

STRENGTHENING CULTURAL IDENTITY FROM THE EFL CLASSROOM

ALBA MILENA FLÓREZ GONZÁLEZ

**UNIVERSIDAD INDUSTRIAL DE SANTANDER
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS
ESCUELA DE IDIOMAS
BUCARAMANGA**

2016

STRENGTHENING CULTURAL IDENTITY FROM THE EFL CLASSROOM

ALBA MILENA FLÓREZ GONZÁLEZ

**Requirement for the degree of
Magíster en Didáctica de la Lengua**

Director

**ESPERANZA REVELO JIMÉNEZ
M.A in English as a Foreign Language**

**UNIVERSIDAD INDUSTRIAL DE SANTANDER
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS
ESCUELA DE IDIOMAS
BUCARAMANAGA**

2016

DEDICATION

Dedicated to my parents who have always believed in me and keep me in their prayers every day. For them because they are my greatest influence, my role models in life and the best parents God could have given me.

To my beloved brother Juan Carlos, the symbol of my efforts, because I am just opening ways for him to walk.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foremost, I am highly grateful to God for His blessing through this process because He has surprised and supported me every single day and His mercy never ends.

I would like to acknowledge the contributions made to this work by students and community in Villanueva, Santander because they were always motivated and open to share information to the research project.

I also want to give thanks to my friend Leidy Constanza Quintero, for her support, suggestions and ideas to improve the research work and for the time devoted to help me with all the process of publishing the book of chronicles in Bucaramanga while I was working in Villanueva. I cannot thank you enough.

To my project director Esperanza Revelo Jimenez, for her constructive support and time, for all the tears and laughs during our meetings and hangouts and for the wise and inspirational words for my personal and professional life. To Luz Mary Quintero who first recognized the potential of my project, even when it was just a master's application proposal.

Thanks to Universidad Industrial de Santander for the opportunity of being part of this master program, for the excellent professors and the always right and on time assistance during all the process.

CONTENTS

	Pág.
INTRODUCTION	14
1. THE STUDY	17
1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	17
1.2 OBJECTIVES	20
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	21
2.1 GLOBALIZATION AND LOCAL PRACTICES	22
2.2 LANGUAGE AND CULTURE.....	24
2.3 BUILDING CULTURAL IDENTITY THROUGH ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE.....	25
2.4 WRITING AS A TOOL IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY.....	27
3. RESEARCH DESIGN	28
3.1 CONTEXT	29
3.2. SAMPLE POPULATION	29
3.3 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS.....	30
3.3.1 Questionnaire.	30
3.3.2 Research Journal. n.....	31
3.3.3 Focus Group.	32
3.4 ETHICAL ISSUES	32
4. PEDAGOGICAL INTERVENTION	34
4.1 CURRICULUM DESIGN	34
4.2 INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN	35
4.3 DIDACTIC SEQUENCE	38

4.3.1 Negotiation of the Topic.	40
4.3.2 Designing Data Collection Instruments.	40
4.3.3 Gathering Data.	41
4.3.4 Information Sharing.....	41
4.3.5 Information Validity	42
4.3.6 Organization of Information.....	43
4.3.7 Knowing the Genre.	43
4.3.8 Group Writing.....	43
4.3.9 Facing Language Demands	44
4.3.10 Peer Reviewing.....	45
4.3.11 Publishing.	45
 5. DATA ANALYSIS.....	 47
5.1. DATA MANAGEMENT.....	47
5.2. DATA ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK	48
 6. FINDINGS	 50
6.1 AT THE STUDENTS' LEVEL	50
6.2. AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL	52
6.2.1 Value Systems.....	53
6.2.2. Knowing the Town.	56
6.2.3 Intergenerational Communication.	57
6.3 IMPACT OF THE STUDY ON THE RESEARCHER	58
6.4 IMPACT ON THE STUDENTS' L2 COMPETENCE	60
6.5 CROSS CURRICULAR IMPACT	62
 7. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS.....	 65
7.1 FUTURE RESEARCH SUGGESTIONS.....	68
 BIBLIOGRAPHY	 69

LIST OF TABLES

Pág.

Tabla 1. Reflective teaching process	58
--	----

LIST OF FIGURES

	Pág.
Figura 1. Didactic Sequence	39
Figura 2. Impact on the sample population	52
Figura 3. System of Values	55
Figura 4. Characteristics of the town.....	57
Figura 5. Language and writing improvements	61
Figura 6. Inter-disciplinary contributions.....	63

LIST OF APPENDICES.

The following appendices are in an external folder

Appendix A: Sample consent form

Appendix B: Categorization of the simple

Appendix C: Matrix

Appendix D: Questionnaire

Appendix E: Research Journal Format

Appendix F: Focus Group Protocol

Appendix G: Lesson Plans

Appendix H: Interviewee Consent Form

Appendix I: Sample of Written Chronicles

Appendix J: Research Journal

Appendix K: Focus Group Transcriptions

Appendix L: Data gathered from the questionnaire

RESUMEN

TITULO: FORTALECIMIENTO DE LA IDENTIDAD CULTURAL DESDE LA CLASE DE INGLÉS*

AUTOR: ALBA MILENA FLÓREZ GONZÁLEZ**

PALABRAS CLAVE: IDENTIDAD CULTURAL, HISTORIA FAMILIAR, LENGUAJE, CRÓNICA, PROCESO ESCRITURAL

DESCRIPCIÓN:

La identidad es un tema común de revisión cuando se habla del aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera. Los estudios realizados en este campo usualmente se dirigen a establecer la relación entre los aprendices, la cultura relacionada con la lengua que se está aprendiendo y la manera de conectar estos dos aspectos para facilitar el proceso. Es decir, como la identidad cultural de los estudiantes, entendida como el conjunto de tradiciones, lengua, historia y normas de comportamiento de los cuales son miembros, se convierte en un elemento potencial para mejorar el aprendizaje. Teniendo en cuenta estas consideraciones, el objetivo de este estudio de investigación acción fue fortalecer la identidad cultural en estudiantes de colegio desde la clase de inglés, facilitando un proceso de aprendizaje significativo y promoviendo a su vez la participación activa de los jóvenes en su comunidad a través del dialogo intergeneracional. El estudio fue realizado con 33 estudiantes de grado undécimo en un colegio público de Villanueva, Santander. Los datos se recogieron a través de entrevistas hechas por los estudiantes a las personas mayores de la comunidad con el fin de saber el proceso que llevó a la fundación y los primeros años del municipio. La información recogida fue usada en la clase de inglés para escribir crónicas que fueron luego publicadas. Los hallazgos se centran en la forma como los estudiantes interactuaron con su comunidad, aprendieron más acerca de su historia y fortalecieron su identidad cultural. Dentro de los resultados se discute también el mejoramiento en el desarrollo de las competencias en inglés, principalmente reflejadas en el proceso escritural de los estudiantes. Por último, se evidencia el desarrollo de estrategias metacognitivas a través del trabajo colaborativo durante el proceso de investigación promoviendo estructuras de pensamiento de un nivel mayor.

* Trabajo de Grado

** Facultad de Ciencias Humanas. Escuela de Idiomas. Director: Esperanza Revelo Jimenez, Magister en la Enseñanza del Inglés.

ABSTRACT

TITLE: STRENGTHENING CULTURAL IDENTITY FROM THE EFL CLASSROOM*

AUTHOR: ALBA MILENA FLÓREZ GONZÁLEZ**

KEYWORDS: CULTURAL IDENTITY, FAMILY HISTORY, LANGUAGE, CHRONICLE, WRITING PROCESS

DESCRIPTION:

Identity is a common topic of revision when talking about foreign language learning. Studies are usually directed to establishing a relationship between learners and the target language culture and how to link both of them to facilitate the process. From another perspective, this research study takes into consideration the students' cultural identity defined as the set of traditions, language, history and norms of conduct students are members of, as a potential element to enhance the foreign language learning process. Bearing all this in mind, the purpose of this action research study was to strengthen cultural identity in high school students from the English class, facilitating a meaningful foreign language learning process and also promoting the active participation of students in their community through inter-generational dialogue. The study was developed with 33 eleventh graders in a public high school in Villanueva, Santander. The data were collected through interviews made by students to elders in the community in order to know about the process of foundation and first years of the municipality. The collected information was used in the English class to write a set of chronicles which were then published in a book. The findings discuss the way students interacted with their community, knew more about their history and strengthened their cultural identity. Second, there was also an improvement in the development of language competencies, mainly reflected in the students' writing process. Third, students also developed metacognitive strategies, since they had to do self and peer review during the research process, fostering higher order thinking structures.

* Master Thesis

** Facultad de Ciencias Humanas. Escuela de Idiomas. Director: Esperanza Revelo Jimenez, M.A in English as a Foreign Language

INTRODUCTION

Cultural identity is the construction all individuals make of their reality according to the society in which they live¹. This construction is normally permeated by the economic, educational and social realities of the context people are immersed in, and it helps them create a relationship characterized by a set of shared beliefs, traditions and cultural practices. Similarly, Norton argues that cultural identity is the relationship an individual has with the members of a specific social group with a common history, language and understanding of the world². In the same way, Jandt describes cultural identity as the identification and acceptance into a group with a shared system of symbols and established norms for conduct³. From these three definitions I can assert that cultural identity is the way we identify ourselves as members of a community and as the manner in which the traditions, beliefs and practices we share with that community can affect the way we see and conceive the world around us.

Language is closely related to the construction of identity. This is supported by Lin, who argues that learning a language is not just the learning of a code but it is also an intercultural enterprise where learners explore the cultural practices of foreign social groups⁴. This means that while we are learning a language, we can consider learning about the cultural implications it has and the way our own principles and customs interact with the new culture. In other words, learning a language is a social practice where new experiences come to the learner's life and create a

¹ LIN, Lu-Fang, Second language learners' identity toward their home culture: Adding pragmatic knowledge to language learning curriculum. *Asian social science*, 2009 5(8). p. 43

² NORTON, Bonny, Identity as a sociocultural construct in second language education. In K.Cadman & K. O'Regan (Eds.), *TESOL in Context [Special Issue]*, 2006, p. 27.

³ JANDT, Fred, *An introduction to intercultural communication: Identities in a global community*, Sage Publications, 2012, p.336

⁴ LIN, op. cit, p. 50

space for the negotiation of identities⁵. In a slightly different understanding of the relationship between language and identity, Ariza explains that “language can be seen as a way of describing and presenting human experiences of the world”⁶, those experiences that construct and enrich the cultural identity. This is to say that languages provide a means to spread and access different worldviews.

Even though we are involved in a particular community with a set of features that define our cultural identity, globalization has facilitated a clash of cultures which is transforming the way we understand our own reality and identity. A clear example of this cultural clash is the way youth seem to be adopting social practices learned through mass media and not necessarily related and relevant to their particular contexts. Here, Norton’s notion of imagined communities is particularly helpful since she defines imagined communities as those social groups individuals aspire to belong to⁷. In our case, today’s youth wish to become part of communities that are not relevant to the local contexts where they live and whose cultural practices are alien to their lives.

Thus, young people seem to be leaving their cultural identity in favor of other cultures; they are abandoning their traditions and neglecting who they are, their roots and history. They are denying themselves and assuming negative attitudes towards their own social group. This denial is called by Anne Marie de Mejia a *cultural rejection*⁸ and consists of a bad image individuals create about their own social group. Most of the times these images are spread by media which undervalue the local identity and over emphasize the practices of foreign cultures. Further evidence supporting this may lie in the findings of Örnek who argues that

⁵ NORTON, Bonny, Identity. In Simpson, J. (Ed.). The Routledge handbook of applied linguistics. Taylor & Francis E-library, 2011 p. 325

⁶ ARIZA, Diana. Culture in the EFL classroom at Universidad de la Salle: An innovation project. Actualidades pedagógicas. 2007. p. 11

⁷ NORTON, op. cit, p. 28

⁸ MEJÍA, Anne Marie de, Bilingual Education in Colombia: Towards a Recognition of Languages, Cultures and Identities. Colombian. Applied. Linguistic Journal [online], 2006. No. 8. P. 159

there is a dominant culture that is being spread by media and it has become a common model around the world; pushing aside local cultures⁹.

In this scenario, the school presents itself as a site of resistance where efforts to strengthen local identities can be made. Álvarez & Medina explain how the study of one's culture in the foreign language class is a process where students can understand their own realities in light of others' realities and points of view¹⁰. It means that the use of a foreign language can help students reflect on their own practices in order to make comparisons with the target culture. At this point, globalization, more than a disadvantage, can be seen as an opportunity to interact with others and to get to know different representations of the world, allowing us to appreciate and understand the uniqueness and peculiarities of our own culture. In this regard, Wang proposes to see cultural identity as a tool which provides people with a global view of local knowledge and helps construct a positive sense of self, community and nation¹¹.

This action research intends to study how cultural identity can be strengthened in the EFL classroom by means of writing chronicles about the students' family histories. The thesis document begins with a statement of the problem, the research questions and the proposed objectives which are followed by a review of the literature, the research design, context, sample population, data collection instruments and, a timeline for the development of the project as well as the description of the pedagogical intervention, and the analysis and findings of it. The last chapter contains the conclusions from the research project and the possible future directions. The document closes with the list of references taken into consideration in the development of the paper.

⁹ ÖRNEK, Yusuf, Globalization and cultural identity, 2003. p.6

¹⁰ ÁLVAREZ, Jose., & Medina, Ximena. Addressing culture in the EFL classroom: A dialogic proposal. Profile Issues in Teachers' Professional Development. 2011. (2), p.158.

¹¹ WANG, Yi, Globalization enhances cultural identity. Intercultural Communication Studies, 2007, 16(1), p 83.

1. THE STUDY

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Globalization has brought with it an abandonment of local cultural practices and identities in favor of global identities from dominant cultures which are massively spread by the media. Nowadays, students are interested in knowing and adapting new trends for example music, traditions, language expressions which are not related to their social group. These mainstream identities are adopted by individuals, especially by the young, giving way to a citizenship that is more global than local or even national. It is not about including or excluding young people's practices but trying to integrate these practices into a glocal view of identity. Babran argues that there is a trend to appropriate new values and traditions which do not have a connection with the individuals' local cultures¹². That is to say, people are leaving aside their own customs in favor of foreign ones.

Likewise, it is possible to see how the promotion of individuals' cultural identity is not given the importance it should have in the classroom setting. In this regard, Anne Marie de Mejia points out that there is a need for promoting language policies from the school considering foreign and local cultures in order to create a more tolerant and inclusive society¹³. This promotion requires designing learning experiences that help develop in students the sense of belonging to their own culture and a more profound understanding of how it can interact with other cultures without losing the set of features that make it unique.

¹² BABRAN, Sedigheb. Media, Globalization of Culture, and Identity Crisis in Developing Countries. *Intercultural Communication Studies*. 2008. 17(2). p. 213

¹³ MEJIA, op. cit, p. 155

A more specific illustration of this identity issue can be observed in secondary education. Specifically, this problem has been noticed at a public school with teenagers who feel more identified with foreign customs or trends they see in the media than with the ones from their local community. This is what Babran presents as the weakening of traditions and values of local cultures in favor of dominant social groups which use the power of media to attract people to their traditions and beliefs¹⁴. An observable example in the students could be how they are more aware of social events happening around the world like international concerts, or even famous people's lives than of the events of their community. For instance, students are barely informed of crucial local situations such as the lack of water supply in the municipality or the reasons why communication between families is so difficult.

The construction of identity, whether local or global, is closely related to language and the way we use it. Language is the vehicle that allows its users to interact with other identities and cultures, since, according to Cakir, it is "the most visible and available expression of culture"¹⁵. However, rather than a way to open the mind to other cultures, language can play a role as a useful connector between people and their own identity because, as it is said by Dervin, in language individuals can find a path for self-discovery¹⁶. Language also provides a voice to people's value systems. In other words, language and cultural identity have a strong relationship since the latter is permeated by the former and this is the reason why it is important to analyze how, through foreign language learning, cultural identity can be maintained and strengthened in a community of language users.

The school, understood as a place where people are open to share knowledge, information and values is the ideal setting to address the issues discussed above.

¹⁴ BABRAN, op. cit, p. 218

¹⁵ ÇAKIR, İsmail. Developing Cultural Awareness in Foreign Language Teaching. 2006. p. 155

¹⁶ DERVIN, Fred, Cultural identity, representation and Othering. Routledge Handbook of Language and Intercultural Communication, 2011. 185

The school must create spaces where students can construct their identity and find out who they are, how they understand the world, and the reasons they act in the way they do before relating with other cultures¹⁷. In simple terms, it is necessary to create a solid foundation of students' own culture, so that they can enter cultural contact zones without alienating or acculturating. This is fundamental if we wish our future generations to maintain their cultural legacy and to be respectful of cultural differences. This is what Braban called the search for a *peaceful coexistence* among cultures¹⁸. This coexistence can also be understood as an intercultural approach which develops a sense of diversity in students, leading them to understand that there is not a culture that is superior to others but that all of them are valuable because of their singularity.

Few previous studies about the awareness of individuals towards their cultural identity have been approached from the foreign language classroom in Colombia. These studies have focused on the analysis of the way students see and understand the target culture rather than the local one. Participants in these studies have been mostly university students. My study looks at identity in a population of eleventh graders and its purpose is to strengthen the local cultural identity from the EFL classroom. In particular, the central goal is to provide students with opportunities to explore the traditions, beliefs and history that constitute their identity as Villanuevas*. With this in mind, this action research project attempts to answer two research questions:

- What are the perceptions students have about their cultural identity?
- How do high school students strengthen their cultural identity by writing chronicles in the English class, about their family history?

¹⁷ FRANK, Jerrold, Raising Cultural Awareness in the English Language Classroom. English teaching Forum, 2013 p. 5-6

¹⁸ BABRAN, op. cit, p. 219

* People from Villanueva

1.2 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this action research project is once known the students' perceptions of their cultural identity; investigate how it can be strengthened through foreign language writing practices. Strengthening Colombian students' cultural identity lost by the prominence of foreign practices is one of the challenges education has to face today. Currently, students feel more attracted to thinking and behaving like people do in the dominant cultures; the result of this new attachment is that cultural features like local history, traditions and beliefs tend to disappear under new global thinking systems. The specific objectives of this action research study are:

- To explore the students' conceptions about cultural identity, how it is defined and understood by learners.
- To design and implement a pedagogical intervention with strategies to help in the strengthening of students' cultural identity.
- To analyze the students' perceptions of their social group after the pedagogical intervention and how the writing process and strategies proposed helped strengthen their cultural identity.
- To report the findings and its implications to future studies related to the development of students' cultural identity from the EFL classroom.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

There are solid reasons to work in the strengthening of the students' cultural identity in a foreign language educational setting. First of all, it can improve the students' local knowledge and foster participants' active relationship with the community through spaces of communication where elders share their experiences with them. Second, students' language skills can be enhanced in a meaningful way since even when they are learning a foreign language, data used in the process are part of their everyday context. That is, the usage of authentic material is promoted and students feel identified because they realize they are learning English but using their daily life community events and traditions. Third, the use of local knowledge in foreign language learning processes allows participants to know and understand better their own culture and be open to know the L2 culture without acculturating. That is, the use of local knowledge in English class as expressed by Cakir connects one's own culture with others in more dynamic scenarios¹⁹.

Thus, strengthening students' cultural identity from the EFL classroom as an integrative process involves using students' own and foreign language to express feelings beliefs and emotions, students' motivation, and the teacher's guide and support. Consequently, this literature review focuses on four main themes related to the construction of cultural identity: a) globalization and local practices, b) relationship between language and culture c) building cultural identity through English as a foreign language class, and d) writing as a tool in the construction of cultural identity.

¹⁹ CAKIR, op. cit, p. 160

2.1 GLOBALIZATION AND LOCAL PRACTICES

Globalization is a worldwide phenomenon and it is impossible to deny its existence, and its continuous controversial expansion around the world. Its principles and impact on communities have been largely the object of discussion in the last decades, however, a unified vision of globalization has not been reached yet, there are different perspectives to see and understand this process. On the one hand, there are people who present arguments against it claiming that it is a strategy from developed countries to establish a global socio economic society without considering cultural diversity : “Globalization has destabilized democracies and cultures in favor of the global elites”²⁰.

On the contrary, some people support the idea of globalization as an opportunity to show local practices in global scenarios. To this regard, Rafat, Emadzadeh, & Ahmadi argue that local communities which expand their vision and give open access to international settings, take the best of local and global knowledge and increase their understanding of themselves, their understanding of the dynamics of the world while improving their living standards²¹.

Both the negative view and the one highlighting the contributions of globalization to the strengthening of culture make strong points. First of all, globalization, understood as the process in which people use a free market system to share political, economic and cultural aspects²², has been highly criticized recently because of the negative effects this process can have on local identities. To this regard, Babran argues that some traditions and values can disappear as a result of

²⁰ POPA, Claudia, Is Globalization a Necessary Evil? Side Effects of the Globalization. International Journal of Academic Research in Accounting, Finance and Management Sciences, 2012, 2(Special 1), p. 247.

²¹ RAFAT, Batool, Emadzadeh, Mostafa, & Ahmadi, Khadijeh, Economic, Social and Political Aspect of Globalization on Health in Developing Countries (with Segregation). International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 2013, 3(7), p. 384.

²² ÖRNEK, Yusuf, Globalization and cultural identity, 2003. p. 2

globalization²³. This means, individuals are adopting trends from developed countries and they are losing their own systems of values. Under this principle and considering that what constitutes a matter of cultural significance to one nation may not be to another, people identified with foreign cultures can become indifferent to local traditions.

Moreover, globalization can often be perceived as an instrument used by dominant cultures to impose their power onto small socio economic groups and create a world culture without considering the specific values and traditions of those groups. In other words, some people see globalization as a negative process which tends to homogenize culture, educating individuals who feel identified with just one common set of traditions and ways of thinking even rejecting their own cultural system of values if necessary. Firouzeh particularly refers to this homogenization process and he states that its impact on a society's cultural diversity is negative because it increases the lack of communication among people in the same community since the majority of customers of this homogenized culture are young people²⁴, they feel more confident talking among them than sharing local histories and traditions with their elders.

On the other hand, as far as the positive view of globalization is concerned, this process is understood as a social phenomenon which more than destroying identities, fosters and helps them to be known and shared around the world. As Örnek found in his research study, globalization can make individuals more aware about their local identity and create on them the need to protect and preserve the features that make them particular and unique²⁵. Wang agrees with Örnek saying that living in the era of globalization, people pay more attention to the particularities

²³ BABRAN, op. cit, p. 215

²⁴ FIROUZEH, Nahavandi. Globalisation and Homogenisation of Culture: The Role of Mass Medias in Developing Countries. In Builders, M (Eds). Human. Ecol.(Special Issue)12 2004, p. 237.

²⁵ ÖRNEK, op. cit, p. 6

their own culture offers as a way to distinguish it from others²⁶. In this regard, globalization is conceived as a practice of social exchange where cultural identity more than disappearing, emerges from its uniqueness and compares to other identities to enrich an intercultural approach.

2.2 LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Language is a strong determinant in the construction of cultural identity, there is no culture separated from language or a language that does not consider any culture in its development. To this regard, Norton proposes the construction of identity through language since the latter is present in all the learners' scenarios and provides them with the voice to express their value systems which are part of the culture they feel identified with²⁷. In a similar way, Ariza sees language as a tool human beings use to describe their experiences and the way the world is represented²⁸. Thus, language is a way to communicate culture, to share the social features composing identity in order to develop intercultural competence where learners understand that there are several cultures but all of them are valuable and unique. This is an important reflection in a globalized world that as stated earlier on this paper can spread the idea of a homogeneous culture.

When the essential role of language in the construction of cultural identity is understood and people realize it is not only a *system of signs*²⁹ or a common *patterned behavior*³⁰ it is possible to start conceiving language as a social process that involves people trying to establish agreements and creating social groups with a common sense of belonging. That is to say, a new perspective of language is

²⁶ Wang, op. cit, p. 85

²⁷ Norton, op. cit, p. 26

²⁸ Ariza, op. cit, p. 12

²⁹ NORTON, Bonny, & Toohey, Keilen, Identity and language learning. In R. B. Kaplan (Ed.), The Oxford handbook of applied linguistics, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002. p. 432

³⁰ Cakir, op. cit, p. 156

conceived and it is recognized as a group practice that allows the organization of experiences and the negotiation of identities³¹.

The arguments presented above work on the assumption that language is not only related to but it is an important part in the construction of cultural identity. In this regard, Lin also argues that a language cannot only be understood as a code but as a set of social element which surround language and nourishes from it³², thus affecting language learning either positively or negatively. In short, cultural identity is constructed and strengthened through language, because it is the medium to spread culture.

2.3 BUILDING CULTURAL IDENTITY THROUGH ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

According to Ariza, cultural identity is defined as the construct of behaviors, beliefs and social thoughts people feel identified with and which make them part of a community³³. In a similar fashion, Frank, points out that culture is not only related to food or clothes, but it also considers the ideology and traditions that build a common society³⁴. This means that cultural identity is not a static linear process but a social construction that is developed through interaction with others. Wang continues to argue that cultural identity is a plan created by people to develop future activities based on past experiences³⁵. It means that cultural identity is not only developed with the current experiences individuals face but also by those previous interactions which could affect the way they see and understand the world as well as their values systems.

³¹ NORTON, Bonny, Identity. In Simpson, J. (Ed.). The Routledge handbook of applied linguistics. Taylor & Francis E-library, 2011 p. 320

³² Lin, op. cit, p. 49

³³ Ariza, op. cit, p. 12

³⁴ FRANK, Jerrold, Raising Cultural Awareness in the English Language Classroom. English teaching Forum, 2013. p.3

³⁵ Wang, op. cit, p. 86

Considering that cultural identity is developed in interaction, school plays an important role in its construction and strengthening. Thus, by using authentic materials in the classroom it is possible to help students in the understanding of their own values and beliefs. But when this strengthening of identity is observed from the foreign language perspective, it is necessary to pay attention to the influence of the L2 culture in the process of construction and maintenance of the L1 cultural identity. In view of this, it is necessary that students take a critical position, knowing and analyzing the target culture but always recognizing the mother culture they are part of³⁶.

Similarly, Fulton highlights the importance of introducing the learner to different cultures but always giving spaces for the analysis and awareness of their own culture³⁷. That is to say, more than fostering the strengthening of a closed cultural identity, it is essential to work on an intercultural sense of belonging that makes students familiar with foreign cultures while they are learning a foreign language, but keeping their own roots and beliefs.

In short, there are as many cultures as languages in the world and each one of them is unique, the purpose is not abandoning the local culture in favor of the target language one, but understanding and being identified with one's own system of traditions in order to establish connection with others. Imposing one's own cultural values on others while neglecting variety is not the best way to communicate or establish relationships³⁸. Keeping traditions but being open to share them with others is a good way to strengthen cultural identity and to be more interculturally competent.

³⁶ ÁLVAREZ, Jose., & Medina, Ximena. op. cit, p.152.

³⁷ FULTON, Mary, Kennedy, Kim, Koslezki, Elizabeth, & Zion, Shelley, , Cultural Identity and Teaching. One Point Series. Tempe: Arizona State University, 2005, p. 3

³⁸ SUNEETHA, Yadaba & Sundaravalli, Miriam, Incorporating Cross-cultural Communication in ELT: A Pedagogical Approach. National University of Singapore, 2011

2.4 WRITING AS A TOOL IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY

In this study the strengthening of cultural identity is addressed from the English class and through the students' writing process. It is a way of working to improve the competence in the foreign language and at the same time the learners' engagement with knowing of their own culture and the opportunity to share it with others.

Writing has been shown as the most difficult skill to be developed by learners since it is a conscious process that considers grammar features and the sociocultural aspects affecting it³⁹. This first definition of writing shows how it is understood beyond the simple use of grammar rules to produce texts but it also considers the ideologies and beliefs the writer has when he or she is creating their writing piece. Another view of writing is given by Ahmed who sees writing as a process where learners are in constant struggle to find the way to weave their ideas using the correct words to express themselves through writing⁴⁰.

This is one of the reasons why writing is so difficult; most of the times the ideas people put on a paper do not say what they mean. In a slightly different understanding of writing, Chala and Chapetón present writing as a process in which students can get involved in social events and share those events with people who are not part of the same community⁴¹. This is a wider view of writing that points out the power it has to connect people around the world even when they do not bear a part in the same value system.

³⁹ LOMBANA, Claudia, Some Issues for the Teaching of Writing. PROFILE Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, 2009 3(1), p.46

⁴⁰ AHMED, Sadik. Exploring Students' Perceptions of ESL Writing, English Language Teaching. 2011 [online] 4 (2), p. 73

⁴¹ CHALA, Pedro., & CHAPETÓN, Claudia. Undertaking the Act of Writing as a Situated Social Practice: Going beyond the Linguistic and the Textual. Colomb. Appl. Linguist. 2013. J., 15(1), p. 32

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

Considering the research questions proposed before which are directed to know the students' perceptions of their cultural identity and how they can strengthen it by writing chronicles in English class about their family history; this research project was framed within the principles of action research. That is, it is oriented to work with a social issue observed by the teacher in the daily teaching process and which can be intervened in the classroom following the process of planning, acting in context, observing and reflecting on the action.

To this regard, Corey cited by Cohen et al 2007 explains that "Action research is a process in which practitioners study specific situations in order to evaluate, improve and steer decision making and practice"⁴² Considering this definition, action research is a process that involves the teacher participation and support and the students' active involvement and commitment since it is a profound practice of reflection and use of strategies guided to improve action.

In a slightly different way, Cohen describes some main characteristics of action research which are closely related to the research project here described, for instance its collaborative nature which enhances the competences of participants, and the use of strategies to promote problem solving and critical thinking improving the classroom practices and community social development.

⁴² COHEN Louis, MANION Lawrence. & MORRISON Keith. Research Methods In Education. London; Routledge. .2007. p. 297

3.1 CONTEXT

Villanueva, Santander, one of the newest municipalities of the department, is located in the Guanentina province, two and a half hours away from the city of Bucaramanga. Its main economic activity is farming, with crops of beans, corn and tobacco mainly. Besides these activities, people also work in the elaboration of sacks made of fique^{*} and sculptures made of stone. In terms of education, the Eliseo Pinilla Rueda is the only state school in the municipality offering formal education to 1250 children from rural and urban areas as well as some others who come from nearby towns. This research project is carried out with a sample of the high school students as presented below.

3.2. SAMPLE POPULATION

The sample population for this research project was chosen by following the convenience sampling principles, that is, researchers choose the participants taking into account people who they have easy access to. That is, those who are available and accessible at the time, for this specific case, one group of students of eleventh grade were chosen. The sample is formed by 33 students, 23 women and 10 men from 15 to 18 years old, and who have been classified in an A1-A2 English Level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages^{*} and based on a placement test administered at the beginning of the school year.

Each member of the sample population was informed about the general principles of the research project and they voluntarily agreed to be part of it. As they are high

^{*} Natural fiber that grows in the leaves of the fique plant and which is used to make garments or handicrafts

^{*} COUNCIL OF EUROPE. Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. Language Policy Unit, Strasbourg. Cambridge University Press. ISBN : HB 0521803136 - PB 0521005310 www.uk.cambridge.org/elt

school students under 18, a parents meeting was also necessary in order to explain the organization and general bases of the project. After this meeting each parent signed a consent form for the participation of their children in the study. This format is available as appendix A.

In order to ensure the confidentiality of the students' identity and to facilitate the coding and citing of their opinions to support the analysis of data and findings in later chapters, the sample has been categorized taking into account gender, age and the geographical location, rural or urban of each subject. For example, if an individual is the youngest woman of the sample and she lives in the rural area, the code she will have is F1R. F represents the gender, number 1 means she is the youngest and letter R is the evidence that she is from the rural area. The complete categorization of the sample population can be observed in appendix B.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Information for this study was obtained from a pedagogical intervention carried out with the participants. During the process some data collection instruments were administered. These instruments were: a questionnaire, applied at the beginning of the intervention; a journal with the teacher observations of the process and a focus group interview applied at the end of the pedagogical intervention.

3.3.1 Questionnaire. Questionnaires are commonly used data collection techniques since they provide factual information about the sample in a way that respondents do not feel the pressure of the researchers even when they are present⁴³. For the purpose of this research project, the questionnaire is designed to know the students' perceptions of their cultural identity, but before writing the

⁴³ DÖRNYEI, Zoltán, Research methods in applied linguistics: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methodologies. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. p. 271

statements and to validate the instrument, a matrix using the definition of cultural identity given by Norton, Chang and Mitchel et al is developed.

This matrix specifies the characteristics related to the concept and exposed by the authors and presents a range of favorability which will be present in the questionnaire. During the process of matrix design, six main categories were considered: relationship with the social group, socio economic status, educational level, sharing of a common history, students' language and understanding of the world. Statements to match each category were finally written. Appendix C shows the matrix design along with the categories and the favorability levels.

A set of nineteen items and a sociodemographic information chart were designed in order to know the students' perceptions about their cultural identity. All the items considered the concept of cultural identity as well as the criteria proposed in the matrix explained above. The questionnaire was designed in Spanish taking into account the students' level of understanding in English and to guarantee the reliability of the collected information. Appendix D shows the questionnaire administered to the sample.

3.3.2 Research Journal. Dörnyei states that journals are systematic written documents as diaries followed especially by researchers in order to reflect on, analyze their investigation and make decisions for the future of the projects. In this regard, the next data collection instrument used in this research process is the teacher diary kept every day to register her practice and details such as the date the lesson was developed, the topic, the research questions and the specific learning objectives worked in the lesson.

Furthermore, there are blanks to complete with observation notes, that is, a description of class events, language notes related to what is studied, and methodological notes about how lessons are carried out. This format is developed

taking into account the guidelines given by Silverman , cited by Dörnyei and it is found on appendix E.

3.3.3 Focus Group. A focus group was designed to be administered at the end of the pedagogical intervention to know the impact the research had on the sample and to search for information about the second research question: how do high school students strengthen their cultural identity by writing chronicles about their family history in the English class? This data collection instrument is designed to complement the data gathered from the research journal because as it is expressed by Cohen et al, it provides students with the comfort of a small group of people to share and the confidence to generate a rich discussion without being inhibited⁴⁴. The focus group protocol as well as the divisions and questions can be found in appendix F.

3.4 ETHICAL ISSUES

In the research context, it is fundamental to ensure the respect, consent, confidentiality and anonymity, among other key ethical issues, of the research sample. Steane highlights the importance of keeping people informed about the study being developed, its methods, the use of the data collected and the diffusion of the findings⁴⁵. That is, each member of the sample needs to consent the participation in the research project and know how the information provided is going to be used in terms of analysis, findings and dissemination.

For the development of this study, the potential research sample students were informed and they agreed to participate. However, as they were school students under 18, their parents' agreement was legally necessary. Thus, a consent form,

⁴⁴ COHEN Louis, MANION Lawrence. & MORRISON Keith. Research Methods In Education. London; Routledge. .2007.

⁴⁵ STEANE, Peter, Ethical Issues in Research, Surviving your Thesis, London, Routledge, 2004, p.63

including all the information mentioned above, was designed and socialized with the parents, who signed it. Appendix A shows the format in which parents authorized the participation of the students in the study and they are also informed about its purpose and later use of the data collected.

In order to guarantee the students' confidentiality and anonymity during the data analysis and specifically in the writing of findings, the information gathered from the questionnaire and focus group was only managed by the researcher. Then, the research sample was categorized and a code was assigned to each participant; it makes possible to use some direct quotes or opinions made by the students to support the emerging categories and the findings without exposing the names of the person who expressed the ideas.

4. PEDAGOGICAL INTERVENTION

4.1 CURRICULUM DESIGN

Curriculum cannot be understood as the fixed amount of activities prescribed by a group of experts, followed blindly by teachers and passed to students without their participation or opinion. In a Community Based Approach the curriculum should be a flexible social process in which all the involved parts can have a voice. This is supported by Sharkey & Clavijo who argue that students are not excluded of the curriculum design, they become co-investigators⁴⁶ and for that reason all the activities and contents must be negotiated and they have to reflect knowledge of the community where participants, in this case, students and teachers live.

From an inquiry perspective, Short and Burke state that even when curriculum is social and thus collaborative, it should be centered on learning rather than on teachers or students in order to avoid oversimplification and bias⁴⁷ because it is all about students learning, about making connections between information gathered through inquiry and their own culture and identity, using language as a tool to communicate their new understandings.

⁴⁶ SHARKEY, Judy, & Clavijo, Amparo, Promoting the Value of Local Knowledge in ESL/EFL Teacher Education through Community-Based Field Assignments. In Medrado, B. and Carla Reichmann (Eds.). *Projetos e Praticas na Formacao de Professors de Lingua Inglesa*. Paraiba: Brasil. Editora Universitaria UFPB, 2013

⁴⁷ SHORT, Kathy & Burke, Carolyn, *Creating Curriculum: Teachers and Students as Community Learners*. Portsmouth, NH, Heinemann 1991, p, 55

4.2 INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

The instructional design understood as the action plan of the research project has been intended taking into account the objectives and the two research questions posted: 1) what are the perceptions students have about their cultural identity? And 2) how do high school students strengthen their cultural identity by writing chronicles in the English class, about their family history? In the following lines, a detailed description of the pedagogical approach used in the designing of activities is presented.

First of all, as it has been previously presented, this research project is guided by the action research principles because it emerges from the reflection on the teaching learning action and demands planning and use of strategies to transform reality. This project goes beyond the classroom activities and involves the community outside school in order to promote the use of cultural aspects, history, traditions and systems of values as tools in the educational process. To this regard, Kempis and McTaggart state that action research implies a commitment to work in parallel with language, self-reflection of practice, organization, social analysis and action to improve the way things are regularly done⁴⁸.

Bearing all this in mind, the Community Based Approach was an appropriate framework to plan the instructional design since it involved the students' learning process and promoted an interaction with the context. That is, the principles of this approach let the researcher create a link between the subject, in this case English, and the local culture students are involved in. This connection is necessary especially in an era of globalization and homogenization when dominant cultures spread by mass media become trendy among young people.

⁴⁸ KEMMIS, Sthepen, & McTaggart, Robin, Communicative Action and the Public Sphere, In Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds). Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry. Sage: California 2008

Nowadays, in all living spheres but especially in education, it is important that students know and are related with their own culture and traditions since globalization is present everywhere and foreign cultures are catching the attention of people who tend to forget or let aside the proper cultural identity on favor of traditions and values from outside. To this regard, Hassid and Sortie argue that it is impossible to deny the influence and shifts globalization get in cultures⁴⁹ but it is also pointed out how a carefully developed work can avoid standardization or convergence towards a world cultural model which does not consider the particular features of local cultures.

This work can be done by implementing community based pedagogies (CBP) that include activities in which students interact inside and outside the classroom taking advantage of their own culture richness, as a useful tool in the language curriculum. “Community Based Approach is about students having a voice in their own education”⁵⁰

The above mentioned principle, stated by Berg guides in a general overview the design of this research project since from activities and strategies proposed, students can take an active role on their own language learning and they become an opportunity for them to get involved in the knowledge and continuous construction of their history and traditions. That is to say, knowledge is not constricted in abstract textbooks which do not consider those learners’ experiences that are recognized and valued in the community⁵¹. Now information is taken from the students’ context and after a process of inquiry facts and experiences become useful in the understanding of reality within the communities.

⁴⁹ HASSI, Abderraham, & Storti, Giovanna, Globalization and Culture: The Three H Scenarios. 2012

⁵⁰ BERG, Amy., Blank, M., & Mellaville, A. Community Based Learning. Engaging Students for Success and Citizenship. Coalition for Community Schools. Washington, DC. 2006.

⁵¹ JOHNSON, Karen, The Sociocultural Turn and its challenges for Second Language Teacher Education. *Tesol Quarterly*, 40 (1), 2006, p. 247.

In a similar way, when learning about their social group, individuals can have access to the community needs and interests and it gives them the opportunity of contributing in the decision making process because they are informed and involved. In other words, Community Based Approach in the intervention allows a place based process where the learners connect the language learning with the unique history, environment and culture of their particular community.

Although some people could regard Community Based Approach as prioritizing community knowledge to the expense of language, that is not the case because as it was exposed by Morgan cited by Pennycook, this new view of learning organizes language around the experiences lived by the students to create a meaningful sense of language and a more profound understanding of the community surrounding the learners⁵². A specific example is the way the students feel motivated to participate in class when they are discussing about their family history, traditions or values, and it happens because they feel confident talking about what they know, even if they are doing it in English and their level in the language is not too high.

Moreover, Community Based Approach is a great opportunity for teachers to leave their comfort zone of already done or scripted curriculum which limits them and students and does not foster an autonomous learning process to propose innovative teaching and learning experiences. Teachers have to develop curricular practices and pedagogies relevant to the local knowledge⁵³ that is, the imposed curriculum can devaluate the cultural, linguistic and sociopolitical knowledge. Given the centrality of this issue, the didactic sequence used in the pedagogical intervention and which takes into account all the already mentioned characteristics

⁵² , Alastair, Critical Applied Linguistics. In Davies, A. & Elder, C. (Eds.). The Handbook of Applied Linguistics. Blackwell Publishing. Oxford . 2004

⁵³ SHARKEY, Judy, & Clavijo, Amparo, Promoting the Value of Local Knowledge in ESL/EFL Teacher Education through Community-Based Field Assignments. In Medrado, B. and Carla Reichmann (Eds.). Projetos e Praticas na Formacao de Professores de Lingua Inglesa. Paraiba: Brasil. Editora Universitaria UFPB, 2013

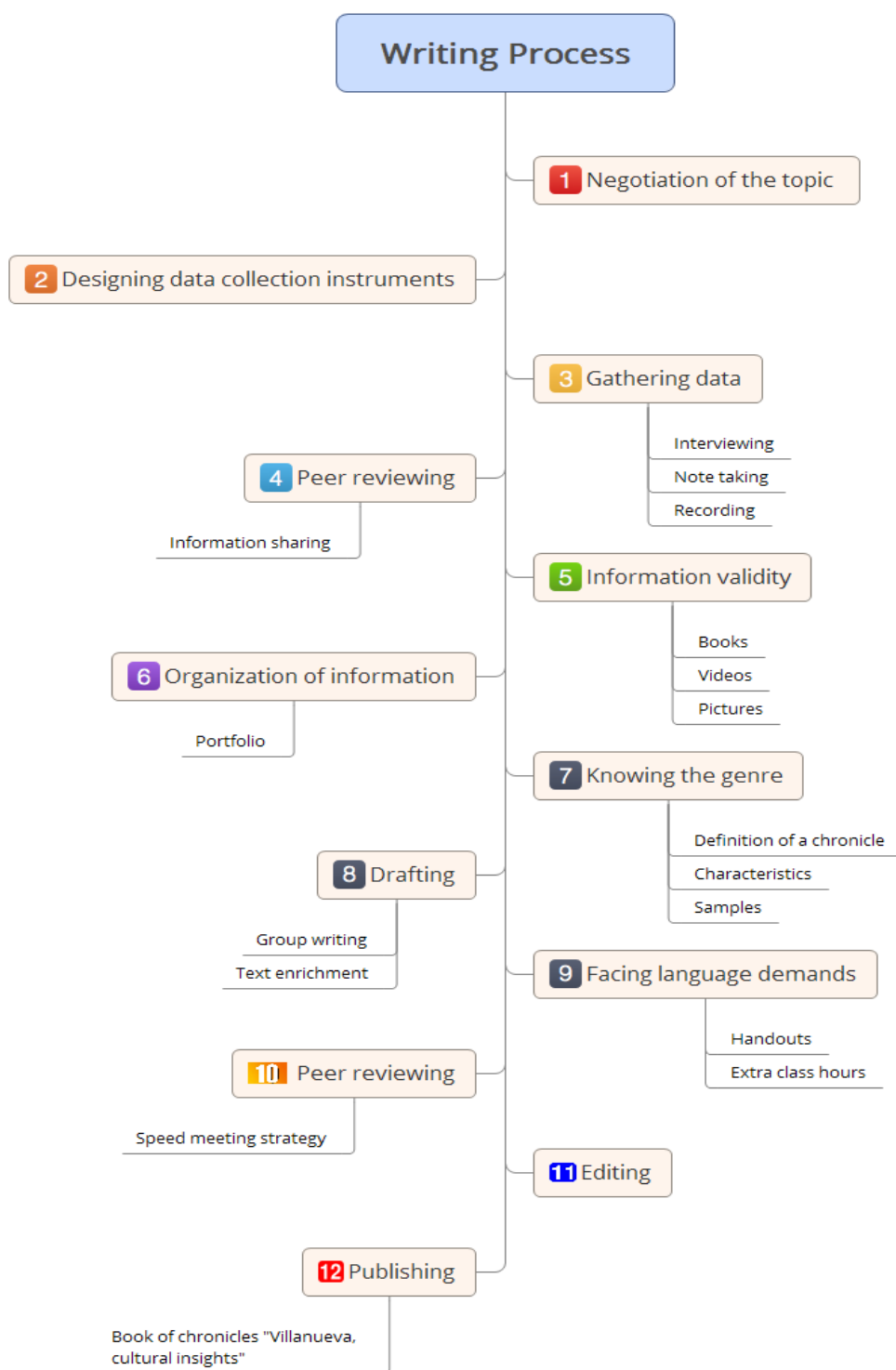
and principles of the Community Based Approach is described below. It shows how instruction facilitated and engaged students' language learning process at the time they fostered the strengthening of their cultural identity by facilitating the interaction with the community.

4.3 DIDACTIC SEQUENCE

A description of how the pedagogical intervention was planned and carried out is shared in order to describe step by step the research process students were involved in, and how they were in constant relation with aspects associated to their cultural identity and their community by communicating with their elder relatives, knowing about the history and identifying the main traditions of the town. There is also a description of how they faced the writing process of history events in a language different from their mother tongue, the strategies the teacher as mediator used to guide the process and the way the teaching process was confronted. The lesson plans supporting the didactic sequence can be seen in appendix G.

To begin, the stages followed to develop the intervention were mainly: negotiation of the topics, designing data collection instruments, gathering data, information sharing, information validity, organization of information, getting to know the writing genre , drafting, facing language demands, peer reviewing, editing and publishing. Figure 1 shows these stages in a graphic way.

Figura 1. Didactic Sequence



4.3.1 Negotiation of the Topic. For this first step students had a free talk and they shared with their classmates the stories told by their grandparents or relatives in family meetings and which were related to the foundation and first years of Villanueva as an independent municipality. This activity provided students with a voice to talk about their origins with others and construct together a common community history. After that dialogue, the teacher asked the students to think about the events talked about, which they did not have enough information or they wanted to know more about. A list of several topics arose and they were written by the teacher in the board while they were told by the students.

Once the list was completed, students organized themselves in groups of three and each group chose the topic they were more interested in. It was necessary to negotiate topics because a couple of groups wanted to investigate about the same. The final decision of who were going to write about the topic was taken through dialogue between the members of the groups and considering who could have more information or who might contact more firsthand people to confirm and broaden the existing data.

4.3.2 Designing Data Collection Instruments. After choosing the topic to write about, students designed the data collection instruments to gather the information necessary for the writing process in the next stages. First of all, they wrote some general questions they would like to ask in an interview to be applied to their grandparents or elder people in the town. Then, the questions were read in a whole class activity in order to do a first peer reviewing to improve or complete them. Furthermore, the teacher provided students with some links where they could find information and guidelines about how to write questions for an interview, considering the topic and the interviewee among other aspects.

Once students had reorganized the statements and the interview format taking into account the teacher and classmates' feedback as well as the online strategies, the

Spanish professor, was invited to the class to support the validity of the interview. It is important to clarify that as the instrument was designed for being applied to elder people in the community who do not speak English, it was developed in Spanish. After the expert validity process, the interview was piloted by the students with adult people to know if the language used in the statements was clear for all of them.

4.3.3 Gathering Data. After completing the interview validity process, the students made a list of people they knew as for instance grandparents, relatives, neighbors and who could know more about the topic they were interested in. The next step was to visit these people and ask for the permissions to record or videotape the interview, take some pictures and use the information and names to write a chronicle about the history of the town. That is, each interviewee signed a consent format to students, available in appendix H, authorizing the collection and later use of the data with the pedagogical use described above.

Before applying the instrument and during the class time, students agreed to have specific roles while interviewing in order to ensure the best quality of the information collected. Thus, the first student would be the one who posted the questions; the second would take notes and the last one, would record or videotape the process. In spite of these roles, the students two and three could also mediate in the interview to negotiate meanings when necessary or to do the meeting more comfortable for everyone. During the data gathering, an intergenerational communication occurred, where elders shared their living experiences to young students and they became the spokespeople to make the municipality history and traditions public for those who want to know it but do not know Spanish.

4.3.4 Information Sharing. The fourth stage consisted of a couple of assignments developed by students in the class but also at home due to the time consumed in

their development, the rigor they demanded and the established school hours which were too short. The first activity was developed in groups; students transcribed the information they collected during the interview taking into account the relevant data that could answer the questions posted. These transcriptions helped students discard data which were not related to the topic of the research project and highlight the pertinent information.

The second was a whole class activity where students shared with their classmates the experience they lived during the interview application, how they faced the language differences, what was the interviewees attitudes and feelings during the activity, how they reacted when they were talking about their past stories and of course the relevant information they as interviewers they after doing the transcription process. While a group was sharing, the rest of the class could give feedback, support and broad the data by using the information collected in their own processes. It was possible since, even when they were looking for evidence about different facts, all of them were part of a common history, culture, and systems of values and consequently they were related.

4.3.5 Information Validity. During this stage, students compared the information they collected with other existing resources and then they did a triangulation exercise to validate the data gathered. To begin, students read the books *Villanueva*^{*} and *Villanueva 50 años*^{*} where they found a general overview of the independence process and the first years of the municipality. After reading, students extracted the information related to their research topic and they paralleled the data with the obtained in the interview. The same process was developed with some you tube videos about the foundation and traditions of the municipality. This practice let the students to write on confirmed and therefore valid data.

^{*} ARDILA, Isaias Pbro, Villanueva

^{*} GOMEZ, Alonso, Villanueva 50

4.3.6 Organization of Information. As a result of the information validity process in the previous stage, students gathered a lot of relevant data to write the chronicle about the history of their municipality. However, that information was not organized at all in the student mind or in a specific physical file. Bearing all this in mind, students were suggested to use a portfolio where they placed the instrument they had designed, applied and the data they had compiled in order to have access to them when it was necessary. Students continued using the portfolio during all the research process to write field notes, know their advances, strengthens and to identify the things they had to improve in the writing process. Portfolios let the researchers have both evidence and feedback of what they have achieved⁵⁴

4.3.7 Knowing the Genre. Even though students had collected enough information to start writing, it was difficult to develop this process in a proper way if they were not aware of the main characteristics of writing chronicles as a genre. Hence, during this stage students, with the researcher and the help of the Spanish teacher were more informed about the principles to write a historic chronicle. First of all, they checked their Spanish notebooks where they had recently studied about chronicles and they extracted the main characteristics of it as well as the writing style and the tenses commonly used during the composition. After that, the teacher presented some samples of chronicles in English in which students could identify the parts, tenses and characteristics they had studied before. The samples were added to the portfolio so that they were available as guides in the coming writing process.

4.3.8 Group Writing. An overall idea of the work in this stage could be summarized as the writing of the chronicle. However, it was not an easy or fast process; actually it took most part of the research project, nine weeks to be exact. First, students re organized the information they had in a general graphic organizer

⁵⁴ ERIDAFITHRI, Muchtar, The Application of Portfolios to Assess Progress in Writing of EFL Students at Secondary Schools in Banda Aceh. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 2015 2(1),p.12

presented by the teacher and used to know how they were going to distribute the data over the text avoiding repetition or absence of relevant facts. It was an exercise students did in their work groups with the closer monitoring of the teacher because they as they expressed, they were not familiar with this kind of formats in other subjects.

After completing the general graphic organizer, students had a new perspective of the gathered information and the way it could be used to write the chronicle. The following step was to start writing paragraphs, for that purpose different organizers were analyzed by the researcher and the sandwich chart was finally chosen because of its appealing and easy to understand design. The chart was presented to the students and its use was carefully explained; the need for purposeful ideas as a clear topic sentence, detail and the concluding sentences was especially highlighted. Once more, students stated they had never used these kinds of organizers before in their learning process and for that reason they were a little confused. Fortunately, along the project students were more comfortable with their use and they found they could be very useful in this and other contexts.

4.3.9 Facing Language Demands. After the introduction and explanation of the sandwich chart, students started to write paragraphs by using the gathered information. Nevertheless, while they were writing they faced the issue that they did not know or did not remember how to use some grammar tenses or rules and as a consequence of this situation they felt frustrated and anxious. To counteract these feelings, the teacher designed a set of mini lessons which were developed at the beginning of each class to facilitate the students writing process. The topics for the mini lessons were selected taking into account the students' questions during the classes and the writing style of the genre.

While developing the mini lessons it was necessary to recycle learning. That is, explain again some topics studied in previous school years, which had not been

interiorized by students maybe because of the time devoted to their comprehension and practice or maybe because the activities proposed in the class were not meaningful enough to be kept in the long term memory. Further research about this learning problem could be addressed in new research projects.

Along with the mini lessons some handouts were also developed to give the students the opportunity to have clear samples they could use to guide their own writing process. The topics worked were mainly related to: simple past, present perfect, past perfect, prepositions of time, linking words, passive voice, direct speech and punctuation marks. All the handouts were organized in the portfolio so that students had access to them anytime they needed.

4.3.10 Peer Reviewing. This stage consisted in a speed meeting strategy applied when students finished the writing of paragraphs and they had organized a first draft of the chronicle. First of all, students shared with the other groups their experiences during the writing process and they presented their chronicle. Each group listened to their classmates, read the composition and finally they gave their own opinion about it. When the activity ended, each group had a collection of many different points of view which needed to be analyzed and considered in order to enrich the final product. After the meeting strategy, students started the edition process and they made decisions to improve their papers taking into account the feedback given by their classmates and the teacher suggestions along the process.

4.3.11 Publishing. The last stage was publishing the chronicles, it happened once students finished the editing process, when after reading and re reading they felt they had included all the relevant information to tell a part of the history of their municipality. The final products of each group were compiled into a book with the name of: Villanueva, Cultural Insights. Appendix I shows a couple of chronicles written by students.

Throughout the research process described above, the researcher took class field notes in a journal to monitor the progress of students, the achievement of the activities proposed in the lesson plans, and to make decisions in the teaching learning process. This journal became an important source of data and along with transcriptions of the focus group applied to students served to the purpose to know how high school students strengthen their cultural identity from the EFL classroom.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

The previous chapters described the theoretical, pedagogical and methodological sources aimed at strengthening cultural identity in the high school students chosen as a sample for this project. This chapter presents how the data were collected and the categories emerged during the analysis process. It also describes how these categories can help answer the research questions.

5.1. DATA MANAGEMENT

The data collected throughout the research process came first from a questionnaire applied to students to know the perceptions they had about their cultural identity. To write the items of the questionnaire, a matrix was designed considering the concept of cultural identity which was broken down into categories such as relationship with the social group, socio economic status, educational level, sharing of a common history, students' language and understanding of the world. The questionnaire items were completed with a socio demographic chart and they were written in Spanish in order to ensure the students complete understanding. As the information collected from this instrument was in Spanish, their use for later analysis was a translation from its original version.

Then, data were collected during the intervention in the classroom through a journal followed by the researcher and which can be seen in appendix J. In this journal it was possible to write, among other things, field notes about the everyday work and the decisions made by the teacher considering the students' strengths and weaknesses. Finally, and at the end of the intervention, a focus group was applied in order to know the students' perceptions about their language process

and cultural identity after the research project. Transcriptions of this focus group are available in appendix K.

5.2. DATA ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK

Taking into account that data are multilayered and open to a variety of interpretations which make their analysis possible from many different perspectives depending on the research purposes, the techniques used for the data analysis were mainly tabulation and interpretation of data, open, axial and selective coding. Tabulation of data lets the researcher have an overview of the sample intentions and fits the purpose of data reduction; it also allows the reader to observe similarities and differences between respondents in a more practical and objective way⁵⁵. Even though, tabulating data is often related to quantitative analysis, it could be directed in a qualitative way if the researcher besides organizing the respondents answers in a table, makes inferences and interpretations of the data, this is what Dörnyei states as *qualitizing data*.

The tabulation of information in the data analysis occurred when the researcher used the answers given by the respondents in the questionnaire applied as well as the categories arisen after reading the definition of cultural identity given by Norton, Chang and Mitchel et al in order to know the perceptions students have about their own cultural identity. The information presented in tables let the researcher note the aspects in which students feel more or less engaged with their community and the way they see and understand the town dynamics. Appendix L shows the data gathered from the questionnaire.

⁵⁵ COHEN Louis, MANION Lawrence. & MORRISON Keith. *Research Methods In Education*. London; Routledge. .2007.

The first step in coding was open coding, it happened when the researcher read and re read the information collected in the research journal and the focus group transcriptions to identify common aspects or codes as for instance, motivation, responsibility, commitment, anxiety, eagerness and then relate them to a specific category, in this case, the students' attitudes and feelings. While the codes were emerging, they were highlighted with different colors to facilitate their later association with broader categories. After this process, the first categories directed to answer the research questions were constructed.

After doing the open coding where categories emerged from the data collected, the next step was to analyze at a more profound level how these categories could be interrelated. For example, during the analysis of the teacher's field notes in the research journal, some students' attitudes were identified and they were taken into account to form a category, but then when reading the focus group transcriptions, it was possible to list some of the attitudes and feelings students said they faced during the research project.

Thus, it is necessary to recognize the connections between these two categories emerging from the analysis of two different instruments and establish the possible similarities or differences. This process is called by Cohen et al and Dörnyei as axial coding. Finally, and after analyzing the similarities and differences between categories, the core categories are specified and supported by the theory to give an answer to the proposed research questions.

6. FINDINGS

The analysis of the data collected provided the researcher with useful information to answer the two proposed research questions 1) what are the perceptions students have about their cultural identity? And 2) how do high school students strengthen their cultural identity by writing chronicles in the English class, about their family history? The findings after the analysis are expressed in four different categories considering the impact of the study at the students, community, researcher, language and cross curricular level.

6.1 AT THE STUDENTS' LEVEL

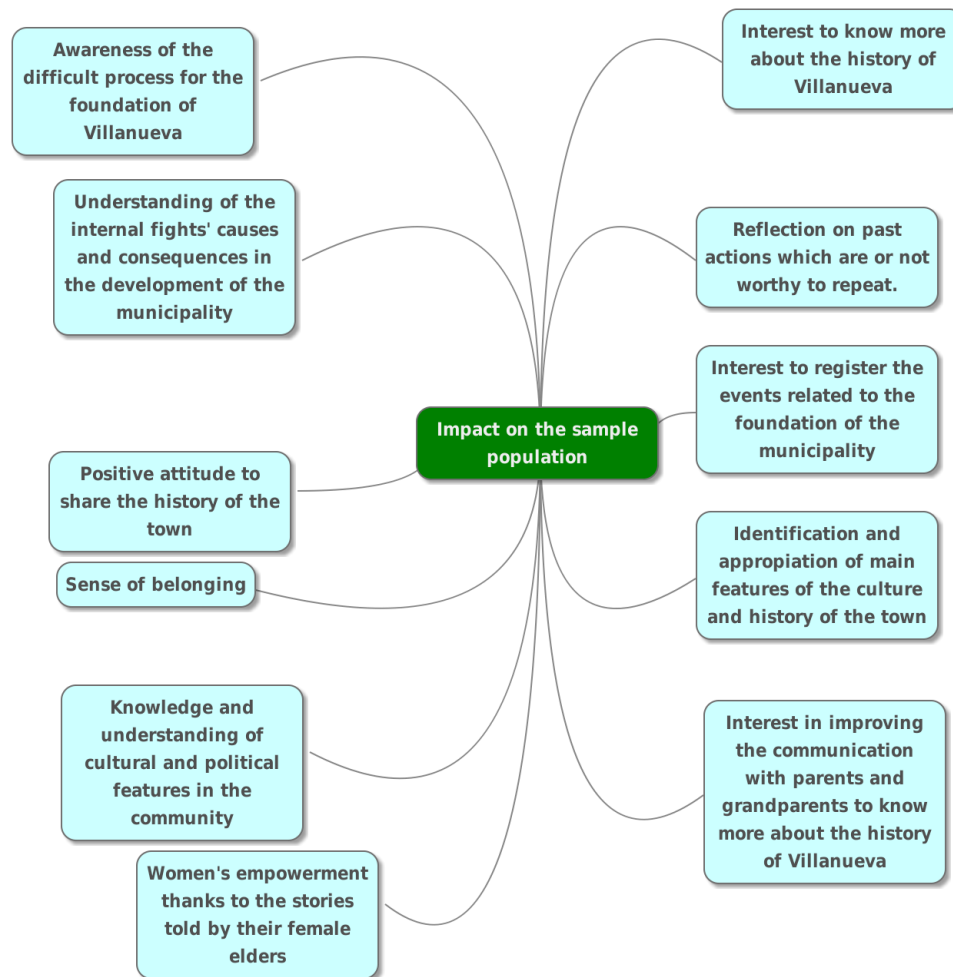
Instruments applied before, during and after the intervention let establish the impact it had in the sample, that is, how participants might change their vision of people in the town and even the way they now conceive themselves as members of the community. After analyzing the data some ideas expressed by students can guide to these findings. First of all, they agreed that after the project they feel they know more about the history of the town and it makes they value more the things they have today because they were not easy to obtain *“Mi visión cambió mucho porque aprendí que hay que valorar más las cosas del pueblo y las personas que han dado mucho para tener el pueblo como está”* (F20R). Talking to the elders also allowed them to have an idea of the causes and consequences of violence and price the importance of peace. As it was expressed by one student *“como Villanueva aún guardo características como la perseverancia, las ganas de salir Adelante y he cambiado las violentas historias de mis antepasados”* (F4U)

Similarly, they stated that when there is more knowledge about culture, history, politics and values of the community they belong to, the interest to continue learning increases “como dice el dicho, no hay peor ciego que el que no quiere ver, siempre tuvimos esas historias y nunca nos habiamos interesado en ellas, ahora yo quiero saber más” (F12U) As well as self-learning, the wish to share this knowledge with other people inside and outside the community, “es importante escribir acerca de la historia de Villanueva para darlo a conocer y que haya registros de la fundación y los hechos importantes que han pasado en el municipio” (F1M)

Finally, an interesting conclusion given by one of the female students was how the project empowered her and helped her understand that women are valuable and able to do whatever they want, because she wrote about the role of women in the foundation and first years of the municipality. “Ahora con más razón veo que las mujeres somos capaces y tenemos iguales derechos para salir adelante” (F10U).

Figure 2 shows graphically how the research project influenced the simple population.

Figura 2. Impact on the sample population



6.2. AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

Living in a community does not guarantee to be a member of it, it is through interaction, communication, active participation that people can understand the way a group of people work, live and are related, and this is the first step to create a sense of belonging and a possible membership. In other words, the belonging to a community requires people's desire to know about its traditions, culture, history and values and the use of this knowledge to help in the decision making and progress of the group, it is known as awareness of cultural identity. To this regard,

Gripaldo states that a consciousness of cultural identity implies to be proud and feel identified with aspects of a specific culture, that is, the positive and lasting linkage to a group⁵⁶.

The analysis of data directed to know what were the students' perceptions about their cultural identity before the intervention revealed how even though most of them felt identified as Villanuevas, they did not always participate in the activities organized to promote the integration and communication between the inhabitants in the town and for that reason they just know important facts as history superficially. That is, the actual involvement in the community or as Norton called, the belonging to the social group⁵⁷, had not been considered by them as a significant factor in their membership as Villanuevas.

On the other hand, after the intervention and making a triangulation of information the findings revealed that this research study impacted the classroom but also the community in three different levels: the way the value systems are conceived, the appreciation of the characteristics of the town and the importance of the intergenerational communication.

6.2.1 Value Systems. Cultural identity is related to those beliefs and values a person feels identified with and which are common characteristics of the community they belong to. Throughout the research process students had a direct contact with people's beliefs and systems of values since they piloted data collection instruments, applied interviews, confronted data, asked for pictures, and even in the classroom when they were writing the chronicle they were discovering those values people in Villanueva have and which are part of the town's own identity. Once analyzed the data collected after the intervention, it was possible to

⁵⁶ GRIPALDO, Rolando, History and Cultural Identity: The Philippine case. In Hogan, J. (Ed), History and Cultural Identity, Retrieving the past, Shaping the future. Washington: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2011

⁵⁷ NORTON, op. cit, p. 23

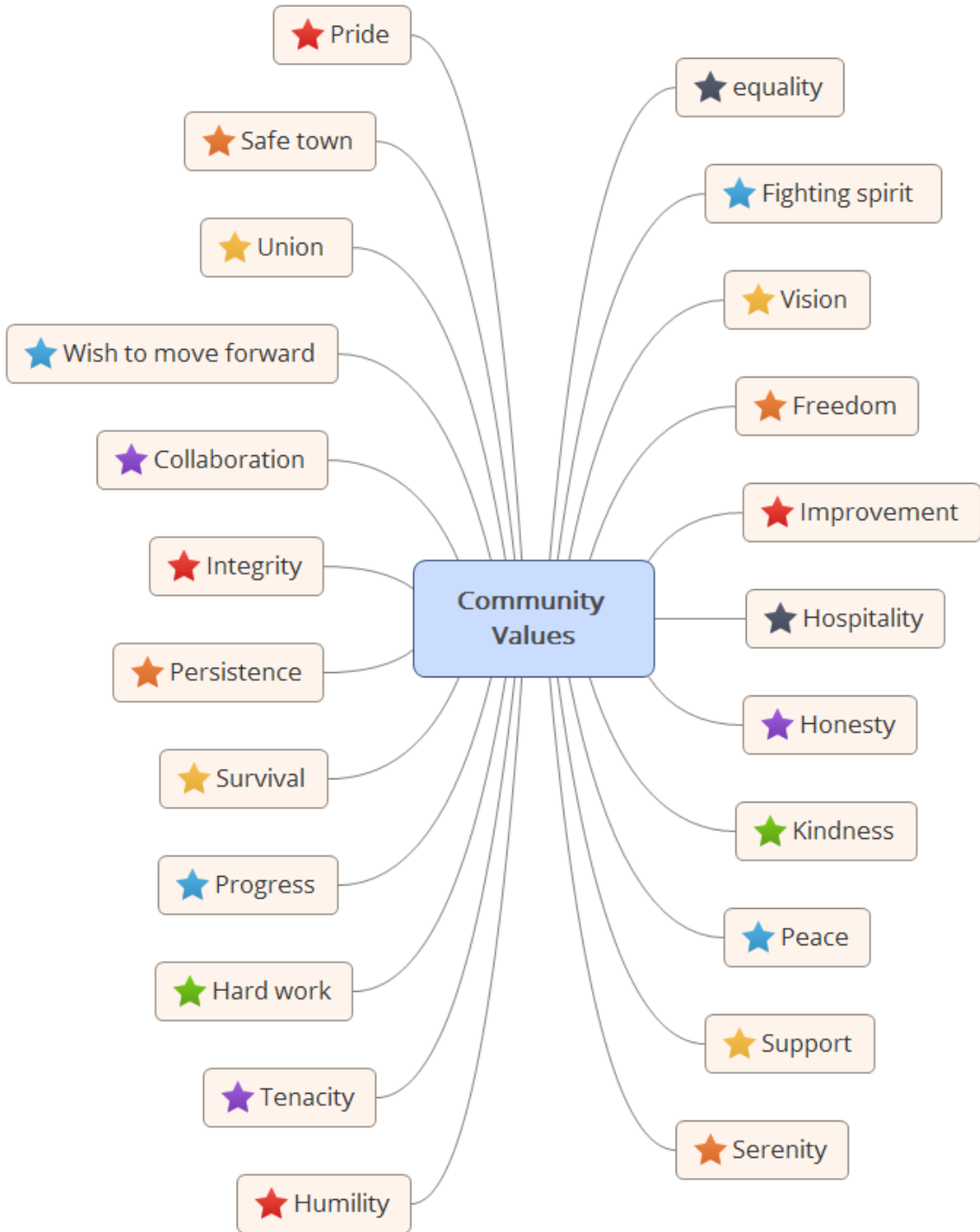
identify the students new vision of their culture, they talked confidently about those values existing in Villanuevas and how they as part of the community also felt identified with and want to promote them.

The main values students identified in Villanuevas were: the feelings of pride about their town and people, the hard work and desire of improving every day, the union and collaboration among people, which started with the decision of founding the town and continues in the looking for a better quality of life. Other values highlighted by students were the disposition to forgive to live in peace after so many years of violence, the persistence to achieve their goals, the humility to accept when they are wrong, for example in the struggles for politic differences and, the sense of survival which moves the progress of the town.

Bearing all these values in mind, it is important to observe the way in which students realized little by little and during the research process, that Villanuevas are people with a strong system of values which lets them to form a robust community and how even though the troubles they have faced, there is always the sense of belonging and the wish to go ahead. As one of them expressed in the focus group “Ahora veo que la gente que está bien hoy, sufrió mucho en el pasado y a pesar de eso salieron adelante” (F17U).

Figure 3 presents graphically the values identified by students in their community through the research process.

Figura 3. System of Values



6.2.2. Knowing the Town. Geographical area as well as political structures and economic position have an effect on people history and culture Chang⁵⁸. The identifying of the main characteristics of the town in relation to its location, the way people are organized in smaller groups depending on personal preferences, social status as well as the language used and more specific data as typical food and handicraft production, were aspects students could be aware of after the intervention and which provide them with tools to understand who they are and what is the role they play in their community

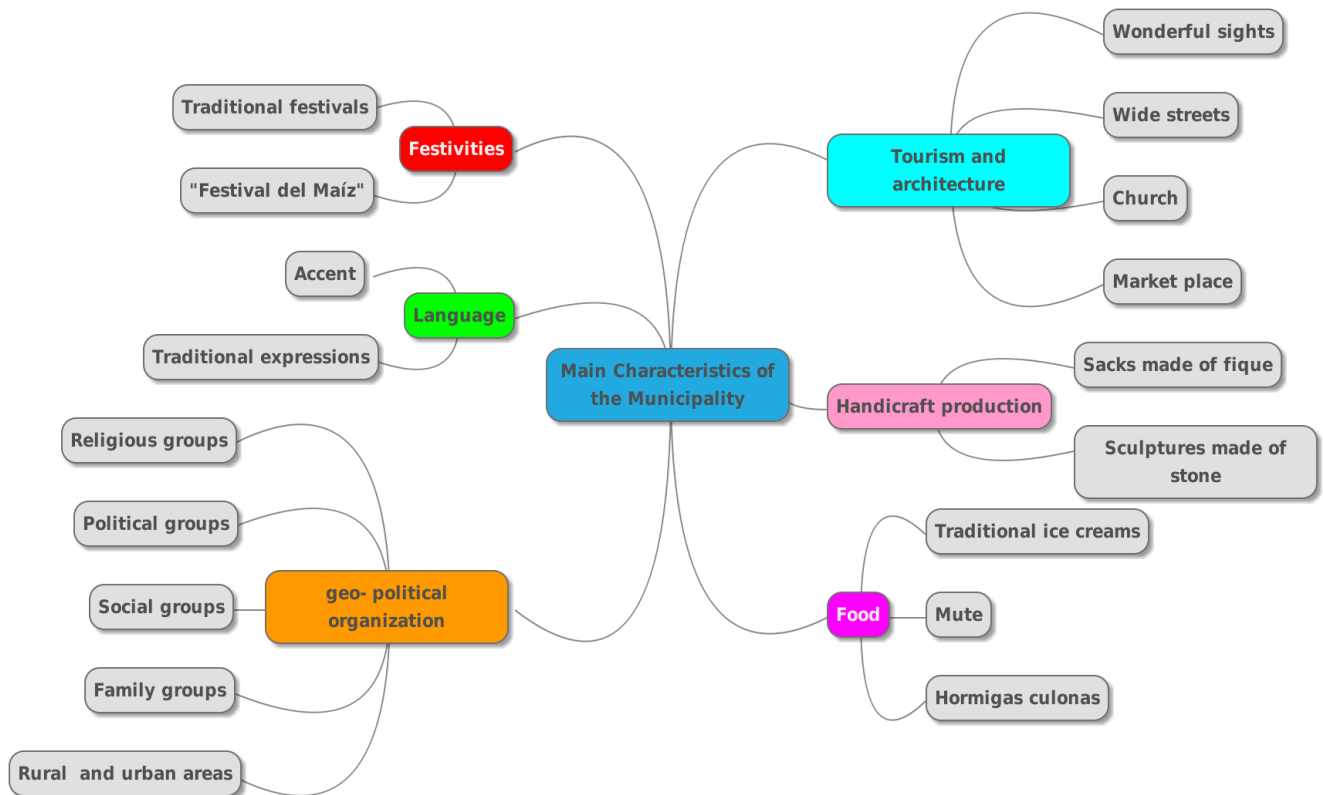
Particularly, one of the changes observed in the students was the identification, appropriation and reinforcement of the physical characteristics of the town which make it unique and beautiful for instance the location of the town in relation to others as Barichara, Curití, San Gil and Mogotes* specially when considering the foundation, trading, tourism or economic production as sacks of fique fibers. The particular language and accent used by people, the organization of the inhabitants according to factors as family, politics, religion among others; the traditional food and the architecture. All these characteristics helped students to know the aspects which mainly describe their municipality and that can be used to talk to others about the singularities of the town.

Figure 4 shows the characteristics of the town students identified or reinforced during the research project.

⁵⁸ CHANG, Bowon. The power of geographical boundaries: Cultural, political, and economic border effects in a unitary nation. 2010 p. 14

* Municipalities in the Guanentina province, Department of Santander

Figura 4. Characteristics of the town



6.2.3 Intergenerational Communication. One of the main impacts observed during the development of the research study was the improvement of real intergenerational communication because as was stated in the problematic situation, nowadays young people are more interested in knowing about trend topics, and stories told by the elders are led aside. However, this research project was the opportunity to foster and strengthen the communication between families around a common topic: the history of the town, the independence process, the struggle and difficult times in the very first years of the municipalities and the collaborative work that motivated the progress of the town.

This intergenerational dialogue creates a sense of union among the people in the town because young learners feel they can be part of the history by telling others

what their parents and grandparents had to face to found the municipality and at the same time elders in the community feel they are heard, and their life events have the importance they deserve.

6.3 IMPACT OF THE STUDY ON THE RESEARCHER

Certainly, after doing this research project, the impact cannot only be described in terms of the sample but the influence it has in the researcher needs to be considered too. That is, during the process, the way the teacher conceives and carries out the teaching process can be challenged and subject to changes because of the continuous reflection on the action, planning the activities, directing and monitoring them, facing the students' language demands and making decisions. The pedagogical paradigms taken for granted and maybe legitimized by the teacher are confronted with new perspectives which take the researcher to reflect again, analyze and necessarily apply new strategies to improve the teaching and language process.

Table 1 shows a parallel between the practices applied by the teacher in the English class before the pedagogical intervention and the way they have been modified towards more active actions which foster students' processes of autonomy and metacognition.

Tabla 1. Reflective teaching process

	Before the Pedagogical Intervention	After the Pedagogical Intervention
Teacher and Students Time Investment	<p>Class hours assigned by the institution</p> <p>A little or no time dedicated by students at home to complete exercises in the workbook.</p>	<p>Class hours carefully scheduled to guarantee all the students participation. Extra class meetings to work on in-class worked topics.</p> <p>More effective home work hours devoted by students to develop meaningful activities.</p>

	Before the Pedagogical Intervention	After the Pedagogical Intervention
Lesson Planning	Information shared to students comes from a workbook and it is not meaningful to them.	Information comes from the students' context, so it is easy for students to internalize and transform it into knowledge. Interviews, videos, books, pictures, handouts, use of samples for modeling purposes.
Class Objectives	To monitor and improve the linguistic aspect.	To improve the language level. To develop different competencies as: working in group, doing research, knowing their culture, improving the communication with their elders, becoming better citizens, valuing their traditions.
Feedback	Expressed in grades, without a direct intervention of students.	There is an ongoing feedback, students know what are their strengths and weaknesses and they work to improve the former and overtake the latter ones. There is a constant support to the students learning process given by the teacher and classmates.
Prior Knowledge	It is taken for granted that students know, remember and use the grammar topics taught in previous school years.	There is a self-questioning made by the teacher, which gives the chance of revising again topics with the students, recycling past learning.
Use of school resources	The smart board is used to follow the grammar offline program installed.	The smartboard is used to present information, make mind maps. School laptops are used to complete students' tasks.
Assessment	Quizzes during the process and a final test at the end of each term.	Ongoing assessment process including feedback of activities as: writing interviews, combining sentences, paragraph writing.
Product	Final test	A book of chronicles
Students attitudes	Lack of motivation, interest and commitment with their learning process.	Motivation, responsibility, commitment, active participation.
Students role	Passive learners. They receive the information and complete exercises proposed in the book.	Active learners. There is cognitive engagement, students do research, ask questions, receive but also provide feedback.
Students' cognitive skills	Lower order thinking	Higher order thinking (metacognition)

6.4 IMPACT ON THE STUDENTS' L2 COMPETENCE

Even though the research questions posted were directed to know the students' perceptions of their cultural identity and how students could strengthen it by writing chronicles in English class, about their family history; the class work, activities proposed and strategies developed also made possible to establish the impact the research process had on the students' language skills, especially in writing.

After the analysis of the teacher's field notes and the answers given by the students in the focus group, the main support the project gave to language was on the one hand by recycling some grammar topics studied in previous school years and which had not been learned by students, for instance the use of simple past, regular and irregular verbs, dates and prepositions. On the other hand, new grammar tenses were studied during the process since they were used to write the chronicle; some of them were present and past perfect, passive voice, direct speech, the use of linking words and finally punctuation marks.

Students' language and writing skills were influenced in a positive way. Throughout the research project, students had the opportunity to design and apply data collection instruments and it helped them practice brainstorming to generate ideas, asking questions taking into account the interviewee and the style of the instrument, note taking to get relevant information from oral sources in real time, and transcription of information to extract meaningful data to answer the questions posted before. All these techniques were useful in their high school life in English but also in the rest of the subjects. They also constitute an important aid in the future university and professional life they are going to start.

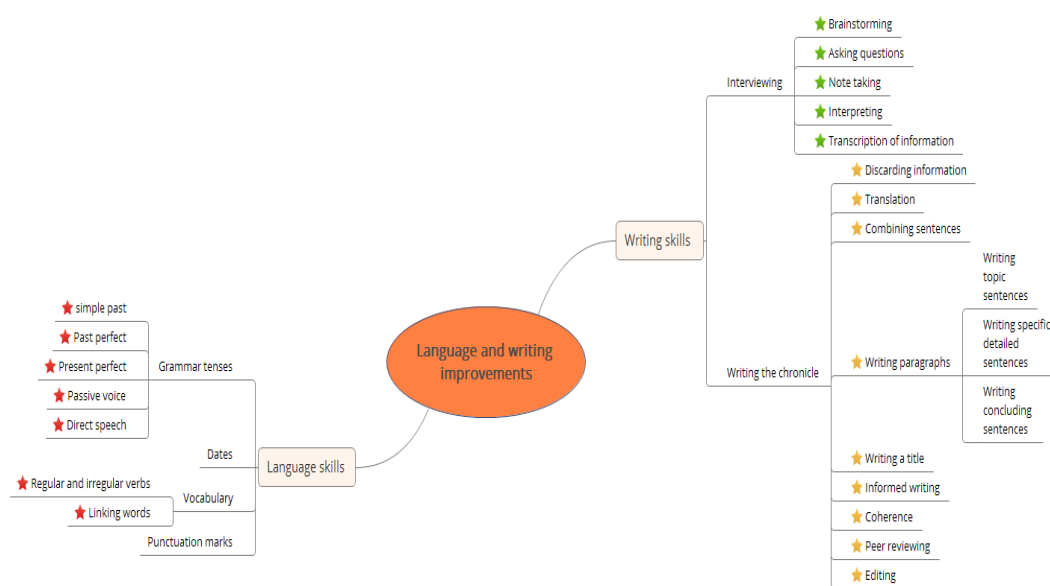
Equally important was the students' writing process of the chronicle itself, they had to organize the information collected in graphics which let them have a more specific idea of how to use it in order to maintain coherence and cohesion. Once

organized the general information, students started to write paragraphs and they had to discard information, translate and combine sentences, it was hard because these exercises were not usually developed in other subjects, as expressed by students. Along with the writing of paragraphs learners could also practice how to write topic, detail and concluding sentences as well as how to write a title to catch the reader's attention and keep close to the topic of the chronicle.

In the same way, through the writing process students practiced peer reviewing activities and how to take notes from their classmates and teacher's comments to improve their chronicle composition. Finally, they had to use the field notes to edit the papers taking into account the writing style of the genre. As has been noted, this research presented a lot of opportunities for students to improve their language and writing skills but it is with constant work it could be achieved. That is, students need to keep working on these kinds of activities from English but from other classes too.

Figure 5 shows the students' progress in terms of language and writing skills.

Figura 5. Language and writing improvements



6.5 CROSS CURRICULAR IMPACT

Meaningful classroom activities are those who even though are linked to a definite subject and are developed with specific purposes, became in tools students can use in other disciplines and even beyond the boundaries of the classroom. An example of this are the learning strategies used during the development of this research project in the English class and the way they can enrich the process of other different subjects such as Spanish, social studies and citizenship. First of all, throughout the communication with grandparents and members of the community, students knew more about their history and traditions and they could analyze the present of the town considering the facts lived in the last decades and related to the foundation of the municipality. This knowledge let them understand social, politic and economic issues which can be debated in social studies classes for further comprehension.

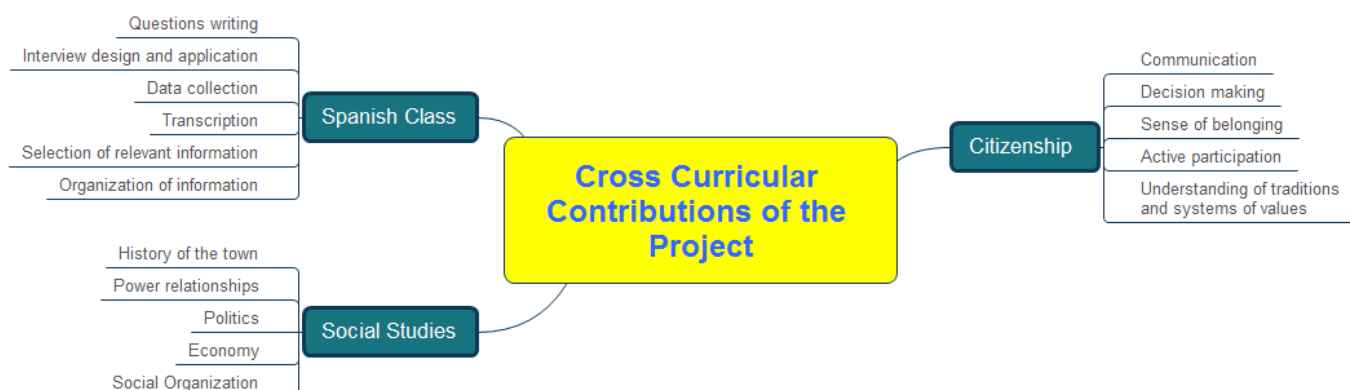
In a similar manner, citizenship competencies can be positively impacted with this research project since communication between students and their families has been fostered as well as the students' interest in history and values of their community. Besides, throughout the research process students could develop some of the standards proposed by the Ministry of Education in the guidelines 6, *Estándares Básicos de Competencias Ciudadanas. Formar para la Ciudadanía ¡sí es possible!* for instance:

“Reconozco que pertenezco a diversos grupos como familia, colegio, barrio, región, país, etc., y entiendo que eso hace parte de mi identidad. Analizo críticamente y debato con argumentos y evidencias sobre hechos ocurridos a nivel local, nacional y mundial, y comprendo las consecuencias que estos pueden tener sobre mi propia vida. Identifico y supero emociones como el

resentimiento y el odio, para poder perdonar y reconciliarme con quienes he tenido conflictos”⁵⁹

With regard to the Spanish class and the way it could have been influenced by the research project, it is possible to start highlighting the design and application of the interview made by students to gather data from the elder citizens of the town. During this stage, students practiced how to ask written questions considering the interviewee, how to pilot an instrument and how to negotiate meaning to get relevant information. They also had the opportunity of extracting information and discarding data that were not pertinent for their purposes. Finally, the graphic organizers students used when writing the chronicle can fit perfectly when writing essays, stories, short articles in Spanish class and in any other subject. Figure 6 shows in a graphic way the inter disciplinary benefits of the project.

Figura 6. Inter-disciplinary contributions



After the analysis of data and with the findings in these four main directions it can be seen how cultural identity can be fostered from the classroom and how these

⁵⁹ MINISTERIO DE EDUCACIÓN NACIONAL, Estándares Básicos de Competencias Ciudadanas. Formar para la Ciudadanía ¡Sí es Posible!. Colombia: IPSA, 2004 p. 21,22,25

kind of activities as the re writing of family history impacts students' lives in a positive way since they are more aware of who they are in their community, the richness of their culture and the necessity of exploring more into the past to know and understand many of the current events and to take future informed decisions in favor of the community.

The impact on the researcher is also important to be considered since it implies the change of a teaching paradigm, that is, moving from traditional schemes to more didactic and appealing ways to teach which involve the students' context and give the teacher new perspectives. It is also the evidence that even though a project is developed in a specific class, it can influence and be influenced by other subjects and it enriches the whole teaching learning process.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Having analyzed the data gathered during the pedagogical intervention and taking into consideration the research questions posted at the beginning of the study 1) what are the perceptions students have about their cultural identity? And 2) how do high school students strengthen their cultural identity by writing chronicles in the English class, about their family history? Some conclusions directed to each one of them can be detailed.

In response to the first question about the students' perceptions of their cultural identity it is possible to see that at the beginning of the research project there were ups and downs. On the one hand, students were optimistic in aspects as language, common history and the fact that educational level did not affect people's participation in the group; that was a favorable vision of cultural identity. However, on the other hand there were aspects as the low participation in activities organized and the role played by socio economic status in the decision making which made students did not feel attached or complete members of the community.

Regarding the second research question how do high school students strengthen their cultural identity by writing chronicles in the English class, about their family history? It is possible to make some important conclusions based on the core categories identified and the findings after the data analysis. First, students' attitudes and feelings towards their cultural identity moved from partially favorable as expressed in the questionnaire's answers to more positive during and after the research process.

That is, students felt more interested and motivated to know about their history thanks to the interviews and the stories told by the senior people. They understood

all the difficult times their relatives faced to found the town and the commitment they as the current generation have to maintain alive the history for their children and also for people who do not know about Villanueva. In other words, students recognized their membership into the group and their role as citizens in the ongoing history making process.

Although the students' identity was impacted with the research project as it was described above, their learning process was also influenced since throughout the process learners were in constant use of the English language to write the chronicles about their family history. The results are described in two directions, first the improvement in the language itself and second the reinforcement of the writing skill. In the former, students recycled learning and they could apply grammar tenses studied in previous school years while they were learning new topics and vocabulary related to the style of the genre. Talking about the writing skill, students improved the way they organize information, do translations, take notes, write paragraphs and edit texts. All this writing process might be used by students in future English compositions but also in written texts proposed in different subjects and even outside school.

Referring to the contributions this research project does to other subjects, they are mainly linked to citizenship, social studies and Spanish class. First, in relation to citizenship, the development of this project let students be in contact with their community, improve the communication with their elders and understand historic processes of violence which need to be stopped to move to peaceful environments. Second, knowing about a town's history is knowing about their traditions, socio economic and politic organization; all this information can be used in the social studies class to understand the way the municipality emerged and how decisions in the past continue affecting present events, for example the organization mainly in families or the conflicts some people still have with their

neighbors in other towns. Debates about these topics could be proposed since now students are informed and they have firsthand data.

Together with citizenship and social studies, Spanish class was directly influenced, since students had to collect information to write the chronicles and they did it in their mother tongue. They designed and applied interviews in Spanish so they practiced how to ask questions, collect data, note taking, transcribe and identify relevant information. Another contribution related to this subject but which can be used in all the school environments is the use of graphic organizers to facilitate the writing process helping students to write cohesive and coherently.

Finally, after stating conclusions about the research impact on students' attitudes, feelings and identity, the improvement in writing and language skills and the contribution to other school subjects, the last point considered is the impact the research project had on the teacher, who during the class work could see the issues students had to face but also their interest and progress little by little. Throughout the intervention, decisions like extra class time, use of handouts, mini lessons, ongoing assessment, peer review, feedback, and qualitative final products as written compositions instead of just final tests were made.

Those decisions represented a change to the traditional teaching paradigm worked in schools and which is often more centered in final standardized products than in meaningful processes. On the other hand, after looking at the students' active participation in the research process, the teacher concluded that meaningful activities motivate and catch students' attention more easily than decontextualized tasks which are not close to the learners' reality and for that reason they need to be fostered in educational environments.

7.1 FUTURE RESEARCH SUGGESTIONS

Taking into account the analysis of data and findings, future research could be directed to foster the students' participation in the decision making of their community, that is, the active involvement of learners as members of their social group. In the light of cultural identity, students might work on the study of language expressions as key factors to be identified as inhabitants of Villanueva or the use of the history of the town and the written chronicles to promote tourism. In a slightly different way and talking to the English class, studies could be directed to know the reasons why topics studied are not internalized by students and they stay as short term knowledge.

Another important direction this research study can follow is to try genres different to the chronicle in order to help students improve their writing skill, cognitive process and the active communication with others. For instance, students might write poems based on what they learnt of their history and traditions, or they can write autobiographies with their own life story. Besides, as Villanueva is in the touristic zone of Santander, students could work in posters or blogs, to involve ICT, inviting people to know the municipality and promoting the different activities organized by the community as well as the places to go and souvenirs made by people in the town.

Finally, to involve all students in the school and combining different genres, a bilingual newspaper which let students from high school, urban and rural elementary school write articles about what they live every day and their perceptions, advertisements with the events coming in the school or the community and cartoons to represent their experiences, might be created.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

AHMED, Sadik. Exploring Students' Perceptions of ESL Writing, English Language Teaching. 2011 [online] 4 (2), 73-83. Retrieved from: www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/elt/article/download/.../7613?...%2%80%8E

ÁLVAREZ, Jose., & Medina, Ximena. Addressing culture in the EFL classroom: A dialogic proposal. Profile Issues in Teachers' Professional Development. 2011. (2), 151-170.

ARIZA, Diana. Culture in the EFL classroom at Universidad de la Salle: An innovation project. Actualidades pedagógicas. 2007. 50, 9-17.

BABRAN, Sedigheb. Media, Globalization of Culture, and Identity Crisis in Developing Countries. Intercultural Communication Studies. 2008. 17(2), 212- 221.

BERG, Amy., Blank, M., & Mellaville, A. Community Based Learning. Engaging Students for Success and Citizenship. Coalition for Community Schools. Washington, DC. 2006.

BLOCK, Cathy, & LACINA, Jan. Progressive writing instruction: Empowering school leaders and teachers. Voices from the Middle. 2012. 19(3), 10-17

CAKIR, Ismail. Developing Cultural Awareness in Foreign Language Teaching. 2006. p. 154-160 [Online] Retrieved from: http://tojde.anadolu.edu.tr/tojde23/pdf/article_12.pdf?origin=publication_detail

CHALA, Pedro., & CHAPETÓN, Claudia. Undertaking the Act of Writing as a Situated Social Practice: Going beyond the Linguistic and the Textual. *Colomb. Appl. Linguist.* 2013. J., 15(1), 25 - 42. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.14483/udistrital.jour.calj.2013.1.a02>

CHANG, Bowon. The power of geographical boundaries: Cultural, political, and economic border effects in a unitary nation. 2010 p. 14. Retrieved from <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2328&context=etd>

COHEN Louis, MANION Lawrence. & MORRISON Keith. *Research Methods In Education*. London; Routledge. .2007.

CUMMING, Alister. Learning to write in a second language: Two decades of research. *IJES, International Journal of English Studies*. 2001 1(2), 1-23.

DERVIN, Fred, *Cultural identity, representation and Othering*. Routledge Handbook of Language and Intercultural Communication, 2011. 181-194.

DÖRNYEI, Zoltán, *Research methods in applied linguistics: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methodologies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007: 271

ERIDAFITHRI, Muchtar, *The Application of Portfolios to Assess Progress in Writing of EFL Students at Secondary Schools in Banda Aceh*. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 2015 2(1), 1-16. Retrieved from <http://jurnal.unsyiah.ac.id/index.php/SiELE/article/view/2231>

FALKNER, Shannon. "Signs of Life" in the High School Classroom: Analyzing Popular Culture to Provide Student Choice in Analytical Writing. *English Journal*, 2011 101(2), 44-49.

FIROUZEH, Nahavandi. Globalisation and Homogenisation of Culture: The Role of Mass Medias in Developing Countries. In Builders, M (Eds). Human. Ecol.(Special Issue)12 2004: 235-39.

FRANK, Jerrold, Raising Cultural Awareness in the English Language Classroom. English teaching Forum, 2013. p.3 Retrieved from <http://peopleleap.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Raising-Cultural-Awareness-in-the-English-Classroom-by-Jerrold-Frank.pdf>

FULTON, Mary, Kennedi, Kim, Koslezki, Elizabeth, & Zion, Shelley, Cultural Identity and Teaching. One Point Series. Tempe: Arizona State University, 2005

GRIPALDO, Rolando, History and Cultural Identity: The Philippine case. In Hogan, J. (Ed), History and Cultural Identity, Retrieving the past, Shaping the future. Washington: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2011

HASSI, Abderraham, & Storti, Giovanna, Globalization and Culture: The Three H Scenarios. 2012,

INTECH Open Access Publisher. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5772/45655>

JANDT, Fred, An introduction to intercultural communication: Identities in a global community, Sage Publications, 2012

JOHNSON, Karen, The Sociocultural Turn and its challenges for Second Language Teacher Education. Tesol Quarterly, 40 (1), 2006, p. 235-257.

KEMMIS, Sthepen, & McTaggart, Robin, Communicative Action and the Public Sphere, In Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds). Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry. Sage: California 2008

LIN, Lu-Fang, Second language learners' identity toward their home culture: Adding pragmatic knowledge to language learning curriculum. Asian social science, 2009 5(8), p43.

LOMBANA, Claudia, Some Issues for the Teaching of Writing. PROFILE Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, 2009 3(1), p 44-51. Retrieved from <http://www.revistas.unal.edu.co/index.php/profile/article/view/11314/11990>

MEJÍA, Anne Marie de, Bilingual Education in Colombia: Towards a Recognition of Languages, Cultures and Identities. Colombian. Applied. Linguistic Journal [online], 2006. No. 8. P 152-168. Retrieved from <http://revistas.udistrital.edu.co/ojs/index.php/calj/article/view/176/288::pdf>

MINISTERIO DE EDUCACIÓN NACIONAL, Estándares Básicos de Competencias Ciudadanas. Formar para la Ciudadanía ¡Sí es Posible!. Colombia: IPSA, 2004

NORTON, Bonny, & Toohey, Keilen, Identity and language learning. In R. B. Kaplan (Ed.), The Oxford handbook of applied linguistics, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, p 432

NORTON, Bonny, Identity as a sociocultural construct in second language education. In K.Cadman & K. O'Regan (Eds.), TESOL in Context [Special Issue], 2006: 22-33.

NORTON, Bonny, Identity. In Simpson, J. (Ed.). The Routledge handbook of applied linguistics. Taylor & Francis E-library, 2011

ÖRNEK, Yusuf, Globalization and cultural identity, 2003, Retrieved from: http://studienkreis.org/common/news/referat_oerneke.pdf

PENNYCOOK, Alastair, Critical Applied Linguistics. In Davies, A. & Elder, C. (Eds.). The Handbook of Applied Linguistics. Blackwell Publishing. Oxford . 2004

POPA, Claudia, Is Globalization a Necessary Evil? Side Effects of the Globalization. International Journal of Academic Research in Accounting, Finance and Management Sciences, 2012, 2(Special 1), 243-250.

RAFAT, Batool, Emadzadeh, Mostafa, & Ahmadi, Khadijeh, Economic, Social and Political Aspect of Globalization on Health in Developing Countries (with Segregation). International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 2013, 3(7), 384. doi: 10.6007/IJARBSS/v3-i7/61

SHARKEY, Judy, & Clavijo, Amparo, Promoting the Value of Local Knowledge in ESL/EFL Teacher Education through Community-Based Field Assignments. In Medrado, B. and Carla Reichmann (Eds.). Projetos e Praticas na Formacao de Professors de Lingua Inglesa. Paraiba: Brasil. Editora Universitaria UFPB, 2013

SHORT, Kathy & Burke, Carolyn, Creating Curriculum: Teachers and Students as Community Learners. Porstmouth, NH, Heinemann 1991, p, 55

STEANE, Peter, Ethical Issues in Research, Surviving your Thesis, London, Routledge, 2004:59-70

SUNEETHA, Yadaba & Sundaravalli, Miriam, Incorporating Cross-cultural Communication in ELT: A Pedagogical Approach. National University of Singapore, 2011, Retrieved from.
<http://www.nus.edu.sg/celc/research/books/3rdsymposium/123to132-suneetha.pdf>

WANG, Yi, Globalization enhances cultural identity. Intercultural Communication Studies, 2007, 16(1), 83.