

**THE CITY AS A LEARNING SPACE FOR SECOND LANGUAGES IN THE ENGLISH
CURRICULUM GUIDELINES**

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This is for the Colombian youth. Thank you for being inspiring.

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Abstract

The city offers a wide variety of spaces that help students with the learning of second languages. That's why schools and teachers should be aware of the new existing realities around the city, and bring them into the classroom, in order to enhance students into the learning process. Likewise, this piece of work pretends to show a methodological proposal that would help to overcome the language barriers, highlighted in schools, thanks to the cultural richness of the city. This monograph employed the "structural analysis of contents" technique (Saldarriaga et al, 2005). Using this technique allows this work to explore, comprehend, and project new ways of learning a second language. Furthermore, it was found that the city helps the production of other meanings and comprehensions that open new perspectives of learning.

Keywords: The city, language barriers, structural analysis.

Introduction

“Nothing more essential for a society than the classification of its languages.

Changing that classification, displacing the word, its doing a revolution”

Barthes (1972)

This monograph pretends to demonstrate the possibilities that the city offers as a space of experiences for the learning of a second language, in interaction with the sociocultural richness it possesses. The school, in general, and the teachers, in particular, should envision the educational implications that the city affords to students. In this sense, this proposal intends to make visible the relationship that the city has with the learning of the culture, the language, the image, the history, the message, etc. all of this interacting with the learning of a second language.

First of all, we use the concept of city as the place where one finds images, words, messages, advertisements, and art, that capture people's attention not only for its colors, shapes, and content, but also for the use of a second language in its creation. That's why we say that the city as discourse is a concept that has multiple dimensions and possibilities in the interactions of its habitants and it creates a spectrum of the culture in the different languages.

The second concept used, makes reference to learning through the experience, as it helps to the construction of interactions and comprehensions in relationship with other discourses. The written, visual, and spoken language builts a communicative culture that helps overcome the language barriers that are not really visible nor overcomed at school. Therefore, learning from the experience becomes the required path for the enhancement of the student's communicative competences. In fact, when a discourse shows up in images, it

increases comprehension, and, in many cases, it facilitates the learning experience without the need of a teacher.

The third concept worked, are the perspectives and guidelines created by the Ministry of National Education in reference to the English Curriculum Guidelines. Those guidelines address the approaches related with the development of the interlingual and intercultural processes. Correspondingly, the methodologies proposed by the Ministry of Education were reviewed and analyzed, and that helped us consider two out of the seven methodologies suggested by the Ministry. Flexible methodologies, and methodologies rich in cultural contents refer directly to the proposal of this thesis, in the sense that the narratives, discourses and the city as experience supports the learning of a second language.

To work the relationship among these three concepts: the city as a discourse, learning through the experience, and the interlingual and intercultural development, we used the “structured content analysis” technique worked in the Structural Semantics by J.A. Greimas. This technique allowed us to chart and to highlight the production of meanings and comprehensions from the cross-linking of the same.

Thinking about a more efficient way to get closer to the learning of a second language, and considering the richness of the city, we worked on two axes of relations: The interlingual and intercultural development, and the flexible methodologies rich in cultural contents. Both axes were taken from the content analysis of the English Curriculum Guidelines, and they shape four complementary hubs that produce other meanings and comprehensions, creating new learning expectations. It is, at the end, an analytic source to expand the reference framework in the learning of a second language.

Finally, we present a framework with the possible alternatives that would help to comprehend, explore, and project, in a more useful way, the new relationships of significance in contribution with the development of students' bilingual competences.

Statement Of The Problem

Today's society is highly different from the one in which our parents lived 20 years ago, and so is our education. The development of new technology, the necessity of having access to different kinds of information, having better opportunities, and also our desire for personal, professional and economic growth have made the learning of second languages the achievement goal for most people in the country (Ayala, 2011). In this case, our target language is English, and we have been learning it in schools and as González (2010) said, “(...) that actual learning of the language takes place in private schools, language centers or in higher education” (p. 338). It means that most people pay in a private institution to learn English. Even though the Ministry of Education has made many efforts to make different programs, the current reality is that the lack of updating the curriculum guidelines have made the learning of a second language something that is “only possible” in schools, as they do not mention there other places that promote learning.

However, learning in a room and always interacting with the same people can be very monotonous, and more expensive than learning in free spaces the city offers. Mora and colleagues (2018) expose that “people do not only learn in schools” (p. 42) and we see that, around the city are many “advertising, restaurants, bookshops and libraries” that use English as a marketing strategy, and also for different purposes. Furthermore, nowadays the city has conversation clubs, so people of different levels of English can come together and practice with native and non-native speakers while at the same time, they are learning from different cultures.

We would like to take out the conception that learning a second language is only possible in academic institutions; but the reality is that the city as a learning space for second

languages provides many places where people can interact with native and non-native speakers of the target language without paying any money. Also, it is important to point out that as those guidelines were made more than 20 years ago, they only recognize the city as a space to put in practice the target language but not as a space that promotes the learning of second languages.

Research has shown, first, that there is an interest in studying how English materialized all around the city and how people have been engaging, interacting and creating their own meanings with the language (Mora et al, 2018a); second, even though the learning of a language is traditionally associated with certified institutions, “cities are creating underground physical and virtual spaces to let citizens meet with international people, usually by the affinity they found between themselves” (Urrego-Zapata, 2018).

Overcoming language barriers is a school commitment that is still very far from being solved by the proposed Ministry of Education’s curricular programs. That is why it is important to search different second language learning alternatives outside the schools and institutions, where it is taken into account the cultural richness of the city as a learning experience and that within its multiple relationships. We intend to present a methodological proposal that changes the way of approaching the learning object of a second language interacting with the sociocultural richness of the city to overcome the language barriers and prepare the students to be citizens of the world, as we address the following question: To what extent does the city serve as a relevant learning experience for a second language, such that students can take ownership of commonplace settings as places of knowledge?

Literature Review

In order to understand the city as a complex setting, and how this one fosters a space of learning, we need to be aware of the relationship between the city and languages and how these two are closely connected, and how one enforces the other. Likewise, this paper is going to present relevant studies about the city, performed in the city. To wit, there is research performed in Colombia, in Medellín specifically, as well as in other countries, all with the intention of exploring the connections of education and the city, as two essential aspects of today's 21st century learning.

Generally, when someone wants to learn a second language, they look for any kind of institution specialized in teaching languages. In those institutions, people have the option to take intensive or semi-intensive courses, but what happens when they leave those places? Does the use of the second language end there? In this sense, Domínguez (1999) exposed “[...] from an educational perspective, the city has developed and promoted many activities, learning environments and learning spaces” (p. 116). This means that people not only learn in schools but the city is also considered as a space that promotes those learnings.

Likewise, Mora and colleagues (2016) stated that “Walking around Medellín, one would likely find billboards and store ads that use English words, English texts in local bookshops and libraries, and even English words in graffiti” (p. 1). The use of English in these scenarios were intended to do something different and capture the viewer's attention, not only from the citizens, but also from tourists. In the same way, their study helped determine that English is not hard to find in the city, on the contrary, languages are part of it.

One of the aspects that Mora and colleagues (2018a) described as missing in the conversation is “further evidence of how people appropriate English in the city and its urban

spaces”(p. 37). This does not only show that even though there have been few studies about the presence of languages among the city of Medellín, there is also an intention of trying to understand how those social practices develop and the pedagogical power that Medellín fosters.

What is more, in their research in Medellín, Mora and colleagues (2016) show that “the city allows its inhabitants the creation of text full of different meanings from different resources as languages” (slide 7), stating that in fact, English is present all around the urban space and it becomes an “educational context” that allows people to learn, engage and discover new elements mediated by languages. The city does not only display its typical system of human settlement (Clark, 2003) but there is a subtext that it's worth profiting from in terms of education.

In this sense, one can see the city from various points of view due to the richness that it possesses. The city comprises not only a physical dimension but also a semiotic one; it means, individuals take over the city, interpret it, experiment it, decipher it, and most importantly, they give it their own meaning (Rama, 1998; Rizo, 2006). Within the city different cultures, customs, and identities come together, and for the same reason, one could say that the city is an ever changing and dynamic space in which it adjusts to diverse social practices.

The city is a place where one can find different cultures, which leads people to establish different kinds of relationships (Rodríguez, 1999) and to live experiences one could not live inside a school, for that reason, the city gives people the possibility to create and interact with realities and communicate with different people. Pérez (2005) agrees with Rodríguez, saying:

The city can educate by allowing us to see a life rich in stories and life experiences, that is why participation, active life, and organization are processes that make sense in a city that is assumed to be a space rich in experiences and knowledges. That is to say, a space that educates (p. 141).

The city should not be conceived as an isolated place of school; on the contrary, it should be assumed as sites that encourage the learning process in students' shaping.

Pyyry (2016) also discusses that “learning is an ongoing engagement with the world” (p.132), meaning that education happens every day and every second as people engage with their own surroundings. The author has defined the experience of these encounters as the power of “enchantment”, explaining that it is possible once one is open to “wander and wonder” and let non- human entities have the chance to affect and take part in the learning event (p. 103).

However, although many authors emphasize the positive aspects of learning in the city, there are some (Rodríguez, 1999) that also talk briefly about its negative sides. *The Charter of Educating Cities* (2009) exposes it affirming: “Today more than ever the city, large or small, offers countless opportunities for education. However, the city can also be influenced by educating forces used in a negative way” (p. 2). In spite of this statement, the charter also gives more attention and meaning to the elements that help students’ integral education, so those negative aspects are left out when one thinks about the benefits of the educating city.

The City as Literacy

All of the above, brings the matter to a group of researchers of Medellín, Colombia. This is the case of the Literacy in Second Languages Project (Mora, 2015; Mora, et al., 2018a) established in 2012, which explores literacy practices across several spaces, contexts, and topics, including the city as a physical and virtual place. LSPL has built a theoretical framework that is the backbone of our study. The version of the framework that this paper draws from, comprises six main concepts: Multimodality (Mejía-Vélez, Salazar Patiño, 2014), Superdiversity (Giraldo, 2014), Geosemiotics (Mora, R. A., 2016). ,Metrolingualism (Peláez, Castaño, 2014) and Polylanguaging (Chiquito, 2014) /Translanguaging (Cárdenas, 2019) as a continuum (Mora, et al., 2018b) . All of them appear in the city as the foundations of how to understand the ever evolving city of the 21st century.

As mentioned before, the city is an urban space that holds many graffiti, billboards, places, people, cultures, etc, that create different possibilities open for interpretation. That is why the concept of Multimodality helps explain how all of these elements work altogether in order to improve comprehension. That is how Mejía-Vélez and Salazar Patiño (2014) define multimodality as:

[...] the integration of a set of modes (e.g. sound, color, text, images, etc.) as resources for sending a message. Multimodality helps to improve learning processes, as it makes messages simpler to understand, [...] In this sense, the use of different resources can improve comprehension: an image shows what would take more time to read, written words say those things difficult to represent through images, and color highlights important elements.

The city is rich in all of these features, so the question remains, why have there not been any efforts to include it in the English curriculum guidelines as a powerful resource for learning a second language? This perfectly illustrates how learning is not reduced to what it is typically thought out to be, just paper, letters and to those who are enrolled in academia, but learning as a continuing process that can happen any time, any place, and that is important to embrace multimodality as the way to take into account other elements that happen in the process of learning.

When more complex factors come into play in the city other than billboards, colors, graffiti, etc., but people, relationships and backgrounds, there is another concept worth mentioning that expands the term of the city as literacy. The city is an ever changing place where people from all around the world and even the country come together to make the city their own, even if they are not born there. As it happens, Giraldo (2014) states that “[...] superdiversity calls for actual reintegration of different cultures inhabiting the same social spaces, thus creating intertwining relations between those different cultures and the one already present in their host environment.” The different cultures that inhabit the same social spaces, create different relationships that intertwine with the ones already existing. Geography, then, is no longer a restricting factor in welcoming new cultures, as people bring their own experiences and circumstances to enrich the local community and at the same time, the local community enriches those who allow it.

There is then a necessity to communicate in those communities where different people meet everyday. Even if there is more than one language spoken, social interplay always takes place as a natural human response. As Chiquito and Rojas (2014) stated, “languaging is the human activity of using a communication tool to achieve social

interaction, polylanguaging is the human activity of using more than one language to communicate something.” Polylanguaging has to happen in today’s cities given that there is no denying that cities foster many people, therefore many languages and if people want to communicate, they will use all their resources available, even if using a combination of their native language and the local communities’ language.

In fact, the term Translanguaging (García & Li Wei., 2014) explains the process of this switching very well. Likewise, Cárdenas (2019) describes when there is use of different languages in a specific space to convey a message:

Translanguaging is the integration of two or more languages in the same context and moment used by bilingual and multilingual speakers to communicate and interact with other people, and cultures. It requires the use of our semiotic repertoire, meaning, while we are talking with someone or writing something, we do not stop our process to think about what language we should use. On the contrary, it is a spontaneous choice of those resources (including gestures) that will help us to have translanguaged communication

When people of two different cultures and native languages engage in a communication process, there is an implicit consensus to use diverse communication skills to be understood. In that exact moment, both parties aim to comprehend the message rather than estimate how correct the use of language is. Translanguaging helps then, “to integrate [languages] in a selective and dynamic process in order to learn, understand, and communicate with others in a situation where you get to use both” (Cárdenas, 2019).

Lastly, but not less important, we have Geosemiotics (Mora, R. A., 2016; Nichols, 2014), and Metrolingualism (Otsuji & Pennycook, A., 2010). The first term studies the city

and the interactions between spaces around the city, and the language, paying close attention to the signs and the messages the city gives. The latter term, explores language practices around the city, meaning that Metrolingualism studies everything that surrounds languages. Pelaéz and Castaño (2014) explained,

Metrolingualism makes sense of how people can build languages and have their own identity in different contexts taking into account their different backgrounds.

Social changes are involved since society is constantly changing. Metrolingualism is not confined to the city, nor is it static. It is also about the movement of the city, people, migrations and interactions to create and use a specific language.

Evidently, there are many processes that expand the city as literacy. Elements that are essential to understand the complexity and intricacy of what happens within the city. It is of the utmost importance to analyze and consider the city with brand-new eyes, knowing that there is an imminent necessity to update the English Curriculum Guidelines. This is the reason why suggesting a pedagogical proposal is crucial to comprehend the pedagogical power of the place we inhabit. There is no need to go abroad to learn a new language or culture, or requirement to enroll in academic institutions to speak a foreign language, as all of that is present in the city itself. There is just a need of integrating all of the above in the curriculum, so all the educators of Colombia can access an orientation of including the city as a place where everyone can learn a second language.

The City as Discourse

Roland Barthes' studies from the urban semiology and in his book "The Semiologic Adventure" allow the comprehension of the city as full of meanings: the city is discourse, and this discourse is truly a language: the city speaks to its inhabitants (Barthes, 1993). The city as a learning experience, to the extent that the city is discourse to be read and interpreted, offers multiple experiences with learning options and routes, which grant students possibilities to be found in the local contexts with alternatives of communication and production of knowledge. The city creates culture and it has all the potential for people to learn a second language.

According to Barthes, the repetition, multiplicity and plurality of meanings in the text are symbolic points in each of the narratives in relation with the messages that the city provides. Therefore, it is known as the hermeneutic code (Alonso, et al., 2006), and its importance lies in the close relation with the connotative and denotative code of the language, in this case, the second language messages facilitate the narrative exchange between individuals.

In this section, there are some approximations of living in the city and learning from the experience that it offers, as it enriches the access of knowledge, such as images, symbols, stories, encounters, and different languages that help students evoke thoughts, and emotions that surpass the limits of the texts. In accordance with Barthes, from a literal ideal text, emerges infinity of narratives (Alonso, et al., 2006).

It is not just to work on the city in itself, but in the representations that it can give the students in relation to the learning of a second language. The youth feeds off of the multiple messages and images that educate from history and the present; the city is a place for

existence. It is the importance of the open, the visual, the noise, the communication among the community, the merchants, the buyers, the commerce, the cultural elites, the minorities, among others (Pérgolis, et al., 1990).

From another perspective, the city is a symbolic space that could become an experience to create meanings, options, and learning paths; these processes play a very important part in the teaching-learning of a foreign language as linked to the sociocultural processes. Likewise, approaching bilingual discourse that circles around the city, promotes the narrative processes; the experiences in the city, not only from what it is lived in it, but of what it is read, and said, changes the city in a privileged discourse for learning fields of knowledge that derives from its numerous messages (Cote Ballesteros, 2018).

Furthermore, Gaona and colleagues (2014) say that the narrative process favors an act of comprehension and interpretation of the world. Narratives help one to learn, reflect, and grow from experiences; it is a process of feasible change because the images at the moment of being read, resignify the look of the world and the way one comprehends it. Taking into account what we discussed above, understanding the city as discourse is to enrich the viewpoints from experience taking all of its infinite possibilities to the learning outside the classroom and beyond of its speech. All the signifiers of the city that are built from its urban space.

Learning from the Individual Experience

In this section we addressed the learning processes from an individual's particular experience. According to the experiential learning theory (González-González, 2012), this happens in an integral and a dynamic course through a process of human adaptation and it could be applied not only in classrooms, but outside of them as well. Introducing this method in schools, would help to overcome second language barriers; it is the city with all of its contents the one who is providing in a continuous and permanent manner, plurilingual experiences that the schools could appropriate and gain efficiency, inclusion, diversity and multiculturality.

To better understand these considerations, it is necessary to overview the traditional pedagogies of the school. This one has been par excellence the designated place to learn, but it is crucial to recognize that the school's field of learning is very limited and does not cover all of the possibilities that, by contrast, the city does offer in an unexpected, bold, permanent way.

In this sense, it is appropriate to say that the schools must "go out" to the city, and the city must "go" to the schools, and under these dynamics of interactions, one could think about a communicative exchange between them, for the students go and learn in the city, leaning in the same resources that it offers. Different outlooks in the second language communicative acts of the individuals that inhabit, pass through, feel, suffer, and enjoy the city from their personal and social adventures.

Learning a second language from diverse perspectives is no doubt one of the most important opportunities and in the urban framework, it is an opportunity for the learning of communicative acts. According to Bruner, in his theory of Experiential Learning, when the

reader or receptor reads, listens to, or sees a texts, it affects them when they identify with the topic or certain situations; this circumstance drives them to organize facts just as their thought process indicates, therefore, they take into account their personal view of the world. In this dimension, one can say that the learning of narratives of a second language (Hederich-Martínez et al, 2015), is possible by the narratives' construction and not necessarily with native tongues.

It is in the learning process from experience that it is present and all human activity and happens everywhere, given that human beings live immersed in multiple transversal actions, that as Bruner (1996) explains, learning is an experiential transformation, and this one occurs in narrative forms, and constructed and reconstructed creations:

Stories are created, they are not found in the world.[...] .It is not that we lack competence in creating our narrative accounts of reality-far from it. We are, if anything, too expert. Our problem, rather, is achieving consciousness of what we so easily do automatically [...] (p. 147).

In this manner, these ways of organization and production from experience, develop linguistic and communicative abilities. These include thoughts, acts, and sentiments that show the cultural capital of the inhabitants, promoting the comprehension of the world and unveiling new communicative intentions.

This succession of experiences suggests new versions of communicative abilities but suggestions and proposals for new developments in second language acquisition in Colombia, is still a task open to explore. In that sense, the Ministry of Education Guidelines emphasizes

una concepción de currículo centrado en procesos y competencias, con carácter flexible, participativo y abierto y que propende por el desarrollo integral de las personas. (...) Es necesario promover la adquisición de por lo menos una segunda lengua extranjera desde el ciclo de básica primaria. La clave es “**superar las barreras idiomáticas para encontrarnos (...)**” (1998, pág. 3).

Overcoming the Bilingual Barriers

The Colombian Ministry of Education expects that the English Curriculum Guidelines help to overcome the multiculturalism barriers Colombia has, and with its future vision of the XXI century it is thought that a high percentage of Colombians would have access to the knowledge of a second language. “Being bilingual is essential in a globalized world”. (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 1998, p. 6)

When facing those expectations, one can recognize that there is still a long way to go in the communicative competence of a second language, as it suggests that every person should be a citizen of the city to the world. However, those speeches are a challenge for schools, and they should respond to the formation of communicative competences a global citizen requires. Likewise, the school should create interculturalism and communicative moments that lead to the integration of didactic, and pedagogical strategies in the learning process of a second language. The school itself has many possibilities to break the inertia.

German philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein says that “the limits of my language are the limits of my world” (Wittgenstein, 1922, cited in Crespo-García & Moskowich, 2009), and in line with this, we need to educate students as subjects that experience the world and themselves. Transforming the experience in narratives of interpretation, and comprehension of life, and the globalized world would contribute to the development of communicative competences. Those ideals appear to be far away from reality, but we need to go for it, and going after the utopy makes us think about new dimensions, options, and strategies to develop those linguistic competences in a second language. Is right here, where the challenge of schools shows up: Educating for a globalized world from the direct experience of each

individual, from the different comprehensions, adaptations, and creations would lead to their own transformation.

In this sense, breaking with the confinement of the school is expected. The Ministry of National Education says that

There has not been significant progress in the definition of variants that interfere in the learning of a language besides the ones already studied: Student, social environment, academic environment, teachers, didactic material, programs, institutional structure, and others (...) The terminology is still confusing; concepts like cognitive and communicative strategies, competences, approaches, methods, techniques, and skills should have a field definition. (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 1998, p.5)

When trying to define new ways of learning a second language, the Ministry says that studies have shown in diverse groups (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 1998, p. 5), that there are theories and didactic models that argue that the processes of the interlingual and intercultural development are the axes in the teaching and learning process of second languages.

In this regard, this monograph considered both axes in order to find the possibilities of exploring new meaningful relationships of appropriation, in the cultural richness of the city. The proposal is to revive the local bilingual contexts where students find underlying messages that would help to the development of the interlingual and intercultural processes. According to Barthes, the construction of this meaning grows up in the language environment as a historic expression of social life (Barthes, 1993, p. 517).

Before going further into the explanation of those two axes, it is important to know how the Colombian Ministry of Education (1998) defines each of them. The development of the interlingual and intercultural processes is a dynamic vision of learning based in a cycle encouraged by the dialectic resolution of the observation/reflection/abstraction/experience:

- Interlingual development refers to every process someone needs to go through when learning a second language, in order to be able to speak it as well or almost as well as a native speaker. Many development steps are similar for everyone, and those will need to go through some required evolutive stages, in the same way it occurs with the first language acquisition.
- Intercultural development: In the development of the communicative competence in a second language come into play two factors: an internal and external factor. The first factor is formed by the knowledge and appropriation an individual has for its own language and culture, and for its expectations regarding other languages and cultures. The latter factor is constituted by the interactions among languages and cultures. Therefore, these two factors influence the affective and cognitive process. This affective-cognitive correlation influences the experience and shows up the quantity and quality of the sociolinguistic production. (Ministry of National Education, 1998, p.8).

Flexible Methodologies Rich in Cultural Content for the City as a Second Language Learning Space

As reflective and analytic landmarks in second language competences in the Colombian system, there are some methodological recommendations. Those two recommendations have to do with: active and interactive methodologies, methodologies that consider the recreational element, activities that lead students to their own growth, methodologies that integrate the new learnings with the previous ones, methodologies that value the affective component, flexible methodologies rich in cultural contents (Ministry of National Education, 1998).

In this paper, the last two methodologies were the only ones considered: **the flexible methodologies, and the methodologies rich in cultural contents**, as both of them remind us of the concepts developed in relation to the city as a privilege learning discourse, and to the learning throughout the experience to represent the heterogeneity and diversity of the existing element around the bilingual competences.

The Ministry defines both methodologies in the following manner:

- **Flexible Methodologies:** They allow students to use learning strategies without the inflexibility of some traditional methodologies and they also offer teachers a wide variety of activities, selection of techniques, and appropriate procedures for each case.
(Ministry of National Education, 1998, p.15)
- **Methodologies Rich in Cultural Contents:** The language and the culture are inseparable elements. The use of methodologies that facilitate getting closer to other cultures associated with second languages is essential, as the languages are the best

way to get to the cultures of the people who speak them. (Ministry of National Education, 1998, p.16)

Considering the elements already exposed, this thesis suggests reviewing the idea of the city as a privileged learning discourse, so we would be able to recover external factors such as the visual, architectural, and auditory language, in order to build bilingual narratives in interaction with the culture. Bruner, an American psychologist and pedagogue, considers that the narrative is a speech-act, it is a text in which the intention guides a searching of significations inside a frame of possible worlds, and where the comprehension process is a path that ends up with the individual's internal conception, giving meaning to the world around it (Bruner, 2000, cited in Hederich-Martínez et al, 2015).

The everyday life thinking has its direct symbolic expression in the narrative modality of the experiential organization. The narrations discuss events, mental stages or incidents in which human beings participate as characters of a plot that continues as a temporal sequence clearly recognizable (Hederich-Martínez et al, 2015).

Methodology

In this monograph we employed the “structural analysis of contents” technique (Saldarriaga et al, 2005). By using this technique, it is possible to graph effectively fundamental axes in order to connect two pairs of elements: the development of interlingual processes/ development of intercultural processes; and, flexible methodologies/ methodologies rich in cultural content. This analytic source allows us to explore, comprehend, and project new ways of learning a second language examining meanings, relationships and complementarity among them.

As Páramo (2009) expresses that when trying to define a new knowledge route, one must recur to the epistemology, theory, principles and methodology approximations that assemble the proposal. Thus, this work contributes to the structure of a methodological field that changes focal points and objectives of the Ministry of Education for the learning of a second language. It is not about contrasting the “ideal” (Ministry) with the “reality” (city) as none reality reaches the ideal. The proposal is to make possible the idea of thinking, and comprehending the city, not as a static description of its richness, but as a complex and dynamic look, analyzing the possible relationships between the interlingual and intercultural developments, and between the flexible methodologies, and methodologies rich in cultural contents, in order to read in them the constant movement of the individuals that inhabit the city.

At the end, it is about not getting trapped between the true or false, it is about a proposal that can be useful for teachers, so they can have conceptual tools, different to the ones already worked, representing, in this way, the diversity, and heterogeneity of the

elements that coexist in the city, and that help us learn a second language from the outside of the school.

Learning A Second Language In Interaction With The Sociocultural Richness Of The City: A Proposal.

As we have explained before, the methodology developed in this piece of work, pretends to demonstrate that learning a second language is possible because of the immanent relationships between the individual, and the cultural richness of the city it lives in. That is why we have used structural templates of the Semantic structure of Greimas explained in the following.

Structural Templates (Structural Analysis of Contents)

The beginning stage comes from the semantic linguistics, and from the structural semantics of A. J. Greimas, who argues that

Every production of meaning in the human world starts with a matching game: “The elemental unit of signification is a match with the complementary opposites, linked by a bond (semantic axis) that underlies and specifies its meaning. (Greimas cited in Saldarriaga et al, 2005, pág. 115)

For instance, the opposite to white is not necessarily black, the opposite is the whatever not black, and those oppositions are not setted, instead, they “allow the description of relationships according to the context and their interactions with the elements that surround the moment of their use (Saldarriaga et al, 2005).

In order to facilitate the analysis of axes of relations, we present two crossbars that at the moment of crossing them, they can create multiple alternatives of combination that constitute a universe of meaning, and learning possibilities, The axes that have been considered are necessary to show the interlingual and intercultural processes, the flexible

methodologies, and the methodologies rich in cultural contents. Those processes and methodologies, in their various relationships, complement each other.

In the axis of the development of the interlingual processes- processes that every student goes through when learning a second language- come into play internal, and external factors of the speaker. Both factors can be recognized as constitutive processes of the learner.



Figure 1: axes of relations 1

In the axis of flexible methodologies- different choices of activities and procedures used by teachers- and methodologies rich in cultural contents-getting closer to the culture of the second languages- taking for granted that languages are the best way to know the culture of the people that speak them. Both methodologies are inherent to the school.

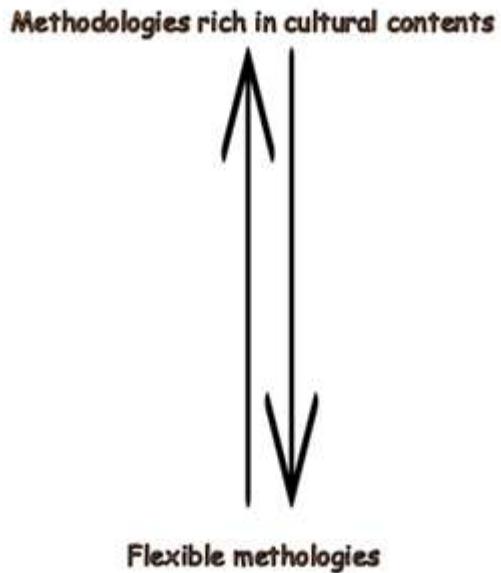


Figure 2: axe of relations 2

In such a manner, the individual that learns, and the school that teaches, recognizes a variety of differences in the educational process, and it is precisely to think in other spaces to visualize the new learning environment with flexible methodologies, and methodologies rich in cultural contents, so citizens would become communicative fluents.

Being aware of the permanent interaction between the city and the people that live in it, means understanding the gatherings of diversity, of different dimensions and complex expressions that constitute more than a physical space, a virtual one, individual and collective from the daily interactions of the subjects with the environment. Additionally, around the city, one can find concepts, knowledge, spaces, times, messages, speakers, advertisement,

architecture, stories, encounters, and disagreements, that make possible the countless relationships and messaging networks of sociocultural linking.

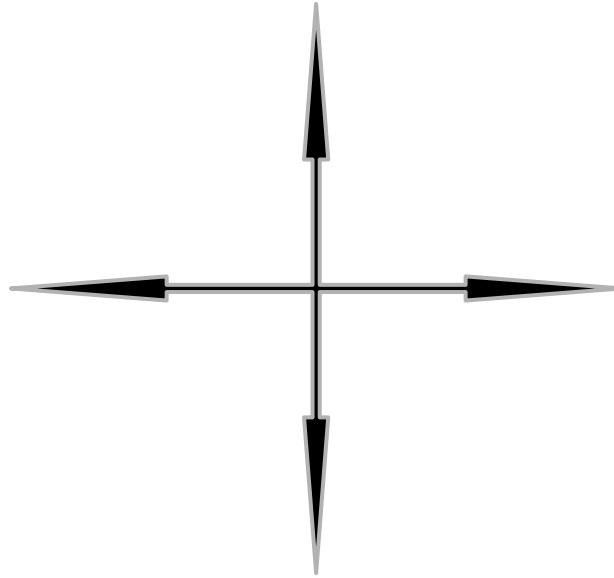


Figure 3: crossing of both axes

Furthermore, Vygotsky (1978) had said that the learning, and knowledge acquisition are the result of social interaction, and its purpose is allowing access to the culture. In this regard, the information, the learning exchanges among individuals in their own environment help the learning process itself and the learning throughout the experience. Those models are not only suitable for the classroom in formal education, but also in everyday life contexts. In the following, we explain the results of crossing the two axes of relationships that give rise to four complementary hubs, from which it produces other meanings and comprehensions that open perspectives of learning.

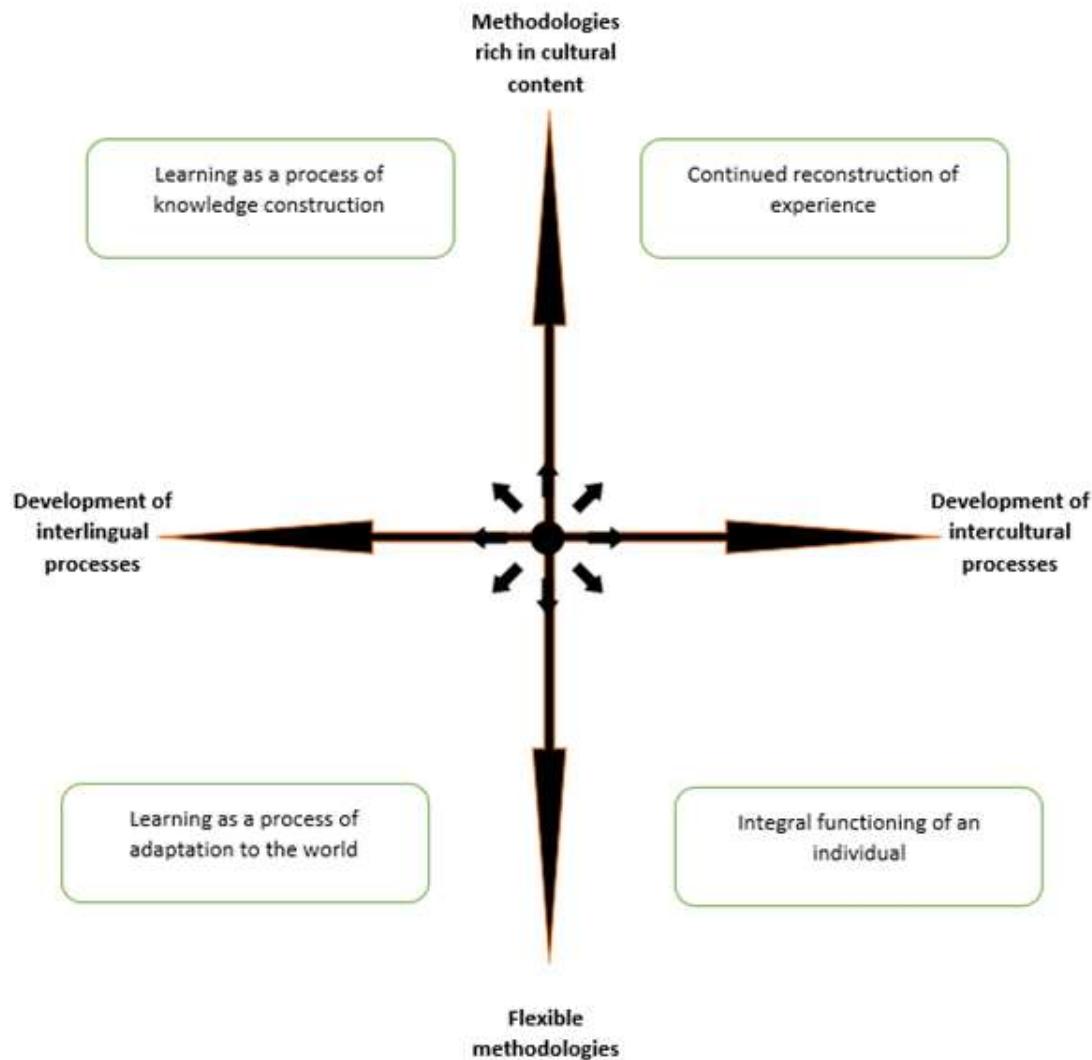


Figure 4: the result of crossing both axes and the endless possibilities that come out of said relationships.

Below, we present a short connection between the multiple relationships one can find and reveal in the crossing of axes of relations:

In the axis of the processes development

- Interlingual processes: Learning process of a second language.
- Intercultural processes: Play of internal and external factors of the speaker.

In the axis of the methodologies

- Flexible methodologies: Varied use of activities by the teacher.
- Methodologies rich in cultural contents: The language is the best way to get closer to the culture.

In the axes of relationships (matching)

A group of multiple relations:

- The environment and the movement.
- The perception of the nearby, and the distant.
- Space and the places, they depend of the narrator.
- The displacement modifies the perceived space.
- The place inhabited: the story it explores step by step. The house, the garden, the riverside, the locations.
- The nearby landscapes, the draws, the style patterns.
- The drawing of a painting.
- The local and universal space.
- The antiquity from the living perspective.
- Prolonged networks.

- A mosaic of layers.
- Flights to the nearest.
- Inhabit, leave, and exist.
- The universal languages.

Every classification rests in the chests and bedrooms. The imagination always bets for the innedit, it precedes the light of the discovering. Sometimes something new is found in the craziness, even the order of the reasoning (Serres, 1995, p.48)

Coda

It is quite accurate to say that the current learning of a second language takes place in schools, or private institutions, and even though the Ministry of Education has created different programs to promote the learning of English, there are still some language barriers that need to be overcomed in order to build a more significant learning experience in students. It is also precise to say that by understanding, comprehending, and recognizing the cultural richness of the city one can be aware of the constant interaction between the city and the people that inhabit it, and in that interaction individuals live significant experiences that promote learning. Additionally, around the city, one can find concepts, knowledge, spaces, times, messages, speakers, advertisement, architecture, stories, encounters, and desagreements, that make possible the countless relationships and messaging networks of sociocultural linking.

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