the connections between home and school.

“I intended to expand and comprehend children's perspectives in a cross-cultural way through listening and asking them questions by starting from their background. When we were working on Colombian and Greek myths, students experienced different moments of the classes where the influence of diverse cultures was the basis for students to construct their interventions. After doing a brainstorm of Colombian myths, James, one of the participants of my research who is from Mexico alluded to the myth *The Alligator Man*. James said the word alligator but did not remember the rest of the title, however, his classmates and I understood the myth he was referring to. “This shows that his experiences and cultural backgrounds from different countries/parts have proportionated facts and events that allow him to cross diverse cultures and build knowledge” (teacher's journal September 22nd/2021)

Figure 5

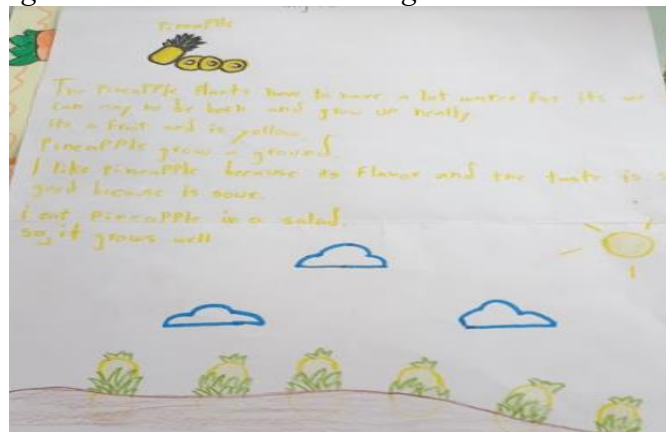
Multimodal composing as a mean to appreciate cultural aspects



Note. This activity was aimed at students describing their favorite food. James remembered his cultural roots. He used an image to convey his idea and later, he was able to detect some mistakes and enhance academic achievement.

Figure 6

Multimodal composing as a mean to share knowledge and increase research skills



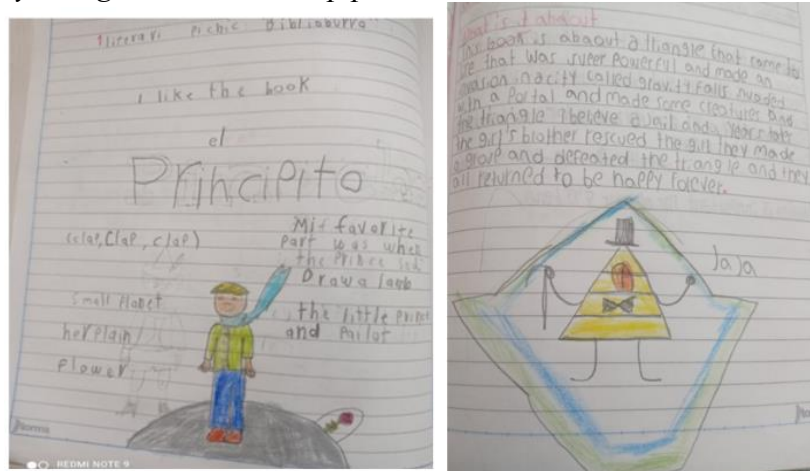
Note. In this picture we can notice Alex wrote about his favorite fruit, used images, colors, textures to reflect about his nuances and reality. He also developed research skills.

Teachers as Facilitators in CRP and Multimodal Storytelling. My goal was to give students different moments where they could discuss, show, and reflect on the work they did during the sessions I carried out my research. Additionally, I looked for other scenarios different than the classroom to provide students with sources and materials they needed to create their own multimodal storytelling. Students and I went to the computer lab and used the webpage Story Jumper to create an artifact (See figure 5).

“Students’ artifacts were done during previous sessions with the aim of gathering all the work they have created during different moments of the class. Students were focused on listening to their classmates’ stories. There was one story that got our attention because Kenny talked about Serbia, about a celebration there, and Serbia’s enemy. Through the performance of this artifact, Kenny could reflect his interest in another country, located on a different continent. Kenny always talks about Serbia. He continuously researches about the food, the language, the celebrations, myths and other topics that he is interested to know more about.” (Teacher’s journal, October 4th/2021)

Figure 7

Multimodal storytelling and CRP develop production skills



Multimodal Storytelling to Enhance CRP in the English Classroom

Convention of Meaning and Understanding in the English Class

Multimodal storytelling in this research is seen as a tool that I was an English teacher, and my students have implemented in the classroom to facilitate culturally relevant practices. Multimodal storytelling has granted our English encounters a natural way to express ideas and thoughts. When multimodal storytelling is part of the class, it promotes students to have contact with new literacies and go beyond decoding letters. While children receive input and connect a story with different modes they construct meaning in a simple and comprehensible way (Cañas & Ocampo, 2015; Mora, 2015 & López Ladino, 2017).

Figure 8

Multimodal storytelling and CRP to convey meaning considering students' reality



In one session, comics were considered examples of multimodal storytelling, because to convey ideas writers use sounds, spatial, gestural, and visual semiotic codes. Through inferencing questions, students activate their cognitive process. When students are challenged to understand meaning from context, it also asks them to scaffold their learning process. Through multimodal storytelling, feelings and sensorial experiences are also brought up to facilitate communicative situations.

Figure 9

Sounds help to clarify students' story



Note. Flora used sounds as snoring and screaming to give more meaning to her story. So that she could express fear and the animal which was in the story.

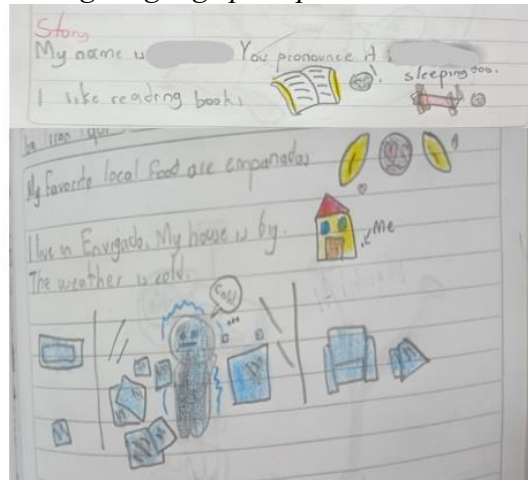
Students saw a comic that had only drawings. Students could infer the setting of the stories since the drawings were clear and well represented. “Teacher I think he is at school because he is sitting on a *pupitre*” word in Spanish for a desk. It looks like he is sleeping,” Jessica added, “teacher that drawing is telling me that sleeping at school is good because you enjoy it. (Teacher’s journal and class recording July 29th/2021)

At this point, students were achieving the standard “I can identify the main characters and events from a tale told by my teacher, supported by images, videos or any visual-aid material” pupils were connecting the content of the story with their intentionality to learn a language. When students saw the comic now with words and onomatopoeias that expressed sounds, they started to retell the story while using English, sounds, gestures, and interacting with the image to give a clear message. For example, in the first square, there was a clock; students made a tic-tac sound. In the second square, there was a drawing of a boy lying on a chair with zzzz around his head. Students could deduce the boy was sleeping because of the mode ZZzzz, James snored doing the gesture and the sound with his mouth (Teacher’s journal and class recording July 29th/2021)

Furthermore, the literacy interventions were supported by students’ language experiences using prompts and simple sentences to express their interests, thoughts, and beliefs. The ways and modes that students apply to tell stories have enhanced language exploration connecting the real world with the words. Multimodal storytelling expands the chances for students to analyze what happens around their worlds and express their ideas by developing critical thinking.

Figure 10

Multimodal composing following language prompts

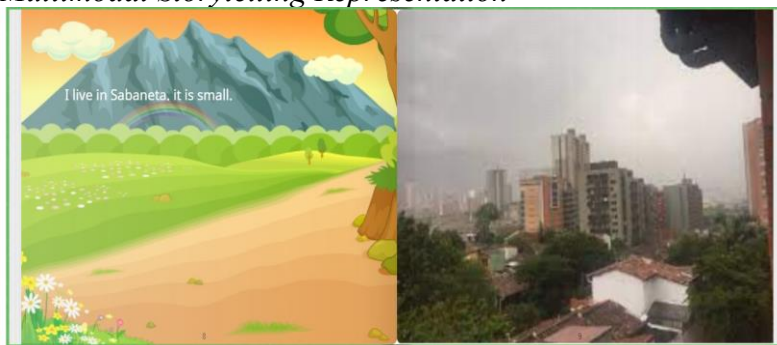


Note. Ferney started composing his story by following prompts. Sensations and colors also convey meaning.

Homeroom teachers manifested students tell their own stories written, orally, through slides, photographs. Audios, videos, audio recordings, showing images, and they use drawings as a means to communicate stories (see figure 5). (Homeroom teacher 1, personal communication, July 22, 2021). On the other hand, 53.8% of students in a survey agreed that they implement different means such as images, sounds, and gestures to tell stories.

Figure 11

Multimodal Storytelling Representation



Note. This activity was aimed at students describing the city and municipality where they live. This is an extract of an online book students created. In this case, Alex used prompts in English that I proposed to my students. He used an image to convey his idea and later, he expressed it rains in Sabaneta. The cloud in the sky depicts his description.

While telling different stories children and me as their teacher started incorporating different semiotic resources such as audio, visual aids, words, gestures, colors, and special representation. Children began to link their literacy practices and language learning through multiple steps that allowed them to engage in conversations and relate their authentic context

with the stories. English students learn and reinforce vocabulary throughout the interaction of diverse materials and strategies. As an example, while we told the story *Saturday Sancocho* a Colombian song was being played, and students were storytellers by completing part of the story and recognizing the word through drawings or gestures. Students can learn and remember new vocabulary more easily by associating words from the context around, finding similarities. When students answer a survey, they recognized, they understood stories better when vary semiotic resources were applied in the English class (see Appendix D, figure 16). (Students' personal communication, August 9th /2021)

Teacher: [...] Now guys, do you know what's the name of this? [I was showing real garlic]

Flora: teacher, gggg gurlish [she was snapping her fingers to remind the word]

Teacher: Garlic

Flora: oooh garlic

Teacher: what is this? [showing coriander]

Jessica and Angelo: mmm the cilantro

Teacher: we have coriander, repeat coriander

Flora: Ahhh like Korea [In Spanish we write Corea]

Teacher: we have...

Students: Garlic, corn, coriander

Teacher: do you know what is this? [I was showing a cassava]

Flora: yuca [she stressed the syllable ca]

Teacher: Cassava

Flora: like casa. (Audio class recording, August 8th/21)

Figure 12*Saturday Sancocho*

Note. This picture represents a way to design and plan resources that can enhance clear understanding and participation. Students were meant to read and emphasize the bold words to catch the attention of who is listening and to complete part of the story by analyzing the images that are present there.

When students engage in conversations emerged by stories connected to their life experiences, they use new language, link the words that they know with the unknown. The action of bridging expands their worldviews. When learners are guided to do an activity, but they are free to choose the ways of making meaning, contributes to students' experiences in decision making by combining, creating, acting out words by speaking, or doing actions in a meaningful way. While students were analyzing and retelling the comic *Kevin's dream* Jessica used English to express her interpretation of a drawing. "Teacher that drawing is telling me that when you sleep in school is for a good reason" (audio class recording July 29th/2021)

Regarding exchange of ideas, in communicative situations like the previous one, students are achieving the standard "I am able to follow a simple conversation with a partner when an activity is being developed in the classroom" schoolchildren express their feelings, ask questions, and share their understandings about what they are experiencing within the English classroom.

Flora: teacher once upon a time is the way you start a story

Teacher: yes, Flora, that's the way you start a story. Once upon a time, there was a beautiful girl called Flora. Ok guys, let's continue, could you please tell me what do you see in this picture?

Flora: I see a bear- *¿cómo era que se decía?*

Alex: I see a bear is sleeping

Teacher: ok, a bear that is sleeping, good. Comandiu what else can you see?

Comandiu: teacher a bear is dreaming.

Teacher: very good, excellent. What is he dreaming about? What is his dream? [teacher does signs with hands and head to represent the cloud students are seeing about the dream] look at the basket what is he doing with the basket miam miam miam [representing with a sound the action of eating]

Students: he is eating

Teacher: very good, excellent. He is eating something from the basket. Now guys, what do you feel or how do you feel? do you feel hungry, sleepy, normal... what do you feel?

Flora: I feel sleepy [she laid her head on her hand and close her eyes]. How about, Alex, tell me what do you feel?

Alex: teacher, I do not know, algodón de azúcar

Teacher: ahh very good, it looks like candy cotton

Comandiu: teacher I feel dreaming and sleeping

Teacher: next question, what do you wonder? What do you wonder is to ask a question, what do you wonder?

Flora: I wonder how he is eating what he is dreaming?

Elisa: if he is sleeping, how he is eating?

Teacher: yes, that's the same question Flora has.

Piter: teacher, how to catch a dream?

Jessica: mmmm eat, the bear is eating

Comandiu: teacher I wonder eeh what occurred in the dream to do that. O sea the basket and the food. (Video recording July 29/2021)

The more students' life experience is relevant, the greater students start appreciating individual identity, ways of transmitting a message and including other resources. Nowadays, due to globalization and technology students count on multiple tools to produce multimodal storytelling. Technology can help children to develop their voice and insights about

themselves, to tell and be aware that their experiences matter. Nowadays, educators have on hands tools that provide students with real images, forums for discussions, and resources. Homeroom teacher 1, expressed students became experts regarding technological management of tools, but sometimes topics such as social media like TikTok and videogames can affect them negatively because they are addicted to devices like cellphones, tablets. “So, it is seeing how the current cultural part, that is now social media is affecting children learning because all the time they are thinking about it. But I think it is about the way we manage the usage of technology. In this case, as an institution, we achieve bringing up the positive side” (Homeroom teacher 1, personal communication, July 22/2021)

The activity of describing students’ dreams was well received by students. It promoted engagement and interest. Piter and Comandiu used PowerPoint and paint as their source to do the activities. Piter and Comandiu used images and words and were aware of the space in the page to explain their thoughts. Piter integrated images and words to talk about his desire to become a YouTuber and everything he needs to do that job. He drew a cloud to represent it was a dream and added a logo brand to give meaning to his message. In figure 4, Comandiu integrated images, space, gestures, and a sound-making sure that in his description he was sitting on a dragon that was flying. (Teacher’s journal July 29th, 2021)

Figure 13

Comandiu’s multimodal composing to explain a dream



Note. This picture represents student’s world representation. Comandiu describes a dream of a dragon by using pictures, colors, comic balloon, onomatopoeias and spatiality.

Figure 14

Feelings, experiences and cultural stories represented by MS and technology



Note. Mía and Elisa explore cooperative multimodal composition to talk about weather, festivals and myths in Colombia.

Multimodal storytelling + CRP to open spaces for English language learning

Culturally relevant practices and multimodal storytelling involve language learning because it takes students to challenge themselves, convey and negotiate to mean. I found some essential elements that represent the interaction of life experiences, backgrounds, and experiences in the classroom: culturally relevant composing to tell stories through multimodality, native language as a means to establish new connections, and families' perspectives dealing with language learning and multimodal storytelling.

Culturally Relevant Composing to Tell Stories through Multimodality

According to Herrera (2016) teachers can strengthen students through strategies and activities while they convey meaning, trigger what they know and construct learning across working with others. Children evidenced through their artifacts that they could connect their real-life experiences with stories and meaningful moments within the classroom. Students to connect the classes where multimodal storytelling with their stories needed the creation of an environment that allowed them to express their ideas and thoughts in the discussion.

Renegado: teacher, we were in a swimming pool and with my friends, the devil was next to us.

Teacher: How did you feel?

Renegado: scared

Flora: my mom was a lion and she come with me *corriendo*. I was scared.

Elisa: I was going up on a ladder and the ladder fell swishh

Comandiu: I was flying with a dragon. It is the meaning. *Y luego voy a buscar un sonido de dragón.*

Piter: teacher, *yo lo hice* in the computer. My dream is to become a great YouTuber and to be famous. To have a computer, camera, and a good microphone to be able to make good videos and streams

Teacher: ok Piter, very Good, please remember to include sounds and images.

(Class recording July 29/2021)

Rather than only reading or telling stories I intended to empower students to analyze their own story and share it with the rest of the classroom. I meant to look for stories that were connected to their immediate context and engage understanding and participation. Multimodal storytelling composing led students to the development and improvement of production skills. Multimodal storytelling facilitated students the acquisition of new vocabulary, getting in contact with written materials and multiple literacies connected to experiences in and out of school (Kalantari & Hashemian, 2016; & Sulistiawati, 2014)

The implementation of multimodal storytelling as a means to engage culturally relevant practices and language learning permitted parents and students to be aware of the processes they were involved in. Through a survey, some parents claimed that the benefits of providing spaces to tell stories are multiple. First, students obtain time to share with others, to participate in a group, and be confident about themselves. Then, parents also told through

multimodal storytelling children can reinforce their corporal expression and learning of new concepts. Additionally, stories can help students to go beyond their view of the world understanding better the differences of others. (Parents, personal communication, October 27-November 1/2021)

When we were working on Colombian and Greek folktales, students were more familiar with multimodal storytelling. Culturally relevant practices promote spaces to discuss and learn new words and expressions and empower imagination (Mart, 2012). “As an example, we discussed the meaning of making fun of using the onomatopoeia [hahaha]. I also pointed with my finger imitating a big laugh. Through the association of those modes, students could understand that making fun means you laugh at other people, and you make jokes. Later, I took my apron and explained the word backward and I put on the part that goes on the back of my torso. This action took students to go beyond asking about how it would be possible to put shoes on backward. James: teacher a question *¿Cómo se ponen los shoes?* In this intervention he wanted to express how a Marimonda [mythological Colombian character] wears shoes, feeling it would be uncomfortable. As we can see, James used both languages to express his message, he pointed out his shoes, so I could understand him better” (Teacher’s journal, September 22/2021)

CRP + Multimodal Storytelling Foster Participation and Autonomy

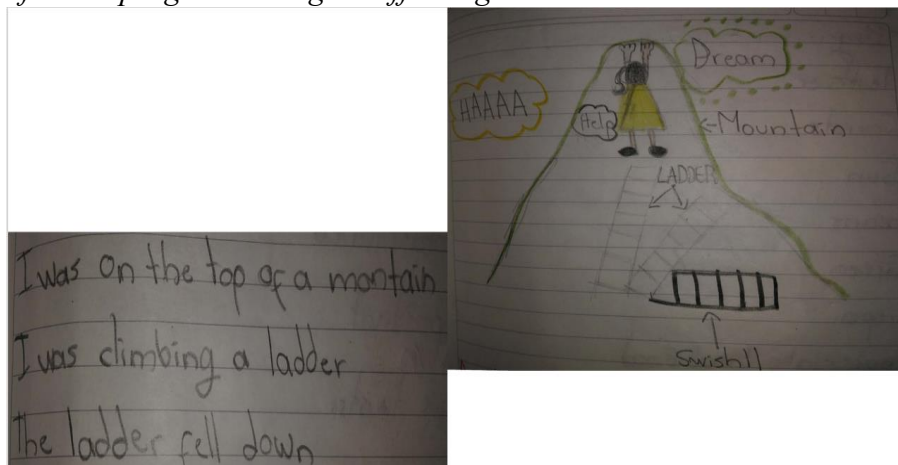
From a wider perspective, learning autonomy can lead students to meaningful language learning (Benson,2012). Culturally relevant practices through multimodal storytelling enhance language learners to be aware of the language process. Learner autonomy involves students developing skills such as critical thinking, teamwork, reflexivity, and adaptation of new resources and strategies (Ganesan, 2020). Students, such as Mía and Elisa, adopted multimodal storytelling to successfully improve language learning. Nowadays their English vocabulary has expanded because of the responsibility and effort to develop the

activities proposed in class. Asking questions, looking in the dictionary, and working with peers and with advanced students have allowed students to encourage their participation and to find ways to convey meaning.

In figure 5, “Elisa described a dream through a drawing of a mountain, and she said she was climbing an *escalera* (ladder is Spanish) and that it fell, to explain the word fell down Elisa used a gesture as a means to communicate. Elisa showed me her hand and moved it toward her legs, so I could see it was falling. To make the story clearer she added keywords ladder, mountain, and the sound swish [as a sound effect of falling] Elisa could express herself using different sounds, gestures, colors, images, and modes. She got power and security to participate and did not feel afraid as she used to do” (Teacher’s journal July 29/2021)

Figure 15

Students Artifacts + progress through scaffolding



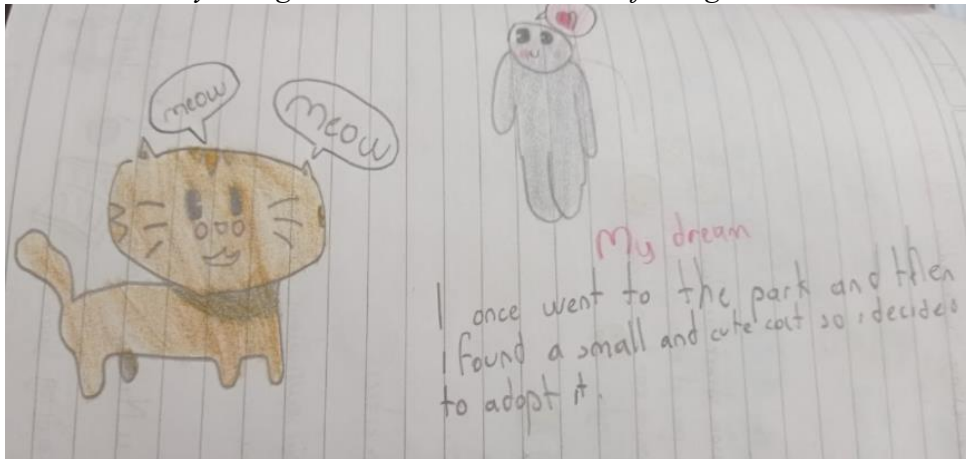
Note. this picture illustrates Elisa’s dream representation. Elisa drew in class and went beyond her work when she gathered the keywords she learned in class and complete sentences to express her ideas.

Students through multimodal storytelling and CRP are capable to construct ideas. Throughout their experiences, they theorize and make relationships of knowledge to face real events that happen around them. Language learners empower themselves to tell and transform their world (Jia & Nashri, 2019; Schrodt, 2015). Therefore, language learners can reach the competence “being able to react autonomously and efficiently in situations where

students should express and ask for personal information in English. My students went beyond basic practices, they found a way to communicate how they understand the world using written and oral language, audiovisual a sensational representation.

Figure 16

CRP + Multimodal Storytelling a vehicle to communicate feelings



Note. Ferney told a dream by using different modes. In this figure, we can perceive the use of graphics as the sun to transmit feelings of love, compassion, and animal appreciation.

In connecting to the world and multimodal storytelling language learning drew information about their own countries and cultures as well as the world around students. Language learners while they build personal literacies according to their interests, they also used their Spanish literacy skills to comprehend and construct stories. When elementary students make personal connections, they are better at understanding the text and engage more with multimodal experiences. “Embracing the connection of Colombian context with Greek mythology helped students to determine their knowledge. Students and I, the teacher, had the chance to assess previous knowledge. Angelo took Madre Monte (Mountain Mother) a famous character of Colombian myths and intended to find similarities between Athena and Madre Monte. He realized that both protect nature. while connecting his learning process of language he used L1 to communicate but I encouraged Angelo to think in English and express his knowledge. Angelo solved his problem of not knowing how to communicate, by forcing himself to remember the vocabulary needed in English. He also used gestures to explain to me the words protection and creation. Angelo grasped his knowledge from his

background and with his body found it easier to convey meaning. (Teacher's journal October 19th/2021)

Figure 17

Children reality representation by multimodal storytelling



Note. Flora and James (down figure) represented celebrations they like to share with their families. This figure is small evidence of diversity in the class.

Chapter Five: Fusing Culturally Relevant Practices and Multimodal Storytelling to Engage Language Learning: Implications and Future Research

This chapter presents the findings of qualitative research I carried out as a teacher-researcher to describe how the process of the English language seems when learning is mediated by connecting multimodal storytelling and culturally relevant practices. I applied this research in fourth grade, in an elementary school during the third and fourth terms of 2021 in Envigado, Colombia. I answer the research question that has guided my project: What does language learning look like when infusing culturally relevant practices through multimodal storytelling in an elementary English class?

First, I relate the literature review presented in chapter two with findings in categories. Then, I will explain some implications for language learning and its future research in culturally diverse language classrooms. Finally, I share conclusions focusing on personal

reflection about how this study promotes language learning, self-identity, and culture consolidation, considering multimodality and students' cultural nuances in the teaching exercise.

Considerations a Research Teacher Should Bear in Mind when Enhancing Culturally Relevant Practices through Multimodal Storytelling

My findings suggest that CRP is a teaching approach that facilitates language learning in an Elementary English Classroom. Research teachers should consider learning objectives, cultural components, academic development, and socio-critical moments to enhance language learning. As previous studies have determined CRP teachers should create a caring and positive classroom atmosphere where everybody feels welcome and are expected to participate considering their values, thoughts, beliefs, and backgrounds (Brown- Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Gay 2002, 2010, 2014; Heflin, 2002; Hunter- Doniger et al, 2018; & Ladson Billings 1995, 2014). Findings also reveal teachers' intentionality to integrate culture in the lessons generates a learning environment that is culturally relevant to students with diverse backgrounds (Acuff et al, 2012; Byrd 2016; Gay, 2010-2018). It requires thoughtful planning, learning through scaffolding, and Constant reflection (Herrera 2016; Schrodtt et, al. 2015; & Sturdivant & Alanis, 2019)

By implementing multimodal storytelling and CRP in the classroom teachers can provide spaces to listen to students while they acquire vocabulary and develop language structures (Eisazadeh & Rajedram, 2020; Kalantari & Hashemian, 2016; & Lopez Ladino 2017). CRP teachers listen to students, learn with them, and find ways to gather and incorporate meaningful experiences. As multiple research studies have shown (Boyd & Galda, 2011; Johnson and Elliot 2020) through interaction there is a way to ensure relevancy by listening to students and responding to what language learners need to say. Interacting

with students becomes a gradual process that occurs in real situations creating a positive classroom of inclusion, participation, and communication.

This research finds CRP and Multimodal Storytelling as means that provides language learners a classroom environment where all students “are expected to participate” (Ladson Billings, 2014; & Samuels, 2018, p.27). It requires trust and empathy, evaluation, feedback conversation every day establishing cultural essential biases for the children. Then, this study reinforces previous research that found CRP as a student center transformative pedagogy considering the teacher as a facilitator and mediator. (Ladson Billings, 1995; & Byrd, 2016). For instance, this research invites teachers and policymakers to think about scenarios that provide opportunities for elementary learners to help each other, to see the difference and the culture as assets to enhance language learning encounters.

This research suggests students have more chances to appreciate diversity interacting with people of the community and enrich socio-cultural practices. This research intended to see diversity as a reality within the classroom that provides students spaces to socialize and be active agents in society. As previous research showed, culturally relevant practice in a language learning classroom allows students to see differences and commonalities among their experiences and their classmates’ knowledge. This research as other studies such as (Ganesan, 2020; Georges, 2020; & Jia & Nashri, 2019) states CRP requires teachers and students to be sensible of cultural references and previous experiences.

Children’s Literacy Practices that Demonstrate English Language Learning

Multimodal Storytelling is beneficial for elementary learners because it reflects real communication, it opens perspectives to know cultures, it increases oral skills, generates spaces for literacy, provides a rich context, and embraces listening and critical thinking skills development (Curtain and Dahlberg, 2010; Shin and Crandall, 2014; & López Ladino, 2017).

Multimodal storytelling helps students to connect their personal lives with academic knowledge- in this case English learning, also can provide spaces to be aware of cultural nuances (Brown- Jeffy & Cooper, 201Gómez Combariza et al. 2013; & Kestha 2013). Therefore, multimodal storytelling can be fused with CRP to enhance the participation of multiple voices.

As Curtain and Dahlberg (2010, p.266) state “story or narrative, is a powerful vehicle for experiencing the culture. Values, concepts of the culture that are embedded in myths and folktales can be shared through storytelling, story reading, and dramatization” Multimodal storytelling is a tool that has been used throughout the last years to help young learners to learn English as a foreign language. Nowadays more ESL teachers use multimodal storytelling, without recognizing that it is storytelling that uses different components such as gestures, sounds, visual aids, colors that transmit a message through their integration. Multimodal storytelling is used as complementary listening practice, children ask to hear stories that capture their interest because they are fun, and reinforce their imagination (Ellis & Brewster, 2014; Pinter, 2006; Kalantari & Hashemian, 2016, López Ladino 2017).

CRP and Multimodal Storytelling Make Learning Contextual

The findings of this study demonstrated that multimodal storytelling is a tool that connects language learning with culturally relevant practices that motivate students to talk about their reality. The data exhibited students use multimodality to convey meaning about their reality using multiple semiotic resources (López Ladino 2017). The findings show how students through interaction and diverse means construct simple sentences in English without feeling limitations to relate their previous knowledge with what is being discussed in class. Enhancing moments of Multimodal Storytelling and CRP in the classroom helps teachers to see students as creative explorers who belong to a family and a community (Gómez

Combariza et al,2013). Students who are curious to know the world and conquer it with new ideas and opinions.

This research was intentionally carried out with the purpose that children find in their literacy spaces contact with stories that are familiar to their context. It ensures students bring into the classroom discussion and stories about their own experiences. They also can develop strategies such as making inferences and providing critical questions about the content of the stories. Children use their literacies to describe words and situations not only through written resources, but also through special, tactile, and audio-visual modes. On the other hand, data such as parents' and teachers' personal communication recognized multimodal storytelling as a bridge to reinforce identity and develop cross-cultural skills.

Furthermore, checking on students' previous knowledge permitted having a fluid conversation in class to link experiences and cultural components with other subjects for example, in classes where students related Colombian Myths and Greek Mythology students show their knowledge about geography and the Spanish class. Students use different strategies to explain words and open spaces to incorporate life experiences, understand and problematize moments of a story in a meaningful way (Johnson & Elliot, 2020; Laughter & Adams, 2012).

By composing stories through multimodal storytelling and CRP students brought up in the classroom feelings, sensational experiences facilitating communicative experiences. Children's artifacts revealed that students can write and analyze the main characters of a story and situations when they can use semiotic resources to convey meaning. By multimodality and CRP composing students expand their chances to see and tell what happens around them. My study supports Lopez Ladino's (2017) idea that students can use colors, realia, written and oral language to acknowledge their home, school, experiences with friends. For further

research, multimodality and CRP can be seen from a wider perspective, so students can feel free about making choices of the means and texts learners can compose new literacies.

Figure 18

Keywords to express books learners like



Note. Ferney's work reflects students' process to convey meaning by selecting keywords such as videogames.

Students are partakers of communicative situations where they should use English as a language to communicate their thoughts and feelings mediated by Culturally Relevant literature. As an example, there was one time when we read "Saturday Sancocho" and it was meaningful for students since they knew the ingredients and have seen that traditional plate of the country. Students were able to manifest if they like that local food or not. They also had an interdisciplinary discussion by asking about the origin of the vegetables. Subsequently, by applying multimodal storytelling every other week, students have felt empowered doing the activities on their own and have transferred previous knowledge and experiences from other subjects (John & Elliot, 2020; & Hunter- Doniger et al,2018)

Then, those moments where stories can be told and heard by everyone, allow students to be less dependent since they can use different means such as gestures, images, and keywords to transmit their message (Flórez Aristizabal, 2017; & Kalantari & Hashemism, 2016). Students can apply to scan and skim for reading comprehension.

Socio-cultural awareness and academic development

CRP and multimodal storytelling engage opportunities to establish a dialogue in a CRP classroom increasing language engagement (Acuff et, al. 2012; Florez-Aristizábal 2017; Lopez Ladino, 2017; Mart, 2012; & Porras 2010). Nowadays, students can describe familiar objects with the words they learn through multimodal composing and experiences from the immediate context. When students read and told the story *It's too noisy*, Mía described the family as noisy. Students also compared the house of the book [an old farm with a straw roof] with their houses. Ematri said his house was big. Flora explained her house was big and that she did not live in an apartment like her peers. Comandiu emphasized the roof was made of a different material [straw]. Alex told the house of the story looks like a house in the rural area owned by people with little money because of the roof and some cracks there were on a wall [Alex pointed with his finger]. This research shows that dialogues as the previous one allow students to acquire language structures while they have culturally relevant practices in the school. (Teacher's Journal; Class recording November 02/2021)

Multimodal storytelling and CRP composing leaded students to improve production, critical thinking, and teamwork skills (Georges 2020; López Ladino, 2017). When students can make conscious decisions and practice taking control of their life and learning, they can reach critical thinking and autonomy. Hence, students can reflect on their learning process and regulate the methods, objectives, and purposes of their pedagogical encounters. As an example, this research depicts learning autonomously in an Elementary classroom enhances the transformation from a teacher-centered to a learner-centered classroom. The teacher becomes a facilitator of resources, tools, and strategies to foster critical thinking and autonomy (Enciso 2011 & Horváthová, 2016,)

As an English teacher, I have perceived a positive value of active participation in the classroom implementing multimodal storytelling (Kestha et al. 2013). Through multimodal storytelling, defined by (López Ladino, 2017, p.4) as “the fusion of storytelling and multimodality” Children develop new forms to express their ideas, relate with others, and participate. Inside my classroom students have been acknowledging their surroundings. My students and I have been “using the language as a vehicle to develop critical thinking but most importantly, to encourage children to use language to act” (Lopez Ladino, 2017, p.3).

Literacy interventions in culturally relevant practices through multimodal storytelling were supported by students’ language experiences using prompts to write and express orally their interests, thoughts, and beliefs. Through scaffolding, students engaged in conversations where they reinforced vocabulary and their corporal expression. Furthermore, students improve confidence, the ability to ask and infer situations in the stories to engage in discussions in a class by recognizing, describing, analyzing characters of a story, settings, problems, and solutions. Then, students found strategies to upgrade their language learning process by creating written activities that converge their reality with the realities of other cultures and those detailed in the story.

Future Research and Implications

This research explores and opens the possibility to create and find stories written in English that reflect the Colombian culture. Based on Herrera’s (2016) statement, teachers and students “must celebrate the ways that others live (e.g., different family structures, different family arrangements, different traditions. And use these experiences to provide an encouraging and enrich classroom community" (p. 23). The findings of this study suggest the importance of considering CRP and multimodality to respond to current educational requirements in elementary scenarios.

This study unites a space to carry out research based on the benefits and disadvantages strategies such as multimodal storytelling and literary picnic bring into the classroom. Teachers need to consider students' characteristics, needs, interests, literacy progress, language cognition, meaning convention, and life- encounters to engage participation and development of autonomy in language acquisition. Additionally, this research claims for studies that bring into language class in the Colombian context more topics such as ethnicity, social-economic aspects that permit students to develop critical thinking supported by their thoughts and encounters. The findings of this research advocate the idea of considering students' production as a source for validating culture. Teachers and school stakeholders must recognize young learners as multimodal composers who construct knowledge by the interaction of their different literacy practices in and out of school.

Furthermore, this research finds the necessity to include in the teaching context scenarios where indirect ways families are part of the learning process in activities that require active participation and share with the classroom creating dialogues. Introducing CRP and multimodal storytelling can facilitate teachers to build bonds with families and students allowing them to understand children's language acquisition from multiple perspectives. This study advises future research to investigate students' outcomes in CRP and multimodal storytelling from students' and families' perspectives. Finally, this research recommends teachers see CRP from a wider view by implementing multimodality as an approach that empowers teachers and students to tell their own stories by describing their personal literacy moments. Teachers and students should recognize themselves as policymakers and ask for spaces where they can bridge culture from their backgrounds and culture from school.

For the Colombian government, this research calls for looking at diversity not only from race, ethnicity, languages but also validating that as human beings who come from different contexts it is important to understand each other and create a community starting in

the classroom. CRP is a transformative pedagogy that can help language Colombian policies fill the gaps created but social inequities that are part of the reality in the Colombian context. Indeed, language policies and standards should be aimed to increment in English classrooms active participation that goes beyond learning a language for the labor market, I believe CRP is an approach that enriches the pedagogical moments that empower students and families to talk and learn about their culture.

Conclusions

This qualitative study is presented as the result of a pedagogical experience in English language teaching in an Elementary classroom. My interest was to implement Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and multimodal storytelling, in fourth grade, to approach language learning and cultural components in the English classroom while developing academic performance and self-identity. Due to the language acquisition trends aimed to enhance communicative and production skills, I looked for stories that were related to students' cultural backgrounds and interests. Those stories were told by using multimodality. This strategy enabled students to intertwine their literacies in and out of the school to convey meaning by using previous and new knowledge. The purpose of this research was to describe What language learning looks like when infusing culturally relevant practices through multimodal storytelling in an elementary English class.

The methodology of this study was based on purposed participants, class record audios, observations, teacher's journals, and students' artifacts for data collection. Moreover, intending to answer the research question I selected two sub-questions: a) What considerations should the research teacher bear in mind when enhancing Culturally Relevant Practices through multimodal storytelling? b) What children's literacy practices demonstrate English language learning engagement through CRP and multimodal storytelling? For data

analysis, I found the categories: Culturally Relevant Practices at school and the English Classroom, multimodal storytelling to enhance CRP, and CRP + multimodal storytelling to engage language learning. I applied Mapping, charting, coding, and narrative analysis for data reduction.

The findings of this research reveal that teacher-researcher uses multimodal storytelling as a tool to engage culturally relevant practices in the classroom with the purpose of validating culture in a classroom where diversity is a feature. Due to the creation of culturally relevant lesson plans teachers and students witnessed meaningful experiences within the school, family, community, and language context by providing a caring environment where everyone can participate, discuss strengths, weaknesses, and thoughts by creating a student-centered class. In addition, findings reveal children used multimodal storytelling to connect life experiences, previous knowledge with the new information by strategies such as inference, image, sounds, gestures analysis, and composing to convey meaning from their reality. Multimodal storytelling and CRP help students to scaffold their language learning process by convening ideas, using sounds, gestural, spatial, and visual semiotic codes. Language learners can recognize and describe characters and main events through language chunks and simple sentences. Multimodal storytelling and CRP enhance language learning because students are challenged to negotiate meaning by linking language learning experiences and the real-world developing skills such as autonomy, teamwork, critical-thinking, reflexivity, cross-cultural moments, and the adaptation of resources to transmit messages clearly.

This study is a referent for other teachers that are interested in going beyond the pedagogical approach CRP and multimodal storytelling to provide in the English classroom moments of local and international culture validation. Also, this study facilitates a wider perspective of students' new literacies processes within the English class when they are

learning a new language. This research responds to the current world demands of transforming the school into a place where students connect with their identity but also with other cultures by caring for those that surround them. Nowadays, teachers are facilitators of learning and moments where students compose meaning and knowledge by interaction. Students, parents, and the community, in general, should be aware of their role as social agents that question reality, participate, are autonomous, and reinforce their identity individually and collectively.

Final Reflection: What did this study mean to me?

This study represents a journey of an English teacher inspired by students' curiosity, contributions in class, and other literacy moments out of the classroom permeated by a cultural component. This investigative process allowed me to enhance language learning and cultural identity by finding new concepts in my professional development such as Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Multimodal Storytelling. During this meaningful process with the help of my students, parents, colleagues, friends, and my thesis advisors I found an approach that transformed my perspectives of language teaching and myself.

Culturally relevant practices and multimodal storytelling help me to reflect how students convey meaning by using their cultural background, my classroom became a space where students are free to talk and listen to their classmates to convey meaning and understandings. I am always willing to find new strategies that help me to give my students a holistic education where they can learn the language but also values such as respect for diversity in the classroom. I feel proud of my students' evolution in seeing society as a place where they can talk without being scared, they have found other ways to express feelings and thoughts that enriched their socialization. Personally, I learn about being a human being who tries hard to listen to and learn about cultures without stereotype lenses that blind

perspectives of the rich world we live in. I learn of discipline and perseverance to reach my academic and teaching goals.

I find this study as a scaffolding process where reflexivity is the first step to provide meaningful strategies to students. Then, when infusing multimodal storytelling and CRP provides new elements to the educational field. It can help ELL, ESL, EFL, ELE, and other languages contexts to awaken the interest in implementing stories told by multiple semiotic resources and by connecting with students' reality. I would like to remind and inspire teachers on stories that are behind children's experiences and literacies that sometimes are forgotten in the learning process. While teachers and students discover new writers, they also enhance language skills that help them to transmit their thoughts.

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Appendix A

I used two models of letters of consent: one for the school principal and another for the parents.

CONSENTIMIENTO PARA PARTICIPACIÓN EN INVESTIGACIÓN PARA TESIS DE MAESTRÍA

TÍTULO DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN: “Culturally Relevant Practices Through Multimodal Storytelling in an ESL Elementary classroom”

INVESTIGADOR:

Ana María Preciado Monsalve

PROPÓSITO DEL ESTUDIO. Apreciado Padre de Familia,

A su hijo(a) se le ha pedido participar en este estudio de investigación de la Maestría en Profundización en procesos de adquisición de segundas lenguas de la Escuela de Educación y Pedagogía de la Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. Antes de permitir la participación de su hijo(a) en este estudio, es importante que usted entienda las razones por las cuales se está haciendo este estudio y que implicaciones tiene. Por favor, lea la siguiente información cuidadosamente y pregunte al investigador cuando algo no esté claro para usted o si necesita más información.

El propósito de este estudio es describir como a través del uso de historias contadas desde la multimodalidad, se genera un espacio para los niños en donde su cultura y contexto personal son claves para el aprendizaje del inglés como segunda lengua, a la par que se les

permite el reconocimiento de su propia cultura y la de otros compañeros en el salón de clase.

Procedimiento. Como parte de la investigación se hará la recolección de datos dentro de los estudiantes del grado cuarto, específicamente durante algunos encuentros del tercer periodo y algunos del cuarto en los meses julio, agosto, septiembre y octubre. Dicha recolección de datos consiste en:

1. Hacer entrevistas a los estudiantes y profesores de la institución.
2. Tomar apuntes de observación sobre las clases y el trabajo de los estudiantes.
3. Escanear y tomar fotos de los trabajos realizados por los estudiantes.

Espero que los resultados de este estudio me ayuden a promover en otros docentes el reconocimiento de la cultura, el contexto, valores e interés de los estudiantes como eje transversal para aprender una segunda lengua.

CONFIDENCIALIDAD. Sus respuestas y las de sus hijos en este estudio serán anónimas. No se escribirá ningún tipo de información que revele su identidad. Para efectos de confidencialidad, se procederá de la siguiente manera:

- Los estudiantes y ustedes como acudientes escogerán un pseudónimo. Este mismo aparecerá en todas las notas que se usarán para el análisis de la investigación y en los documentos que se publiquen.
- En el caso de la institución, solo si los líderes de la institución lo consideren necesario, se hará referencia al nombre de esta en el trabajo investigativo a realizar.
- Las clases serán grabadas para analizar los aportes y diálogos generados durante los momentos de discusión cuando se trabajen historias usando diferentes medios como gestos, imágenes, sonidos, y movimientos. Dichas grabaciones no serán publicadas en ningún medio.
- Los resultados de este proyecto de investigación se emplearán en principio para la escritura del trabajo de grado (tesis). Sin embargo, los datos que se recojan en el trabajo de campo también se podrían utilizar en futuras ponencias y publicaciones académicas. En todos los casos, se hará uso de pseudónimos.

INFORMACIÓN DE CONTACTO. Si tiene preguntas acerca de este estudio, puede contactar al investigador en cualquier momento. Su información la encontrará en la primera página de este documento.

PARTICIPACIÓN VOLUNTARIA. Su participación en este estudio es voluntaria. Es su voluntad decidir si participar o no en este estudio. Si su decisión es participar en esta investigación, deberá firmar un formulario de consentimiento. Aún después de firmar el formulario de consentimiento usted es libre de retirarse en cualquier momento sin presentar ninguna justificación. Su retiro no afectará el proceso académico de los estudiantes, ni la relación con el investigador. Si el retiro se presenta antes completar la recolección de datos, sus datos le serán devueltos o destruidos.

CONSENTIMIENTO. He leído y entiendo toda la información suministrada y he tenido la oportunidad de hacer preguntas. Entiendo que mi participación es voluntaria y soy libre de retirarme en cualquier momento, sin dar ninguna razón o justificación. Entiendo que se me entregará una copia del consentimiento y acepto voluntariamente que mi hijo (a) puede participar en este estudio.

Firma del Padre de Familia o acudiente. _____ Fecha _____

Firma del investigador _____

Appendix B

CONSENTIMIENTO PARA PARTICIPACIÓN EN INVESTIGACIÓN PARA TESIS DE MAESTRÍA

TÍTULO DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN: “Culturally Relevant Practices Through Multimodal Storytelling in an ESL Elementary classroom”

INVESTIGADOR:

Ana María Preciado Monsalve
ampreciadam@unesam.edu.co

PROPÓSITO DEL ESTUDIO

Estimado rector

Cordial saludo,

Yo, Ana María Preciado Monsalve, soy estudiante de la Maestría en Procesos de Aprendizaje y Enseñanza de Segundas Lenguas de la Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. Uno de los requerimientos para aspirar al título de magíster es el desarrollo de un proyecto de investigación como parte de mi trabajo de grado (tesis). Para dicho trabajo, he propuesto realizar la investigación **en la clase de inglés del grado cuarto**. Antes de permitir la realización de este estudio, es importante que usted entienda las razones por las cuales se está haciendo y que implicaciones tiene. Por favor, lea la siguiente información cuidadosamente y pregunte al investigador cuando algo no esté claro para usted o si necesita más información.

El propósito de este estudio es describir como a través del uso de historias contadas desde la multimodalidad, se genera un espacio para los estudiantes en donde su cultura y contexto personal son claves para el aprendizaje del inglés como segunda lengua, a la par que se les permite el reconocimiento de su identidad, comunidad y la de otros compañeros en el salón de clase.

Procedimiento. Como parte de la investigación se hará la recolección de datos dentro de los estudiantes del grado cuarto, específicamente durante algunos encuentros del tercer periodo y algunos del cuarto en los meses julio, agosto, septiembre y octubre. Dicha recolección de datos consiste en:

4. Hacer entrevistas a los estudiantes y profesores de la institución.
5. Grabar las clases como instrumento de análisis.
6. Tomar apuntes de observación sobre las clases y el trabajo de los estudiantes.
7. Escanear y tomar fotos de los trabajos realizados por los estudiantes.

Espero que los resultados de este estudio me ayuden a promover en otros docentes el reconocimiento de la cultura, el contexto, valores e interés de los estudiantes como eje transversal para aprender una segunda lengua.

CONFIDENCIALIDAD. Sus respuestas y las de sus hijos en este estudio serán anónimas. No se escribirá ningún tipo de información que revele su identidad. Para efectos de confidencialidad, se procederá de la siguiente manera:

- Los estudiantes y acudientes escogerán un pseudónimo. Este mismo aparecerá en todas las notas que se usarán para el análisis de la investigación y en los documentos que se publiquen.
- En el caso de la institución, solo si usted como líder de la institución lo considera necesario, se hará referencia al nombre de esta en el trabajo investigativo a realizar.
- Las clases serán grabadas para analizar los aportes y diálogos generados durante los momentos de discusión cuando se trabajen historias usando diferentes medios como gestos, imágenes, sonidos, y movimientos. Dichas grabaciones no serán publicadas en ningún medio.
- Los resultados de este proyecto de investigación se emplearán en principio para la escritura del trabajo de grado (tesis). Sin embargo, los datos que se recojan en el trabajo de campo también se podrían utilizar en futuras ponencias y publicaciones académicas. En todos los casos, se hará uso de pseudónimos.

INFORMACIÓN

DE

CONTACTO

Si tiene preguntas acerca de este estudio, puede contactar al investigador en cualquier momento. Su información la encontrará en la primera página de este documento.

A los padres se familia y acudientes se les enviará un consentimiento en el que se les explica que su participación en este estudio es voluntaria. Será disposición de ellos decidir si sus hijos pueden en este estudio. Si su decisión es participar en el estudio, deberán firmar un formulario de consentimiento. Aún después de firmar el formulario de consentimiento los participantes son libres de retirarse en cualquier momento sin presentar ninguna justificación. Su retiro no afectará el proceso académico de los estudiantes, ni la relación con el investigador. Si el retiro se presenta antes completar la recolección de datos, los datos de los participantes serán devueltos o destruidos.

De antemano agradezco su colaboración en el desarrollo de esta investigación, la cual me ayudará en mi formación y el mejoramiento de los procesos educativos de mis estudiantes.

CONSENTIMIENTO. He leído la información en esta carta y estoy de acuerdo con la participación de los estudiantes y/o docentes de esta institución en esta investigación.

Nombre, Cargo y Firma

Fecha

Firma del investigador _____ Fecha _____

Appendix C

Table C 1

CRP Interview and Questionary Carried Out with Parents and Teachers

Questions for teachers	Questions for parents *Spanish
<p>1. How is the relationship between teachers and students?</p>	<p>1. ¿Cuántas personas viven en su hogar?</p>
<p>2. In what ways do you think the individual student's culture is reflected within the different moments in class and learning scenarios?</p>	<p>2. ¿Cuáles es el contexto familiar (raíces-procedencia)?</p>
<p>3. What spaces or activities in the institution and your classes enhance students to recognize their own identity?</p>	<p>3. ¿En casa hablan otro idioma diferente al español? ¿Cuál?</p>
<p>4. Do you believe the socio-cultural and family background affects positively or negatively the student's learning process?</p>	<p>4. ¿Cuáles son las celebraciones o momentos más importantes que se viven en casa?</p>
<p>5. How is diversity appreciated within the classroom?</p>	<p>5. ¿Cómo beneficia a su hijo tener espacios para contar historias propias o existentes en casa y en otros escenarios como la clase de inglés?</p>
<p>6. How do your students tell their own stories? Do you think telling stories promotes participation, recognition of</p>	<p>6. ¿Considera importante o benéfico el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua? ¿Por qué?</p>

one's own and the other's identity?

- 7. What elements of culture do you think should be changed or considered in the language classroom to promote recognition of their own identity and others'?**

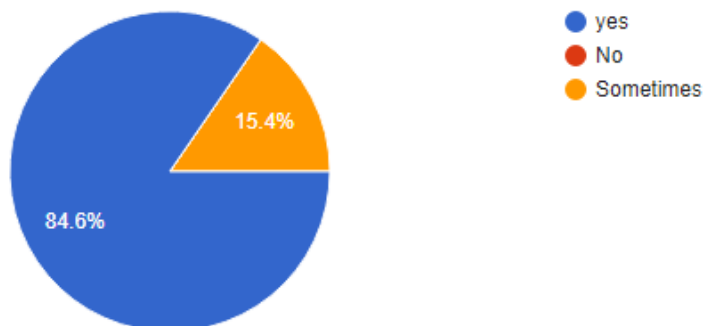
- 8. How can the English class include students' culture as a main element of the learning process?**

- 9. What strategies do you apply in the English Class to work the cultural aspect? Does it benefit your students' academic learning? Does it generate moments of reflection of their own culture and others'? (If you have an example, please tell me some experiences)**

Appendix D**CRP and Multimodal Storytelling Survey for Students**
Figure 19

I like the literary picnic (Me gusta el picnic literario)

13 responses

**Figure 20**

How is my relationship with my classmates from the English Class? (¿Cómo es mi relación con mis compañeros de la clase de inglés?)

13 responses

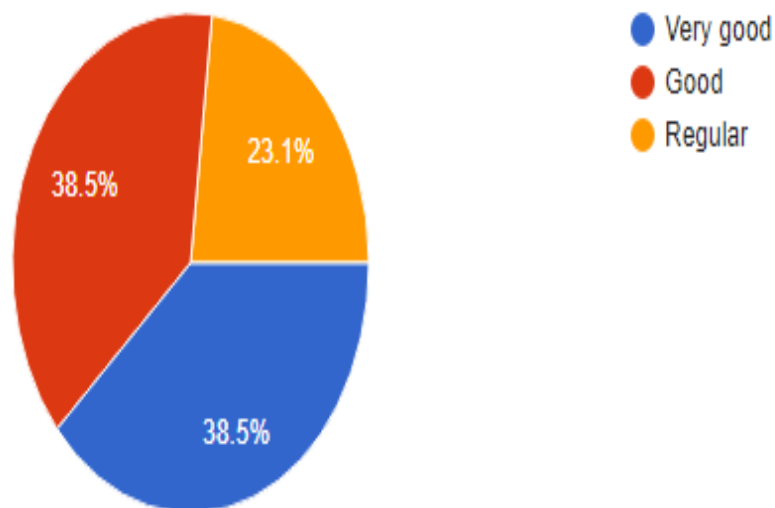
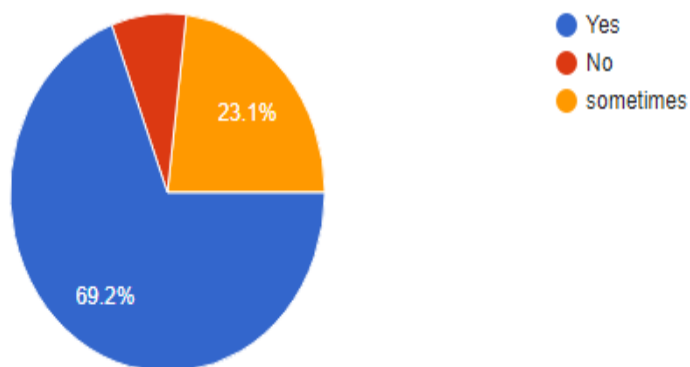


Figure 21

The English classes promote everyone's culture in the classroom by asking about our cultural backgrounds and experiences (Las clases de inglés promueven la cultura en el salón de clases a través de preguntas sobre mi contexto cultural y mis experiencias)

13 responses

**Figure 22**

I like reading and listening to stories (Me gusta leer y escuchar historias)

13 responses

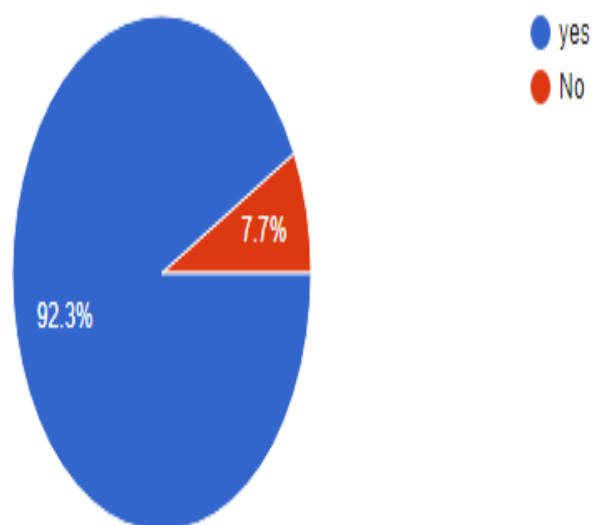
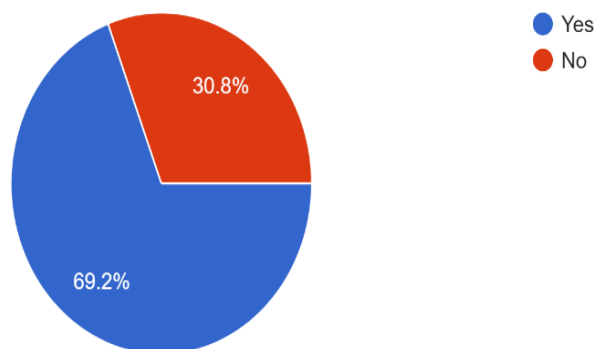


Figure 23

I like to tell my own stories (Me gusta contar historias)

13 responses

**Figure 24**

I am interested in telling stories about what I like, I believe, I think. (Me interesa contar historias sobre lo que me gusta, lo que creo y pienso)

13 responses

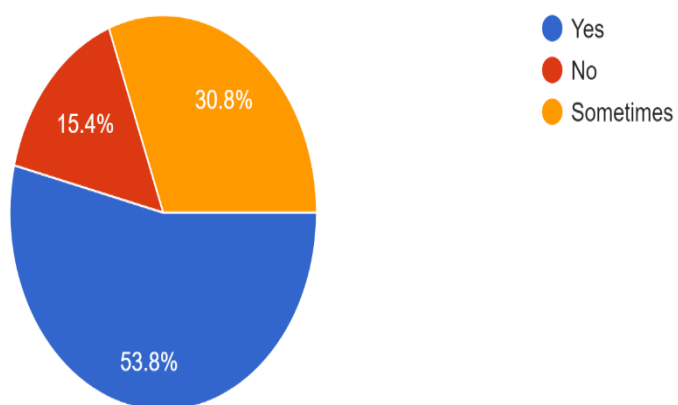
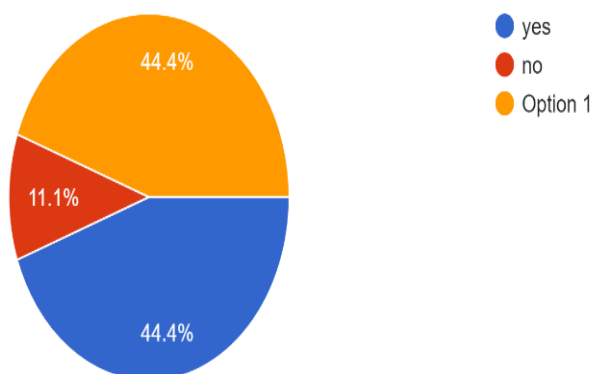


Figure 25

I would like to tell stories about my family, my school, my friends and community (Me gustaría contar historias sobre mi familia, mi escuela, mis amigos y mi comunidad)

9 responses

**Figure 26**

I pay attention to the media is used when I listen to/read a story. (Pongo atención a los medios usados en las historias cuando las escucho o las leo)

13 responses

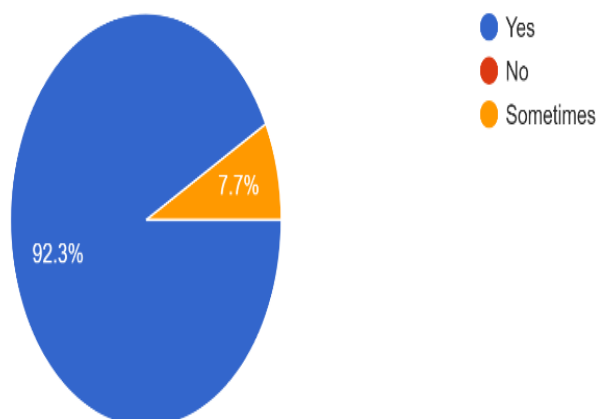
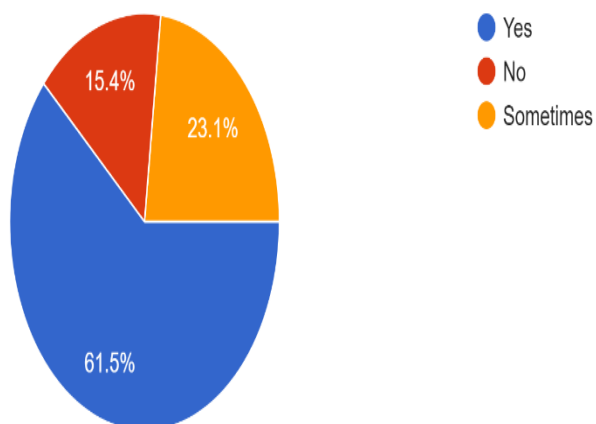


Figure 27

I understand the stories easily when images, sounds, words and gestures are used at the same time in the English class. (Entiendo más las histori...usan imágenes, sonidos, palabras y gestos a la vez)

13 responses

**Figure 28**

I use different means as images, sounds, and gestures to tell my stories. (Uso imágenes, sonidos y gestos para contar mis historias)

13 responses

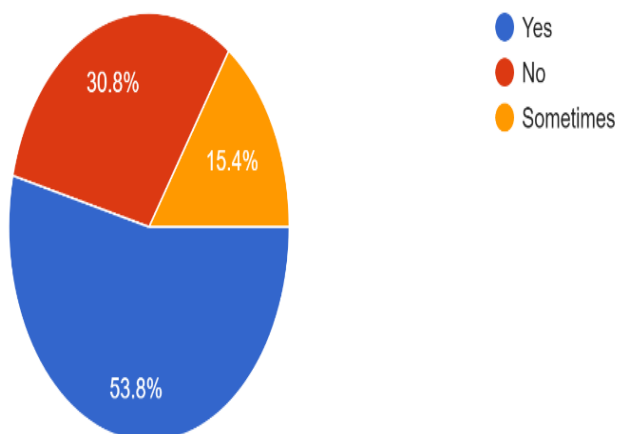


Figure 29

what kind of topics are you interested to talk about through stories in your English class? (¿De qué temas te gustaría hablar a través de historias en la clase de inglés?)
me gustaria escuchar historias sobre la historia griega
i dont know
sobre diferentes temas de literatura como fantasía, mitos, etc.
.
temas de DUOLINGO
de f ornite
como a sido mi vida en cuarentena
of the class
of the protests of the chicks every time we see one in a story or story
of personal stories
Nobel Rewards
my live

Appendix E

Table E 1

Parents CRP survey

Time stamp	¿Cuántas personas viven en su hogar?	¿Cuáles es el contexto familiar (raíces-procedencia)?	¿En casa hablan otro idioma diferente al español? ¿Cuál?	¿Cuáles son las celebraciones o momentos más importantes que se viven en casa?	¿Cómo beneficia a su hijo tener espacios para contar historias propias o existentes en casa y en otros escenarios como la clase de inglés?	¿Considera importante o benéfico el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua? ¿Por qué?
10/27/2021 15:12:39	4	Los padres provienen de los municipios de Apartadó y Jericó	Solo el papá, inglés	Se celebran los cumpleaños, siempre se va a la eucaristía los domingos, compartir en familia	Pueden ampliar su visión del mundo y entender mejor las diferencias de los demás	Sí, porque es necesaria para el estudio, el empleo y la socialización de personas de todo el mundo, ayuda a comprender y aceptar otras culturas
10/28/2021 17:00:56	3	Del departamento del cesar	Español	Cumpleaños , navidad	Tiempo para compartir,	Para el desarrollo personal, competitivo y laboral
10/30/2021 15:34:22	4	Colombiano	no	Los cumpleaños	Lo beneficia en que logra afianzar la expresión corporal y aprendizaje de nuevos conceptos	Sí, porque se hace necesaria para interactuar en muchos ámbitos
10/31/2021 19:40:12	4	Colombiana	No	Cumpleaños	Ampliar conocimientos	Si. Es necesario en la actualidad
11/1/2021 20:22:30	4	La familia la conforman, la mamá, la hermana y la abuela	No	Cumpleaños, Navidad, Halloween, Día del Niño, Día del Hombre, Día de la mujer, Amor y Amistad.	Lo beneficia porque permite compartir en grupo, Desenvolverse y a tener confianza en sí mismo	Es importante porque le abre puertas y a tener más oportunidades
11/3/2021 18:31:34	4	Abuela, Papas, Hijos	no	La navidad en familia	Muy especial porque lo siento en otro espacio diferente	MUY MUY benéficos porque nos puede ayudar en un sueño de un país nuevo que queramos conocer

Author's Biography

Ana María Preciado Monsalve is currently working with a well-known English Program in Envigado, Antioquia- Colombia. During the last years, she has worked with Elementary Section as English Teacher. She also has experience working as a Spanish teacher for foreigners. She holds a English and Spanish Teaching Degree as *Licenciada Inglés- Español* from Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana (2016). She is a candidate for the MA in Learning and Teaching Processes in Second Languages from Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana (2022). She conducted qualitative research titled “Infusing Culturally Relevant Practices and Multimodal Storytelling in an English Elementary Classroom” to fulfill the requirements of the master program. She is currently looking to continue with research projects related to Culturally Relevant Literacies in language teaching.