

The construction of Seventh Grade Language Learners' Identities at a Public School in Bogotá,
Colombia



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Bogotá, Colombia**

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Universidad Pedagógica Nacional

Facultad de Humanidades – Departamento de Lenguas

Master's in Foreign Languages Teaching

Bogotá, Colombia

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“A thesis submitted as a requirement to obtain the degree of M.A. in Foreign Languages
Teaching”

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Colombia

Note of acceptance

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Acknowledgements

Firstly, I want to thank God because He made everything possible, and He gave me a lot of wisdom to carry out this research.

Secondly, I would like to present special thanks to my loving, patient, and beautiful family, my husband Carlos and my children Laura Daniela and Andrés Leonardo, because they supported and encouraged me to defeat the obstacles.

My respectful gratitude to Professor Luis Fernando Gómez because his collaboration, helpful advice, valuable guidance, and wide knowledge supported my work.

Finally, I would like to thank all the participants and Institution that took part in this research.

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Abstract

This descriptive case study attempts to describe, analyze and examine what language learners' identities seventh graders' constructed in an EFL classroom at a public school in Bogotá. It also explores how these learners developed their language learning investment and how this investment influenced the construction of their identities. This research proposal is framed into the Poststructuralist perspective on the construct of Identity. The data collected through field notes on learners' investment and identity during classroom observations, a semi-structure questionnaire, and open ended interviews, was analyzed by using Norton's theoretical foundations on identity. Data evidenced that identities constructed by EFL learners were unstable and strategic influenced by factors such as academic and family demands and their friendly ties. The data also showed that the interactions generated in this EFL classroom involves relations of power established among students who constructed diverse, multiple, unstable, contradictory, strategic, dominant and dominated identities, that at the same time influenced on the way students invested. It was also demonstrated that the level of investment shaped language learners' identities. In addition, data showed that some students in this group of seventh grade students positioned themselves as high investors in such a way that they could meet better personal living conditions for the future.

Since there is a close relationship between identity and investment, the academic and family demands, learners' expectations and desires, relations of power and also lack of responsibility, motivation and autonomy determined the level of English language learners' Investment.

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Key words: Language learner identity, investment, EFL classroom interaction, power relations.

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Resumen

Este estudio de caso descriptivo intenta describir, analizar y examinar qué identidades, como aprendices de lengua, construyen estudiantes de séptimo grado en un aula de inglés en un colegio público en Bogotá. También explora cómo estos estudiantes realizan su inversión en el aprendizaje de la lengua y cómo esta inversión influye en la construcción de sus identidades. Esta propuesta de investigación se enmarca en la perspectiva post-estructuralista de la construcción de la identidad. Los datos fueron recogidos a través de las notas de campo de la inversión y la identidad de los aprendices durante observaciones de clase, un cuestionario semi-estructurado, y entrevistas con preguntas abiertas. El análisis de datos se realizó a la luz de los fundamentos teóricos planteados por Norton. Los datos evidencian que las identidades construidas por los estudiantes de ILE eran inestables y estratégicas influenciadas por factores tales como las exigencias académicas y de la familia y sus lazos de amistad. Los datos también muestran que las interacciones que se generaron en esta aula ILE implicó relaciones de poder que se establecieron entre los estudiantes que construyeron identidades diversas, múltiples, inestables, contradictorias, estratégicas, dominantes y dominadas, que al mismo tiempo influyeron en la forma en que los estudiantes invertían en el aprendizaje de la lengua. De igual manera, los datos evidenciaron que algunos estudiantes de este grupo de estudiantes de séptimo grado se posicionaron a sí mismos como altos inversores de tal manera que pudieran cumplir con mejores condiciones de vida personal para el futuro.

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Ya que existe una cercana relación entre la identidad y la inversión las exigencias académicas y familiares, expectativas y deseos individuales de los aprendices, relaciones de poder y también la falta de responsabilidad, la motivación y la autonomía determinaron el nivel de inversión de los aprendices de lengua.

Palabras clave: identidad de aprendiz de lengua, inversión, interacción en el aula ILE, relaciones de poder.

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Fecha de Aprobación: 10-10-2012	Página 10 de 180	


1. Información General	
Tipo de documento	Tesis de Grado de Maestría en Investigación
Acceso al documento	Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. Biblioteca Central
Titulo del documento	The construction of seventh grade language learners´ identities at a public school in Bogotá, Colombia (Construcción de identidades de aprendices de lengua, de grado séptimo en un colegio público de Bogotá, Colombia)
Autor(es)	Collazos Moná, Maritza
Director	Gómez Rodríguez, Luis Fernando
Publicación	Bogotá. Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, 2017. 180 p.
Unidad Patrocinante	Universidad Pedagógica Nacional
Palabras Claves	IDENTIDAD DE APRENDIZ DE LENGUA, INVERSIÓN, SALÓN DE INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA, RELACIONES DE PODER.

2. Descripción
Tesis de Maestría en Enseñanza de Lenguas Extranjeras. Este estudio de caso descriptivo describe, analiza y examina qué identidades, como aprendices de lengua, construyen un grupo estudiantes de séptimo grado en un aula de inglés en un colegio público en Bogotá.

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También explora cómo estos estudiantes realizan su inversión en el aprendizaje de la lengua y cómo esta inversión influye en la construcción de sus identidades. Esta propuesta de investigación se enmarca en la perspectiva post-estructuralista de la construcción de la identidad. Los datos fueron recogidos a través de las notas de campo de la inversión y la identidad de los aprendices durante observaciones de clase, un cuestionario semi-estructurado y entrevistas con preguntas abiertas. El análisis de datos se realizó a la luz de los fundamentos teóricos planteados por Norton. Los datos evidenciaron que las identidades construidas por los estudiantes de Inglés como lengua extranjera (ILE) eran inestables y estratégicas influenciadas por factores tales como las exigencias académicas y de la familia y sus lazos de amistad. Los datos también muestran que las interacciones que se generaron en esta aula ILE implicar relaciones de poder que se establecieron entre los estudiantes que construyeron identidades diversas, múltiples, inestables, contradictorias, estratégicas, dominantes y dominadas, que al mismo tiempo influyeron en la forma en que los estudiantes invertían en el aprendizaje de la lengua. De igual manera, los datos evidenciaron que algunos estudiantes de este grupo de estudiantes de séptimo grado se posicionaron a sí mismos como altos inversores de tal manera que pudieran cumplir con mejores condiciones de vida personal para el futuro.

Ya que existe una cercana relación entre la identidad y la inversión, las exigencias académicas y familiares, las expectativas y deseos individuales de los aprendices, las relaciones de poder y también la falta de responsabilidad, la motivación y la autonomía determinaron el nivel de inversión de los aprendices de lengua.

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3. Fuentes

Esta tesis tuvo como referentes teóricos el trabajo de los siguientes investigadores:

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. F. Richardson (ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241–58). New York, NY: Greenwood Press.

Darvin, R. & Norton, B. (2015) Identity and a Model of Investment in Applied Linguistics *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 35, 36-56.

Duff, P. (2012). Identity, Agency, and SLA. In A. Mackey & S. Gass (Eds.), *Handbook of second language acquisition* (pp.410-426). London: Routledge.


Heller, M (1987). The role of language in the formation of ethnic identity. In J. Phinney & M. Rotheram (Eds), *Children ethnic's socialization* (pp. 180-200). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Norton Peirce, B. (1995). Social identity, investment, and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29 (1), 9 -31.

Norton, B. (1997). Language, Identity, and the ownership of English. *TESOL Quarterly*, 31(3), 409-429.

Norton, B. (2000). *Identity and language learning: Gender, ethnicity, and educational change*. London: Pearson/ Longman.

Norton, B and Toohey, K. (2011) Identity, language learning, and social change. *Language teaching*, 44, pp 412-446 doi: 10. 1017/ S0261444811000309

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Van Lier, L. (2008) Agency in the classroom in *J.P. Lantolf & M.E. Poehner (Eds.), Sociocultural theory and the teaching of second languages, London: Equinox.*

Van Maanen, John (1988) *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Weedon, C. (1987/1997) *Feminist practice and poststructuralist theory.* (2ndedn). London: Blackwell.


West, C. (1992, Summer). A matter of life and death. *October, 61, 20–23.*

La bibliografía de la presente investigación se compone de 51 referencias, escritas entre 1977 y 2015, correspondientes a diferentes tipos de documentos tanto impresos como virtuales.

4. Contenidos

Tener un punto de vista post estructuralista del aprendiz de lengua, lleva a reconsiderar la manera, que como docentes, vemos a los niños de grado séptimo de un colegio público de Bogotá. Esto implica observar con detenimiento cómo interactúan durante la clase de inglés con la intención de analizar la manera como construyen su identidad y la manera como invierten en el aprendizaje de inglés como lengua extranjera.


Por lo tanto, se abordaron conceptos tales como Identidad de aprendiz de lengua, Inversión e Interacción en el aula de clase de lengua extranjera desde el punto de vista del campo de la Lingüística Aplicada y dentro del marco post-estructuralista.

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Esta Tesis se encuentra dividida en cinco capítulos: El primero presenta el planteamiento del problema, la pregunta de investigación y sus objetivos. Así mismo las razones que justifican la misma. El segundo capítulo, presenta las categorías teóricas que dan fundamentación a la investigación. Dichas categorías son: Identidad de aprendiz de lengua, inversión en el aprendizaje de inglés como lengua extranjera e interacción en el salón de clase. Igualmente, en este capítulo se encuentra el estado de arte. Este estado de arte presenta cinco investigaciones relacionadas con las categorías previamente mencionadas. El tercer capítulo, presenta, define y describe la metodología investigativa. El capítulo cuarto, da cuenta del análisis de los datos recogidos y de los resultados este estudio de investigación. Finalmente, el capítulo quinto presenta las conclusiones, limitaciones, implicaciones y propuestas para próximas investigaciones.

5. Metodología

Este es un estudio de caso descriptivo que está enmarcado dentro de la perspectiva post-estructuralista de la construcción de identidad. Es por lo tanto, una investigación cualitativa. Los datos se recogieron sobre la inversión y la identidad a través de notas de campo, durante observaciones de clase, un cuestionario semiestructurado y entrevistas con preguntas abiertas, lo cual permitió obtener datos verídicos y confiables gracias a la triangulación de los mismos.

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6. Conclusiones
<p>Los datos recolectados en la presente investigación muestran que los estudiantes de inglés de grado séptimo construyen identidades inestables y estratégicas para crear una buena impresión a los demás. Estos aprendices buscan responder a las exigencias académicas, familiares y expectativas individuales. Además, sus identidades como aprendices de lengua están basadas en las relaciones de poder que los posicionan como dominantes y dominados. Debido a la violencia y los conflictos en el aula que ejercen los aprendices cuyo nivel de inversión es bajo y a la resistencia al poder que ejercen los aprendices cuyo nivel de inversión es alto. De igual manera, los datos evidenciaron que algunos estudiantes de este grupo de estudiantes de séptimo grado se posicionaron a sí mismos como altos inversores de tal manera que pudieran cumplir con mejores condiciones de vida personal para el futuro.</p> <p>Ya que existe una cercana relación entre la identidad y la inversión, el nivel de inversión, que hacen los aprendices de lengua en su aprendizaje, está determinado por los mismos factores que determinan la construcción de esas identidades inestables y estratégica, dominadas y dominantes.</p>

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Revisado por:	LUIS FERNANDO GÓMEZ RODRÍGUEZ

Fecha de elaboración del Resumen:	19	05	2017
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Chapter I

Introduction

This case study attempted to examine and analyze which English language learners' identities were constructed by seventh EFL graders at a public school in Bogotá, how these learners developed their language learning investment, and how this investment influenced on the construction of their identities. Identity and investment in EFL education are recent topics of interest that aim at understanding language learning as a social practice that not only determines relationships and social interactions in the classroom, but influences on students' academic performance. Investment is a construct keyed by Norton (1995), a conception that has its roots in the notion of *cultural capital* proposed by Bourdieu (1977). Cultural capital refers to the forms of knowledge that an individual possesses or develops to become a more intellectual and prepared person, such as rules of etiquette, the ability to speak and write well, the ability to play an instrument, and the acquisition of academic or cultural knowledge. This cultural capital gives individuals power and status because it helps them achieve professional, academic, and intellectual goals, influence other people, and rises up their social level without necessarily having a great financial capital. Ultimately, this knowledge can improve economic levels.

Language is part of a subject's cultural capital because through it we can become more socially and intellectually educated. Thus, the knowledge of a second/foreign language is included as a part of human beings' cultural capital since they, as foreign language learners, have to invest in time, effort, dedication, learning processes, and cognitive capacities to be able to speak that language correctly. Within this frame of the relationship between one's own cultural

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capital and investment, Norton (1995) defines investment as the effort and the ways people put under their own benefit any kind of resource in the classroom in order to improve their language learning. She affirms that if learners invest in the learning of a second language, they will get a wider variety of symbolic and material resources, which will later increase the value of their cultural capital. Symbolic resources, according to Norton (1995) refer to the intellectual development a person can achieve in regards to learning other languages, have a better educational level, and make good friendships. On the contrary, material resources involve those possessions a person can gain in terms of capital goods, real state, and money.

Norton also states that the increase of this cultural capital can shape significantly learners' language learning identity. Identity, in a broad sense, is defined as the way people perceive themselves (Ivanic, 2006). According to Norton (2000) it is as "how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how this relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (p. 5). Identity is not a stable condition because it is transformative and variable depending on the diverse social circumstances, environmental factors, and the context in which language learners socially interact. So, this study will adopt the conceptualization of identity as "fluid, context-dependent, and context-producing, in particular historical and cultural circumstances" (Norton & Toohey 2011, p. 419). The theoretical constructs of investment and identity in the language classroom will be treated in detail in chapter two.

This research study claims that the EFL classroom is a discursive space where language learners construct identities and exert their agency of investing in their language learning process. An EFL classroom of seventh graders at a public school in Bogotá was not the

exception. For that reason, I focused my research on identifying and analyzing the causes and reasons how and why this group of seventh graders invested in the learning of English as a foreign language and in the construction of identity as being EFL learners in a public institution. The present research study was conducted in order to reflect on how the level of investment in the English class of a group of seventh graders at a public school in Bosa, Bogotá, shaped their language learners' identity.

Thereupon, this is a descriptive case study whose objective is to identify, describe, analyze, and reflect on how seventh graders in an EFL class invest in their language learning and shape their language learner identity. This qualitative research approach was descriptive because there was no intention to do any pedagogical intervention to the selected group of students for this study, in order to get specific results. The intention of this study was not to apply a magic formula to obtain expected results. Rather, it intended to use the findings as useful tools to apply strategies to do future and realistic pedagogical interventions to help these learners invest more in their learning process.

Statement of the Problem

One of the main problems that we, English teachers, face in our classes is that many times we limit ourselves to prepare and teach contents, design evaluations, and grade students. We believe that these duties are enough and sometimes misunderstand why our students do poorly in classes and why they are undisciplined, demotivated, and even irresponsible. In general, we do not reflect upon how social, personal, and even environmental factors can affect our students' academic performance in the English class. We prepare, teach, and grade, but sometimes ignore

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those social and academic issues. That is why this research study claims that EFL education needs to do further research that allows teachers to see our students' needs, personal investment, and identity in order to help them become better English learners. As an English teacher at a public school for several years, I have carefully observed and experienced several academic, behavioral, and social interaction events related to investment in the EFL classroom. For instance, through a careful initial observation process during the analysis phase in the first term of 2015 in an EFL sixth grade classroom, I discovered that students did not work hard for academic success. They were constantly resistant to study English and practice the four communicative language skills. For instance, they did not like to answer simple or short questions orally, they complained about the reading material, and when they had to write a short story, sentences or paragraphs they looked bored. Students constantly asked the teacher to speak in Spanish, and most of the time they did not do homework or brought material that they were aware they needed to invest in their learning. In other words, they did not use any resource that helped them to learn the language. Students also had continuous discipline problems, such as doing something different while they were asked to do a specific task related to the activity of the class, moving around the classroom interrupting their classmates' work, being disrespectful to others and encouraging fighting, physical aggression or psychological bullying and they lacked motivation and investment in their English language learning process.

Also, they frequently made fun of and ridiculed students who liked to participate somehow; for instance, if a student made a mistake when s/he pronounced a word or expression, they laughed. Situations generated by those conflicting students such as bullying, ridiculing, and teasing made some students decide to avoid participation, which implies that their investment

decreased, because one of the way learners use their resources to increase their English level was through oral participation.

As a result of these problematic situations, their grades were notoriously low; thus, according to the academic results analyzed in the first term of 2015, 85% of these students got low academic scores and 15% scored an average value. Revising the academic results in the second term of the same year, the scores were relatively similar. Some of the arguments that these students gave for their low grades were that they were not “intelligent” for English, even though there was not a test or diagnosis that proved these arguments. They also did not make any effort to try to understand or develop their communicative skills in this language. It was also detected that those students used to get low scores in the other subjects, which showed that it was not an issue related to the learning of the language, but lack of responsibility and commitment in investing in their learning. Getting bad grades also contributed to construct an image of “bad boys” or “bad girls,” which represented for these students a modeling way of putting themselves in powerful ways in relation to the whole group.

I concluded with my first observations that these children resisted to learn English, as they had said it in informal conversations that they did not understand it, did not like it, did not use it, and would never use it; hence, they did not perceive themselves as language learners. As a student said “Profe, a mí no me gusta el inglés, además para que lo voy a necesitar, si no voy a viajar” (field notes¹, March 24, 2015), another student said “¿Inglés? ¿Eso para qué? Así estoy

¹ This initial field notes were taken to detect and describe the statement of the problem at the beginning of this inquiry, and must not be confused with the field notes that I later took during the observation phase to collect more systematic data about these learners’ investment in the classroom.

bien en mi casa nadie habla inglés” (field notes March 24, 2015). With these few examples, I want to make it clear that students did not want to invest in their language learning process because they did not find this subject motivating and meaningful for their lives. In fact, they mentioned in several occasions that English was a requisite to pass the academic year, and that they just coped with it because it was an obligation to move up to the next grade, as it happened with all the subjects they were taking. I will provide additional information about these students’ profile in chapter 3, in the section of participants.

These serious situations that affected the classroom environment and generated a low academic performance of learners, led me to decide, as a teacher researcher, to continue doing further research through a more systematic approach, in such a way, that I could determine what the causes were and the reasons why this group of learners was demotivated and did not want to invest in the language classroom. Although they had mentioned important issues to be considered, I thought it was important to collect more data, in order to triangulate the information and have a deeper understanding of these problems. The purpose was to understand and address the problem of learners’ poor investment in learning the foreign language and to have some views of their own language learning identities in a deeper manner, based on qualitative research. In this sense, after identifying the problem in the first and second term of 2015, I started to develop this descriptive case study during the first semester of 2016, with the group that was in seventh grade at the time. To do so, I chose a group of 12 students of seventh grade in the school (who represent 30% of the whole group) where I have worked for five years, in order to examine in depth issues related to investment and identity in the classroom. In chapter three, about the research methodology, I will explain the reasons why I decided to have only 12

participants in the intervention phase. This time (first semester, 2016) the in-depth analysis of the problem not only took into account the teacher's observations, systematically registered in field notes, but also students' own voices, opinions, and experiences in the English classroom through the completion of interviews and a semi structured questionnaire.

Once I had identified the problem in the classroom, I went deeper into the description, analysis, and identification of the level of students' investment and the way this group of students shaped their identity as language learners in a public school, with the guidance of the following research question:

Research Question

1. Which English language learners' identities are constructed by seventh EFL graders at a public school in Bogotá?

Objectives

1. To identify which language learners' identities are constructed by seventh EFL graders at a public school, in Bosa, Bogotá.

2. To describe the (social) factors that influence on a group of seventh graders' investment in a foreign language learning and the shaping of language learner identity.

3. To examine how seventh EFL learners' investment in the English class influences on their English language identity.

Rationale

Being a student in any educational institution implies assuming the directions, instructions, rules and, in general, the challenges that this role brings to his/her learning process. Also, taking part in a learning process implies being an active participant of it, in order to get specific results. Being a foreign language learner involves the same commitments in the classroom. So, if an English learner wants to acquire a good communicative competence to use the language in different contexts, which should imply to get good academic results, he/she needs to do an investment in this learning. It means that in order to learn English (symbolic capital), the learner needs to use any kind of resource to acquire the benefits that this investment implies.

As language is the way through which a subject externalizes the self, that is, his/her identity, and to learn a foreign language could provide a wider way to externalize this self or to have a different perception of self, as some scholars have claimed, investing in the learning of English is a need in order to shape the construction of the language learner identity, understood as diverse and variable according to recent theorists. Based on this, to develop a research on investment and identity in an EFL class at a public school context, is a need to give foundations to improve EFL teachers' perception of what happens in the classroom interactions.

Since this study is drawn on the poststructuralist perspective of the language learner as a subject whose social identities are complex, multiple, and subject to change, this research project is useful and meaningful for English teachers because the analysis, description, and identification of these two constructs, investment and identity can give EFL teachers and educational institutions a series of parameters and tools to reflect on their discourses, practices, and

performances during their classes. This study provides a relevant material to help teachers to reflect deeply on how their students construct and reconstruct their identities and how these identities are shaped by the way they invest in their English language learning process.

When Norton (1995) presents the findings of her study on investment and identity, she argues that an important implication of her study is that “the second language teacher needs to help language learners claim the right to speak outside the classroom;” (p. 26) to achieve this objective, it is necessary to incorporate the development of pedagogies which include learners’ experiences and social identities in the formal second/foreign language curriculum. For this reason, the findings of this study can serve as an example to generate pedagogical changes such as recognizing and addressing the role of the language learner as a dynamic subject whose social identities are complex, multiple, and subject to change, which could benefit learners, teachers, and institutions in the field of EFL because the aim of this study was to identify social factors such as family support, personal relationships and interactions in the classroom that impacted learners' investment and identity.

This study specifically contributes to a better understanding of the concept of English language learner in the particular context of a classroom in the educational system of a public school in Bogotá, Colombia. Because, as English teacher in this specific site I faced many academic and social situations that made me realize that it was not enough to simply know the language and know how to teach it through the application of methods, approaches, techniques or strategies, but that it was necessary to go beyond this. I saw the need to focus more attention on the interaction, participation and attitude of the students. I began to realize that the

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relationships they established influenced their academic performance. All this experience gained over many years of teaching made me reflect on my role and teaching practice. Therefore, this research is important because it contributes to my teaching practice since it leads me to make a rigorous analysis of all the factors that converge in this particular space and that broadens my perspective of what is a language learner in the institution where I work. Which at the same time will lead me to review and transform my teaching practices for the benefit of the students and by extension of the institution.

Thus, a better understanding of the constructs investment and identity can help EFL teachers find ways of creating learning environments favorable to their emergence and development, which can contribute to the improvement of the teaching practice and the learning process. For this reason, concepts as investment, identity construction and classroom interaction will be addressed in the theoretical framework.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

This research study is supported by three main theoretical constructs: *English Language learners' identity*, *Investment in EFL learning process*, and *classroom interaction in EFL education*.

English Language Learners' Identity

This research is framed within a poststructuralist perspective of the construct *Identity*, stated by Norton. The relationship between language and identity in language education is still a topic of exploration and debate, and much to clarify is still needed (Norton, 1997). However, Bonny Norton, a Professor and Distinguished University Scholar in the Department of Language and Literacy Education, at the University of British Columbia, Canada, can help us to elucidate the importance of identity in language learning. Another preliminary idea to understand the concept of identity is that *identity* is intrinsically related to the concept of *investment*, and one cannot be separated from the other. However, in order to help the reader understand identity and investment in EFL/ESL education in a clearer way (since they are still complex and debatable), I will explain the two concepts separately. Nevertheless, the two concepts will inevitably come together at several parts of the explanation.

According to Norton (2000) identity is “how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how this relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (p. 5). So, this research study sees identity as “fluid,

context-dependent, and context-producing, in particular historical and cultural circumstances” (Norton and Toohey 2011, p. 419), since identity is by no means a static and fixed concept. In fact, Hall (1999) states that we should understand identity as a “production” that is always in process and never complete.

Norton (1997), an EFL scholar, is interested in language and identity drawing her theoretical framework on theorists from other academic fields, who have been influential in her work. Among the theorists who have helped her to develop an understanding of identity in the field of EFL/ESL education are Cornel West, Pierre Bourdieu, Jim Cummins and Christine Weedon. Due to these influences, and because it will help readers to understand the concept of identity, I will explain briefly how their theories have inspired Norton to explore identity issues in language education.

The first theorist to bear in mind is West, an American philosopher, academic, and social activist. His work focuses on the role of race, gender, and class in the American society and the means by which people act and react to the critical circumstances which affect the way in which they live or work. Norton follows West (1992) statement which claims that identity relates to human desires. For example, human beings' desire for recognition, affiliation, security and safety. And these desires, according to West, cannot be considered in isolation from the distribution of material resources in society. So, social changes and relations established by economy permeate a subject's desire to gain a well- prestigious identity (Norton, 1997).

On his part, Bourdieu (1977) was a sociologist, anthropologist, and philosopher whose work was mainly focused on the dynamics of power in society and especially the diverse and acute ways in which power is transferred and how generations have maintained a social order. His

contribution to sociology and the understanding of identity relates to the difference between cultural or symbolic forms of capital and economic forms of capital. Symbolic forms of capital refer to those prestigious aspects that improve humans' conditions, including education, language, knowledge, friendship, experience, and recognition, while traditional economic forms of capital involve money, real state, and material possessions. This distinction between symbolic capital and economic capital inspired Norton's work on the notion of *investment* in the language classroom, which is defined by Norton as the way a language learner actively puts symbolic, material, and other resources into the language learning process in order to increase the value of his/her cultural capital. That is to say, a language learner necessarily gains prestige and social recognition when learning and speaking a foreign/second language because it increases his/her intellectual knowledge, and that knowledge is a part of his/her symbolic capital.

Bourdieu (1977) claims that linguists must take into account the social conditions in which communication is established by the speaker and the listener, because the way the relationships of power are established in the context of the interlocutors is what determines that communication. Thus, Norton (1997) argues that “the right to speak intersects in important ways with a language learner’s identity” (p. 411) because the way the language learner invests in his/her learning process and how he/she practices the target language is determined by social and historical relationships constructed by learners with respect to the target language. In other words, the way students invest in the classroom determines their social identity as language learners depending on particular space and time.

Another theorist who has influenced Norton's work on identity is Jim Cummins. Cummins is a teacher whose research focuses on the challenges educators face in adjusting to classrooms

where cultural and linguistic diversity is the norm. In his book *Negotiating identities: Education for empowerment in a diverse society*, he focuses on power relationships that operate in the broader society and how they influence the interactions that occur between teachers and students in the classroom. He mentions two types of power: Coercive power takes place when a dominant individual, group, or country exercise power in the sense of being detrimental to others in order to maintain inequitable relations. Collaborative power happens when the exercise of power serves to empower instead of marginalizing human beings. Based on Cummins (1996) distinction between coercive and collaborative relations of power, Norton (1995) takes the position that power can serve to empower or disable the set of identities that language learners can negotiate in their classrooms and communities, since when language learners speak and practice another language, they do not always impose, but rather create and establish collaborative relations of power harmoniously. These collaborative or possible imposed relations of power contribute to define learners' identities. Therefore, language learner identities are strongly influenced by the relationships of power (whether imposed or negotiated) in the classroom.

Another theorist that influenced Norton is Christine Weedon, a professor of critical and cultural theory. She is one of the most well-known scholars in the field of feminist poststructuralist theory. Norton (1995) drew on Weedon's (1987) conceptions of social identity or subjectivity, in order to examine the relationship between language learners and the social worlds in which they live. Norton drew on Weedon's work because this feminist poststructuralist's work links the individual experiences and social power in a theory on subjectivity. Weedon (1987) argues that subjectivity, which is constructed through language and

discourse, is “the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individuals, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relation to the world” (p. 32), a similar definition to Norton’s view of identity. For Weedon, social relationships are critical in how individuals are constructed and construct themselves. Weedon’s view states that the subject is diverse, contradictory, dynamic, and changing over historical time and social space. An individual is not always static and definite in the way he/she understands his or her relationship to the world and how he/she takes action. He/she may transform his/her ways of seeing the world and act differently according to the context and the circumstances in which he/she has to deal with diverse social relationships and situations of life. So, the children who participated as subjects of this study, are seen from this perspective.

Norton (1995) proposes a theory on social identity, which takes into account the language learning context in which the language learner is immersed. She argues that Second Language Acquisition theorists need to reevaluate the conception of the language learner as a subject who constructs a complex social identity in relation to social structures, which are reproduced in every day social interactions, including in this case, English language classroom interaction.

Norton (1995) explains three characteristics involved in the construction of social identity, as they were outlined by Weedon (1987). They are, (1) the multiple nature of the subject; (2) subjectivity as a site of struggle; and (3) subjectivity as changing over time. To explain the first characteristic mentioned, Norton (1995) clarifies that the concepts of subject and subjectivity are framed within a poststructuralist perspective which represents the individual as diverse, contradictory, dynamic, and multiple. This is due to the fact that the different spaces in which a

subject operates, determines the position that this subject performs. For example, a woman can be a mother or a daughter or a teacher in different social contexts. Another example of the multiple nature of social identity is in the language classroom as a person can be a language learner but in turn be a friend, be a leader, and be a student who has failed to reach the required standard in previous course, and so on. The second characteristic is the conception of social identity as a site of struggle. Norton claims that bearing in mind that social identity is multiple and contradictory, the subject adopts different social positions in different social contexts, which are permeated by relations of power; some individuals with subordinated positions can be in conflict when they resist and react against those who impose unfair power. For example, some language learners may decide to remain silent despite wanting to develop the oral skills of that foreign language or to participate in the conversation of a specific group, because others ridicule them unjustly. The last characteristic of social identity is that subjectivity changes over time, this being an extension of the position that a person's social identity is multiple, contradictory, and has the quality of change, thanks to the experiences generated along his/her life.

In taking Norton's position in relation to social identity, she foregrounds the role of language as constitutive of and constituted by a language learner's social identity, which is one of the most important points in the consideration of language learner's identity. For Norton (1995) language is not understood as a neutral means of communication, but it is understood in terms of its social meaning. For poststructuralist theorists, identity and language are seen as mutually constitutive. For instance, according to Heller (1987), it is through language that a person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points in time, and it is through language that a person gains access to – or is denied access to- powerful social networks that provide the

learner with the opportunity to speak. Another argument to supports how language is constitutive of and constituted by a language learner's social identity is given by the American linguist and academic Gumperz (1982) who states that “to understand issues of identity and how they affect and are affected by social, political, and ethnic divisions we need to gain insights into the communicative processes by which they arise” (p. 1).

Another key point in the conception of identity from poststructuralist point of view, is that identity construction implies a process of becoming. For that reason, words like invent and reinvent, making and remaking, used by some scholars, are a part of the theory of this perspective. This poststructuralist point of view emphasizes on individual's ability and willingness to exercise agency, according to Duff (2012) understood as “people’s ability to make choices, take control, self-regulate, and thereby pursue their goals as individuals leading, potentially, to personal or social transformation” (p. 414). According to Van Lier (2008) with respect to agency, learning mainly depends on the activity and the initiative of the learner, it means that the process of learning, in this case, a language, emphasizes on action, interaction, and affordances. Van Lier states that “agency is not simply an individual character trait or activity, but a contextually enacted way of being in the world” (p. 1) This statement presents the relationship between Identity and agency because the process of becoming or construct identity implies a constant exercising of agency, that is, making choices and decisions to take a position in the world relative to others.

The construction of the language learner’s identity also involves a close interrelationship between social structure and agency, which is a complex one. Social structures and agency are linked. To evidence this connection, the contribution of authors belonging to the fields of social

studies is a need. For instance, as the American cultural anthropologist Ortner (2006) states, in what she calls “Practice Theory,” “culture (in a broad sense) constructs people as particular kinds of social actors, but social actors, through their living, on-the-ground variable practices reproduce or transform—and usually some of each—the culture that made them” (p. 129).

Another argument of how social reality affects individual agency is given by Jenkins (2004), professor of sociology and trained as an anthropologist: “all human identities are for definition social identities” (p. 4). So, the analysis on the construction of identity in this research needs a revision of social structures in which the exercise of agency takes place. Some scholars have stated that it is a challenge for future research to develop analysis on identity and, for extension, on agency, which does not place structure in a secondary place.

It is also important to mention that many ESL/EFL researchers have focused their attention on different issues related to identity, especially they have the tendency to privilege identity politics, that is to say, identity inscriptions such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, nationality, and language, instead of the material conditions of life and their influence on language learning. According to Norton and Toohey (2011) “In the broader field of applied linguistics, interest in identity has also gained considerable momentum. There is work, for example, on identity and pragmatics (...), identity and sociolinguistics (...); and identity and discourse (...)” (p. 413).

Norton and Toohey (2011) also claim that “while much research on identity focuses on second language (L2) learning, poststructuralist theory is also of great relevance to foreign language learning” (p. 413). They argue that “while much of this research explores the multiple and intersecting dimensions of language learners’ identities, there is also a growing body of research that seeks to investigate the ways in which particular relations of race, gender, and

sexual orientation may impact the process of language learning” (p. 414). So, we can see that there is a wide range of issues related to identity that are a matter of EFL/ESL scholars’ attention.

The poststructuralist position assumed in this research study takes into account how the new world order generates more complex and dynamic ways of constructing the language learner’s identity personally, socially, and virtually. This broader perspective tries to give a better understanding of the construction of language learners’ identity, and the Self in this globalized world, as stated by Norton and Darvin (2015).

Investment in an EFL classroom

This study aims at examining the ways in which a group of EFL learners constructed their social identities and the way they interacted and established relationships of power in order to learn and use English in the context of an EFL classroom at a public school. It has been said that identity and investment in language learning are two concepts that depend on each other. That is to say, learners necessarily have to establish interaction and social relationships in the classroom to communicate and speak in the foreign/second language. Those interactions might be negative if unfair relations of power are built among learners, in such a way that attitudes of domination, submission, and marginalization can ultimately affect students’ investment in their academic performance. Therefore, if in a given educational context unfair social circumstances and struggle exist, learners are likely to *invest* in their learning of the foreign language negatively. Such investment inevitably impacts their identity construction. For this reason, *investment* is a key concept to understand English learners’ identity in this study.

The concept of *Investment* has its roots in the notion of *cultural/symbolic capital* used by Bourdieu (1977). Bourdieu is a sociologist best known for his job on French education, particularly higher education and its role in the reproduction of class relations. His work represents a great effort to delineate the mechanism of symbolic domination and control by which the existing social order is maintained. Bourdieu (1986) hypothesizes that capital has four guises that create and help to maintain material wealth, including money, property, and human resources of economic value. The four guises are economic, cultural, social, and symbolic capital, although many sociologists affirm that Bourdieu uses cultural and symbolic capital interchangeably (this aspect is being part of ongoing analysis in the field of sociology).

Hence, investment in EFL education is coined by Norton (1995) based on the work of Bourdieu on cultural capital. According to Bourdieu (1977), *cultural/symbolic capital* refers to the knowledge and modes of thought that characterize different classes and groups in relation to specific social structures. *Cultural/symbolic capital* is the form of knowledge, education, skills, prestige, and advantages that one person can gain in life, and that gives him/her a higher status in society. It does not include money or material possession, but rather intellectual growth and personal development. First, the parents provide a child with a certain cultural/symbolic capital by transmitting attitudes and knowledge necessary to grow up in the educational system. The concept of cultural/symbolic capital is learned and reflected in the family and reinforced in schools and daily life situations. This type of capital refers to resources that are acquired, it is closely linked to cognitive and educational processes. According to Bourdieu (1986), *economic capital* is directly convertible into material wealth, while cultural/symbolic capital involves accumulated knowledge and skills and how those are evidenced through institutions,

organizations and objects such as motion pictures, inventions, or books. Cultural capital is potentially, but not directly, convertible into economic capital.

One of the most important examples of cultural/symbolic capital is the language that any individual learns and masters to produce meaning and ideas because it represents a means of communication and self-presentation acquired from the subject's surrounding culture (Bourdieu, 1990). Thus, as Norton (1995) states, learning a foreign language will increase the cultural/symbolic capital of any language learner.

Based on this concept of cultural/symbolic capital coined by the sociologist Bourdieu, Norton (1995) takes the position that if learners invest in the learning of a second/foreign language, they will be aware of the set of symbolic and material resources that they will acquire which, in turn, will increase the value of their cultural capital. The *symbolic capital*, according to Norton (1995) refers to language, education, social recognition, and friendship, among many other aspects. These achievements, in turn, can bring about material resources to capital goods, real state, and money, respectively. According to Norton (2000) since the acquisition of symbolic and material resources allows to increase the cultural capital, learner's identities, future expectations, desires, and hopes in life need to be reevaluated so that they can gain such important capital.

Therefore, based on Bourdieu's conception of cultural capital, Norton (2000) coins the construct investment and frames it into the field of Applied Linguistics. It refers to the degree to which learners actively put together symbolic and material resources into their language learning process. For instance, when an English learner invests in his/her learning process, he/she not

only considers, evaluates, and compares costs, time, relations, effort, and class materials (economic capital), but also takes into consideration symbolic resources such as the intellectual, personal, professional, and prestigious level (symbolic/cultural capital), generated by his/her investment in learning another language. Norton also states that these symbolic achievements are called benefits or good return that are seen as directly proportional to the effort spent on the investment in learning the second/foreign language.

Investment also regards language learner desires, plans, and hopes which may include utilitarian purposes, for example, learners might have the desire of getting a job, learning a language to be a part of the target language community successfully, or hoping to have access to symbolic resources that he/she could not have acquired before. As a result, these achievements will change their identity in social terms. Norton (1995) purports that when a learner “invests” in the target language, he/she is also “investing” in his/her own “social identity” which is continually changing during the period of learning the target language.

Norton (1995) also argues that when language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information but they are equally organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the context in which they are interacting and socializing. She claims that investment in the language learning process considers the dynamic, contradictory, and changing relationships of the language learners to the social world in which this learning process occurs, and how learners construct identities starting from these relationships. For this reason, this construct was fundamental in this study, since it aims at identifying what sense of themselves was being constructed by the children, participants of this study, and how they related to their

social world, especially during social interaction in the EFL classroom and how this interaction impacted on their investment which was evidenced through their subject positions.

The construct of investment aims at reevaluating the conception of language learners. Norton proposes a conception of investment rather than motivation. For her, investment complements and extends the traditional notion of motivation since investment aims at capturing the complex social relationships among language learners, the target language, and their sometimes ambivalent desire to speak it in the classroom. Norton (1995) seeks to give a sociological complement to the notion of motivation, which has been mainly treated as a psychological construct. She explains the difference between motivation and investment as follows: As the learner has been seen as an individual who produces and reproduces language and the learning process has been considered as a task which involves mental processes mainly, the performance of a language learner has been seen from a unitary and individual view of identity. The teacher usually assumes that language learning depends on the personal motivation of the learner, so the learner is often classified into dichotomies like good/bad, motivated/unmotivated, or dedicated/careless, without considering how social aspects and structures (fair or unfair relations of power and interaction), influence on the individual's learning. The accessibility to and the success of speaking the target language depend on the learner's motivation only. Thus, language learning has been reduced to the acquisition of linguistic or sociolinguistic competence thanks to the individual's mind processes and personal levels of motivation. This implies that language learning has historically been a process that depends on learner's personality, learning styles, and motivation.

On the contrary, the notion of investment is used within the field of Applied Linguistics, taking into account some considerations: It regards the learner as an individual who constructs complex identities, which are context and time dependent, these identities are also reproduced within the dynamics of social interactions. As identity is a sociological construct, relations of power are involved. For this reason, conditions of power position the learners in uneven manners which make them vary their learnings outcomes. Another consideration is that the learner is seen as a member of social and historical contexts which must be examined to determine the conditions in which language learning takes place. This examination focuses on doing research on how social structures and relations of power affect language learning and on the variety of positions that a learner might assume (Norton, 2000). As an example of Norton's position with respect to motivation and investment, she explains that a subject may be highly motivated to learn a language, but may not invest in that process due to the complex and contradictory identities that the learner constructs when unfair relations of power (or disempower) are established. In other words, a motivated language learner can invest poorly or invest nothing in his/her language learning process, despite his/her high level of motivation, when he is emotionally, socially, physically, and even psychologically hurt by attitudes of racism, classism, homophobia, misogyny, and other types of prejudice. Therefore, unbalanced relations of power in the classroom not only affect learners' identity negatively as they are humiliated, rejected, and victimized, but their investment (academic performance and motivation) in learning a foreign/second language is destroyed by unequal social relationships and injustices.

The construct of investment is framed into the poststructuralist theory, which gives a broader sense of who a language learner is in relation to the social environment and conditions in

which he/she has to live or learn a language. Thus, the language learner is constantly becoming, changing or transforming his/her identity by adapting to, struggling against, and even resisting different expressions of social and hegemonic power. For this reason, Darwin and Norton (2015) present a Model of investment in which they characterize the construct investment with similar features that define the construct's identity. That is why language learners' identity relates to investment, since identity becomes fluid, multiple, and changeable at sites of struggle where learners have to find ways to survive and cope with issues of violence, aggression, discrimination, and marginalization. Similarly, investment is complex, contradictory, and suffers a state of flux, because, as Darwin and Norton argue, the way a learner invests in a foreign language is in some way limited to dynamic relationships of power established in specific interactions. This model also recognizes that changes produced by the globalization era call for new examination, analyses, and theories of identity, integrating constructs such as ideology and capital to the notion of identity, in order to show how investment is developed in the intersection of them.

In a broad sense, and in order to conclude this theoretical construct, it is imperative to say that issues of identity and investment in language learners are useful for English teachers because they help to better understand concerns about how specific social dynamics and relations of power can permeate the acquisition of a target language in contexts where, for instance, migration situations, minority and mainstream groups, dominant and dominated cultural groups, privileged and underprivileged students, and native and non-native speakers of English share the same space.

The process of globalization in the last two decades has led to change ideologies related to language learning. For example, the value that the English language has in the global world has promoted the generation of new policies, projects, plans or programs to teach it and learn it. Such is the case of the program of Immersion Rooms implemented in public schools in Colombia in order to respond to the imposition of teaching English as the hegemonic foreign language. Equally, there are new changes in the identities constructed by language learners whose social interactions become more fluid, but have fewer face-to-face experiences due to technology devices and the development of means of communication. For instance, speakers can write e-mails or send messages through Skype when they interact, so, writing, not only speaking, causes learners to assume different identities and different levels of investment in the way they use the foreign/second language (and even their own language) in social websites. Also, there are changes in the mechanisms of power which become more invisible, as it happens when economic or political decisions are attributed to a corporation or a collective. For example, the policies related to the educational system in Colombia are attributed to Secretary of Education, which is responsible for ensuring adequate provision of educational services, under the management of the Ministry of Education. In short, technology and the new economic order have reshaped the way language learners communicate, acquire, and practice the target language. It also enables new forms of productivity and social interaction. So, the recontextualization of the construct investment and identity are necessary (Norton and Darvin, 2015) to be addressed in different educational settings, including the EFL context.

Norton and Darvin (2015) assert that the concepts of identity and investment provide teachers with a better understanding of the language learners in the new world order influenced

by technology and ideals of globalization. Thus, they explain that since language learners move across transnational spaces, they go across with their own capital: economic, cultural, and social, which are represented in summary as symbolic capital. When they are inside new contexts and perform in them (including the language classroom), they acquire new materials and symbolic resources that confer new value to their capital. This transformation of their capital is a site of struggle because what is valued in one context, in terms of symbolic or economic capital, is not valued or is devaluated in another. For example, English learners' academic performance, learning styles, pronunciation, and accents are evaluated under parameters that evidence stereotypes imposed by the hegemonic and dominant power of the Anglo-Saxon culture. These parameters determine the learner's way and level of investment in the language learning, either to resist or to accept them. These considerations should lead language teachers to rethink how to value the linguistic and cultural capital of language learners. This research study, in particular, aimed at understanding, describing, and identifying how identity factors and levels of investment influenced on a group of EFL learners' English learning at a public institution.

Classroom interaction in the EFL context

Since this study aims at examining how children invest in their learning of English as a foreign language and its impact on the construction of their identity, when interacting in the context of an EFL classroom at a public school, classroom interaction is a construct that must be examined in this theoretical framework.

Firstly, it is important to clarify what is understood by a classroom. According to Tudor (2001), "the classroom is a place where a variety of potentially perspective on the nature and goals of language teaching meet and interact" (p. 47). However, not only language teaching and

learning occur in the classroom; social relations and social skills are developed among the members of a class. Tudor (2001) also states that “what takes place in the classroom cannot be fully understood from the perspective of any one participant or groups of participant in isolation” (p. 47). Because all of the participants are social beings, “it is therefore necessary to explore what situations mean for the various participants involved in them and how these meanings interact dynamically with one another” (p. 47) Therefore, the classroom is not merely a place but it is a site where language learners interact in order to construct identities, invest in language learning, and generate social relationships in which relations of power are evident and most of the time inevitable.

Taking into account that this study is framed within the poststructuralist point of view of language learners as subjects who construct their identities in a complex, dynamic, contradictory way, which changes over time and space (Norton, 2000), and subjects who also establish relations of power which permeate those identities and the way they invest in their language learning as a result of their interactions, doing a critical and detailed revision of these interactions into the classroom is a need.

Although language classroom interaction implies to talk about language teaching and learning, this study focuses its analysis on language learners’ interactions in the classroom. Moreover, it is a need to consider classroom interactions as experiences that may affect in a negative way or constructively improve learners’ investment, identities, and language learning strategies and social relationships.

It is also important to clarify that classroom interactions can generate hegemonic practices or relations of power determined by the role of the teacher and the learners. This descriptive case

study focuses its description and analysis on the complex dynamics of the classroom in which unique experiences are generated by language learners, as a result of their interactions, making those rules and hegemonic practices vary and changing the dynamics of the activities, projects, and plans adopted or organized by the teacher previously. As an example of this, is what Van Lier points out, cited by Tudor (2001): “The classroom is not a world unto itself. The participants (teachers and learners) arrive at the event with certain ideas as to what is a proper lesson, and in their actions and interactions they will strive to implement these ideas” (p. 104).

In summary, the classroom is a social space where the construction of language learners’ identities takes place. The analysis of the construction of language learners’ identities implies the revision of two dynamic aspects which are teaching and learning, without forgetting that the focus of this study is on language learner interaction. However, it is a fact that classroom interactions involve the conceptions that the two participants, teacher and learners, have about language and learning, and also the influence of their corresponding social context, because these conceptions and influences determine the way the teacher and learners relate to each other and also the way learners relate among them. Tudor (2001) states that teachers and learners’ identities are influenced by aspects of the context in which learning takes place; according to him, “Language classroom is not another-worldly entity divorced from human culture and society” (p. 18).

Following Tudor (2001), the context influences what takes place in the classroom. He claims that context is a complex aspect and must be considered from different components and factors, for example class size, teaching-learning material resources, learners’ beliefs, attitudes, and behavioral expectations. Language learners’ interactions in the classroom are also permeated

by the methodology implemented by the teacher. In relation to this last aspect, Tudor (2001) says “Methodology is the means by which the language is presented to students, teaching-learning activities are organized and classroom relations are defined; it therefore plays an important role in this process” (p. 47). Then, revising methodology is a starting point for exploring the dynamics and interactions of the children during the English class.

Describing and analyzing classroom interactions involve the revision of the participation, socialization, and interaction of many actors such as students, teacher, principal of the school, parents and many others that are not physically present in time and context but influence language learners’ interaction, in some way. These “invisible” actors are educational authorities who impose the politics that rule the educational system of the country. For that reason, as Tudor (2001) explains when he talks about how to understand language teaching, it is necessary to explore “realities to the way in which classroom participants interact with one another and with the choices of other participants, who, more or less directly, influence the context in which they are operating” (p. 47).

Another aspect to take into account that determines the way learners interact among themselves in the language classroom, following Norton’s theory, is how they establish their social relationships, which are permeated by their habitus, structured in turn by prevailing ideologies which predispose them to think and to act in certain ways. Their desires allow them to exert their agency in order to invest in their learning, to frame and reframe relations of power, and to construct identities in multiple and contradictory ways that position themselves (while they are positioned by others) and position others (2015). The interaction of language learners in the classroom usually turns into a very complex issue worthy to be examined. The researcher of

this study understands that many interactions in the EFL classroom can lead to the proliferation of relations of power (control, submission, rivalry) among learners from different social and contextual circumstances, some of which are, dissimilar academic levels among learners, discipline problems, social class prejudice, racism, homophobia, bullying, exclusion, intolerance, and verbal dominance, among many other factors. These interactions constructed through power define and transform constantly students' identity and investment in the English classroom. For this reason, the concepts of identity, investment, and interaction build the theoretical framework of this research.

Literature review

In the present Literature review previous research on identity, investment, and interaction are outlined in order to strengthen the theoretical framework, which gives support to this study.

As this research aims are identifying which language learner's identities are established if children invest in an EFL classroom at a public school, in Bosa, Bogotá and what kind of factors influence the dynamic relationship between investment and language learner identity construction, in this particular context, it is a mandatory to locate this study within Norton's foundational work on identity and investment. Additionally, on interaction in the classroom.

The following studies provide the present research with powerful foundations to determine the theoretical path. They were selected due the fact that they put together key constructs such as language, language learner, investment, and social identity that help to give support to the relationship between language learners' identity and investment evident through interaction, which are the key elements in the present study, under a poststructuralist perspective. The

research studies mentioned here are presented as follows: Two research studies on learners' language identities, one conducted in an ESL context in Canada and one in an EFL context in Colombia, two international research studies on investment in EFL context and one on classroom interaction in an EFL context in Colombia.

Research studies on learners' language identities

The first research here mentioned was conducted by Norton (1995), it was entitled *Language learning, social identity, and immigrant women*. The problem posed by the researcher was that Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theorists had not examined in a more critical way the relations of power immersed in the language learning process. They had failed to examine how issues related to sexism, racism, and elitism influence the opportunities second language learners had to practice the target language and how immigrant language learners were usually disadvantaged by members who belonged to the target language community.

The research questions were posed according to two stages of the research procedure. The research questions for the first stage were: "How are the opportunities for immigrant women in Canada to practice ESL socially structured outside the classroom? How do immigrant women respond to and act upon these social structures to create, use, or resist opportunities to practice English? To what extent should their actions be understood with reference to their investment in English and their changing social identities across time and space? The research question for the second stage of the research procedure was: How can an enhanced understanding of natural language learning and social identity inform SLA theory, in general, as well as ESL pedagogy for immigrant women in Canada?" (p. 18)

The main objectives of this study were to examine the relations of power immersed in the language learning process and the role of language as constitutive of and constituted by a language learners' social identity. Norton invited the learners of an ESL course to participate in a longitudinal case study about their language learning experiences in Canada. The participants were five immigrant women in Canada. They were Mai from Vietnam, Eva and Katarina from Poland, Martina from Czechoslovakia, and Felicia from Peru.

The data were collected through the diaries that participants kept of their social interactions in what the researcher called the “diary study” from January to June, 1991, they also completed two detailed questionnaires administered before and after the study and the researcher had personal and group interviews with the participants. The data collected mainly focused on the language learning experiences of participants in different contexts, such as their homes, workplaces, and communities, and they had some meetings to discuss their opinions and worries in relation to their language learning experiences.

The findings presented in this study were, first, the researcher reconceptualized the notion of the language learner as an individual with a complex social identity which is multiple, contradictory, and changing over time. For example, the participants had to assume multiple and contradictory social identities as immigrants living in Canada based on cultural stereotypes, social rejection for being immigrants, and lack of opportunities to learn and practice the target language and have the right to speak at their workplaces. Second, the researcher coined the concept of investment as a complement of the psychological construct of motivation, bearing in mind the social conditions that the participants had to face. For example, they were not native

speakers, but immigrant women who came from low social working classes and did not have a complete cultural knowledge of their workplace. Thus, the researcher concluded that investment is closely connected to the ongoing production of a language learners' social identity, because the participants had to construct multiple and contradictory identities, as immigrant women, non-native speakers of English, being a part of the working class, and being productive in order to practice the target language. They also had to gain the right to speak in a context (Canada) in which relations of power and social conditions positioned language learners in inequitable ways by marginalizing and silencing them.

As an example of the findings mentioned, the case of one of the participants, Martina, is briefly presented. Martina, a 37-year-old woman, was born in Czechoslovakia. She had a husband and three children; they came to Canada for a "better life for children" (Norton, 1995 p. 20). She had a professional degree as a surveyor, but she worked at a restaurant helping in the kitchen. Martina assumed the major responsibilities to take care of her family. She did not know any English; for that reason, her children helped her to cope with social life conditions and English use in Canada, where she took an ESL course. As Martina started to improve her English, she was more involved in public life in Canada.

According to the author, the poststructuralist perspective of the subject as multiple and contradictory helps to explain how Martina responded to and created opportunities to practice English even though she felt inferior and stupid, among other reasons, because she did not speak English fluently and she worked for \$4 an hour helping in a restaurant kitchen. When Martina was involved in a situation in which she had to defend her family's rights against unscrupulous

social practices and xenophobia, she challenged linguistic rules, which constrained her to perform properly in the Canadian context. The researcher argued that Martina's investment in learning English was mainly structured by her identity, constructed as the mainly caregiver of her family. Also, Martina drew on her symbolic resources as a mother to reframe the power relations between herself and her coworkers, when her coworkers (who were so young and reminded her of her son) asked her to do everything while they were doing nothing. Then, she said "No, you are doing nothing. You can go and clean the tables or something"(p. 23), so her identity as a mother allowed her to position herself in such a way that she reframed the relations of power and claimed the right to speak.

The study is relevant to this research because it includes a discussion of the implications of the study for classroom teaching and theories of communicative competence. For example, an important implication for language teaching is that the second language teacher needs to help language learners claim the right to speak outside the classroom. Norton claims that the lived experiences and social identities of language learners need to be incorporated into the formal second language curriculum. She suggests that classroom-based social research may help language teachers revise the way their students' progress in language learning has to do with their investments in the target language.

Another research study dealing with the construction of identity is presented by Tatiana Pose Ramírez (2010), BA in Modern Languages with an emphasis on Spanish as a foreign language at Javeriana University, in Colombia. Its title was *Factores que determinan la construcción de identidad de jóvenes estudiantes de colegios departamentales y su relación con la enseñanza y aprendizaje del inglés*, (this research was conducted and presented in Spanish).

Factors that determine the construction of identity of young students from departmental schools and their relationship to teaching and learning English.

The problem presented by the researcher was that based on a previous observation of English classes in a department school, she identified problematic facts such as the perpetuation of patterns of authority in the figure of the teacher against students' submissive figure. In addition, behind the figure of authority of the teacher, there are also teacher practices within the classroom which are determined by traditional and hegemonic models of English teaching, such as repetition of dialogues, fill in the blanks, dictation, etc. These practices are those, which in turn, are set by external agents to the teacher and his/her classroom such as state educational policies and internal policies of the institution. Another problematic situation presented in this research is that English is not considered essential or desirable for students of that institution. During the observation phase, the researcher found that the relationship between the teacher and the student in the learning process created certain positions, for example of superiority and inferiority, that affect students' learning experience, and more extensively, the identity of the students as language learners. Therefore, the researcher considered that in order to reach an understanding of the relationships established between teacher-student and the English language, it was necessary to identify the factors that determined the identity of these young people through journals around this relationship, also to reach an understanding of the current situation of English at that school. The research question was: "What do the experiences in learning English, described in journals by ninth graders of a departmental rural school, reveal about identity construction in relationship with that foreign language?" (p. 19)

The main objectives of this study were to identify the elements that determine the construction of identity as English learners of young ninth graders in the Departmental Educational Institution Fagua, Tiquiza through reflections written in the ninth graders' journals and to determine the factors involved in the construction of the "self" in relation to English learning experiences, from the psychological approaches, socio-constructionist, and cognitive perspectives.

She conducted the study with students from ninth grade of a departmental public school in the municipality of Chía, Cundinamarca. The methodology used for this research was qualitative, descriptive, and interpretive mainly based on the experiences described in 7 reflective journals written by students of that institution. The instruments were a survey, reflective journals, and individual interviews. The survey allowed to focus and quantify the trend related to basic problematic aspects of the students (as resistant to study) regarding the teacher's work, methodology, and resources. This survey consisted of one open and seven closed questions and its intention was, as previously mentioned, to identify trends and students' preferences with respect to the English language and its teaching in the school.

The reflective journals used in this research were called conversational reflective journals, where reflections raised from the interaction between the teacher and the students, thus, encouraging the latter to express themselves daily in an informal way, through the description of their experiences in relation to the process of learning English. In these journals, students reflected upon the ways they reacted and will react towards their learning process, having a tour of their past, present, and future learning experiences.

The third instrument was a semi-structured interview whose purpose was to inquire and deepen the main topics mentioned previously; for instance, experiences related to learning and teaching at this school, so the questions focused on learning about the students' opinion in relation to teachers' practices. Students agreed that teachers knew and had a good command of the English language, but the monotony of their activities, negatively affected the motivation they experienced and how they behaved with the teacher and the language.

This research yielded the following conclusions: The Ministry of Education is the institution in charge of controlling education in Colombia; thus, through the imposition of a National Plan of Bilingualism and with the help of assumed hegemonic Standards, the Ministry of Education seeks the commodification of English under the sponsorship of international organizations such as the British Council. This international organization influences the construction of the youths' identity of the institution, as these are called power entities that determine how people should learn English and what, in today's globalized world. Also, other external factors such as culture, the media, and the relationships established among members of the same culture, caused the establishment of paradigms through the use of language as an instrument of symbolic power. For example, English is the foreign language that must be learned at school, generating a feeling of inconformity towards current public policies. So, learning English as the official foreign language affected the students' sense of being a part of the educational system in the Colombian context.

Among the internal factors raised in the study, the construction of the self in light of constructionist and cognitivist approaches was established. These approaches showed the

individual as a relational being; that is, a being who builds identity as a result of a set of relationships developed from the language and supportable in the context of the individual. They have been generated and modified by power entities such as the State, which determines the guidelines of behavior of individuals in relation to international standards for purely economic purposes, and it is through these social and cognitive constructionist approaches that the author stated that motivation is a fundamental theoretical construct. However, since the concept of motivation does not take into account the socio-cultural context of the individual, the researcher considered the concept of Investment pertinent because this construct is a fundamental issue for framing the relations of power and subordination that are experienced in the classroom between teachers and students, involving the family, and the control entity, the Ministry of Education.

Research studies on investment

Mckay and Wong (1996) conducted a study entitled *Multiple Discourses, Multiples Identities: Investment and Agency in Second Language Learning among Chinese Adolescents Immigrant Students*. The main problem posed in this research study was based on the authors' interest in reviewing certain traditional views of second language learning. For example, the code-based view, which assumes that fluency in second language learning depends on the acquisition of a set of grammatical rules mainly. The authors argued that little recognition was given to learning processes, individual variables, and the social context in which the second language was learned and used. Another problem stated in this study was that the view of the language learners' agency and subjectivity was limited to the conception of motivation. The researchers explained that learners' choices, performances, and language development were

reduced to “some monolithic inner quality that a learner may summon in varying amounts” (p. 579).

The authors posed the following questions: “Why do some learners in some contexts draw upon every available strategy to make themselves understood and to progress in the target language, while in other contexts they do not? Why, as many teachers may have noted to their frustration, do some learners seem to act counter-productively, using strategies that subvert or oppose the language performance expectations of the situation rather than fulfill them?” (p. 578). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to make a detailed revision of the social context in which language learning took place and redefine the conception of the language learner. The authors considered that there was a need to examine the connection between discourse and power in the language learning context. They defined discourse as “a set of historically grounded statements that exhibit regularities in presuppositions, thematic choice, values, etc. that delimit what can be said about something by whom, when, where, and how; and that are underwritten by some form of institutional authority” (p. 579). They also subscribed to the concept of power given by Foucault (1972). For Foucault, power is not considered as an object that the individual gives to the sovereign (according to legal-political conception), but is a relationship of forces, a strategic situation in a society at a given time. Therefore, power, being the result of relations of power, is everywhere. The subject, who is crossed by power relations, cannot be considered independently of them. Power, for Foucault, not only represses but also produces: produces effects of truth, produces knowledge.

This was a longitudinal, ethnographic research project, conducted at a junior high school level in California, US. For two years the researchers followed four Chinese-speaking learners, three boys and one girl. Four teachers also participated in the study. All of them were in agreement and signed a consent form. The data collection instruments were interviews and periodical assessments of the English language learners' level. This assessment was carried out through the answers given to oral questions, the summary written about a reading, and some writings in English. Researchers visited the classes and collected writing samples and a portfolio. They also tried to socialize with teachers in different settings out of the classroom. Informal conversations with the focus group, their parents, and their peers were also developed in order to identify the diverse cultural nationalist discourses in relation to "being Chinese" and the discourses emerged from the social and academic context in the school, in order to revise how the American social context influenced on the language learning process.

Among the findings of this study, the authors identified the following discourses: model minority, colonialist/racialized discourses on immigrants, Chinese cultural nationalist discourses, social and academic school discourses, and gender discourses. They also claimed that these discourses interacted with each other and helped shape Chinese students' investment in learning English. As an example of this, the case of Michael Lee, one of the participants, is briefly presented. The researchers conjectured that the model minority discourse was one of the most important ones in his life. The model minority discourse refers to Asians and Asian-Americans characterized as disciplined, hardworking, and academically successful. He focused his investment on learning English, especially oral skills. His performance in writing was acceptable, which created a crisis at his home, but his proficiency in sports helped him to define

a positive social identity (he won many friends). So, the authors argued that this positive social identity allowed him to position himself in a favorable way and influenced on the selective investment in the English language. His investment was selective because he preferred to improve oral skills instead of writing, and when he had to write about a topic, he selected hobbies or sports instead of family or school. The researchers also stated that Michael was influenced by the colonialist/racialized discourses on immigrants. These discourses reflected a Euro and Amerocentric attitude of superiority toward those parts of the world with a colonial relationship. And, the influence of these colonialist/racialized discourses also establishes that a person gains a powerful position in the U.S society due to his/her speaking proficiency. So, it is probable that Michael was not investing in practicing and improving written English, because oral skills led him to establish more powerful relationships.

In summary, the authors established the relationship between discourses, identities constructed by language learners, and how they exercised agency in order to position themselves in multiple social relations of power (as interacting with teachers and local students) at school and in the U.S. society. They also linked investment in the target language with investment in social identities (Norton1995).

Another research on investment was conducted by Jaidev, R. (2011). Its name was *Investing in learning English: A case of three Saudi students in Singapore*. The researcher was interested in investigating the language learning strategies used by three Saudi students and how they handled their fears while they were learning English in a setting that was new for them. Thus, the aim of this study was to report the learning process of three English learners who arrived in a

country for the first time and how their investment in learning English moved for specific and personal objectives. It is explained below.

The study involved three Saudi Arabian students, two boys and a girl, who were selected to be members of the King Abdullah Scholarships Program (KASP), which was launched in 2005 in Saudi Arabia. They arrived in Singapore from Saudi Arabia in the middle of 2008 to learn English, so that they could take either the TOEFL iBT or the IELTS examinations (These are standardized tests to measure the English language proficiency of non-native speakers who want to enroll in English-speaking in an undergraduate or graduate degree program at one of the publicly funded universities in Singapore. The three students attended a course that was theme-based with focused practice in the four skills to prepare them for the TOEFL iBT and IELTS examinations. Theme-based means that the topics were selected according to students' interest, ages, and experiences. The participants took 5.5 hours of English language lessons for five days a week, for 15 weeks, in total 412.5 hours before they attempted the TOEFL iBT or IELTS examination.

Among the participants was a 28-year-old female physics teacher from Jeddah, whose objective was to be accepted as a graduate student in the science faculty of one of the local universities, she had to get a TOEFL iBT score of 85. Another participant was an 18 year-old male student from Yanbu. He had a conditional offer from the faculty of accountancy of one of the local universities. His objective for learning English was to be accepted in the undergraduate program, he needed to get a TOEFL iBT score of 80. The last participant was a 22 year-old science student from Riyadh, who also had a conditional offer from the faculty of engineering of one of the local universities. He had already been attending IELTS preparatory classes. He

needed an IELTS score of 6.5 to assure the university offer. As it was previously mentioned, all of them came from Saudi Arabia and arrived in Singapore to take English courses. It is worth mentioning that the expression *local* is used to refer to Singapore, where one of the official languages is English.

The data collection instruments used in this study were: A questionnaire survey, in-depth semi-structured interviews with individual students, and an analysis of their reflective journals. The data collected with the survey attempted to gather the students' opinion and feelings about the benefits of the course or its deficiencies. From the survey, the researcher also obtained previous learners' conceptions about their learning experiences. The students' answers to the survey were used to guide them to write in detail about their learning experiences during the course.

The in-depth semi-structured interviews were designed to glean relevant data about the coping strategies that students used with respect to the investment in the language learning; they referred to the way a subject faced a situation generated by a specific conflict, in order to solve personal or interpersonal problems, with the intention of trying to control the stress or the conflict situation. These interviews aimed at gathering data about the feelings of constrain that the students may have experienced, as a result of the teacher-student power dynamics during the course. Students' answers to the survey were used to guide them to write about their learning experiences during the course in detail, so they could generate their reflective journals. Their comments and descriptions provided rich reflections and details on the difficulties they had to face while learning English.

As a conclusion, the author states that although all three students clearly recognized the advantages they gained by achieving proficiency in the English language, their individual learning experiences were essentially different. For example, all of them coincided in that English is an international language and they needed it to further their studies, have access to information, and assure a good job, but their investment in learning the language was related to the way they operated their previous social identities when they were in their country and the way they allowed these previous social identities to operate in this Singaporean context. For example, one of the boys made friends easily and was not afraid to start a conversation, even with strangers, just to practice his English. From the data collected, it is possible to deduce that he often went to nightclubs on weekends in his country.

On the other hand, the girl who was introverted and generally preferred to speak to girls, did not mind engaging in a general discussion with boys so that she could improve her English in Singapore. She recognized that she was selective about the people she chose to interact with, maybe influenced partly by her religion and culture in Saudi Arabia. In summary, learners' investment in the target language is developed not only for the meanings and goals that involve learning that language, but it also has to do with the individual's social identity.

Research studies on interaction

Since the previous research studies involved, in some way, language learning in formal educational systems and for that reason interaction was implied, this part will only address one research study on interaction.

The following study was carried out by Gómez (2012), in an EFL Colombian context with students at a private university. Its title was *Language learners' identities in EFL settings:*

Resistance and power through discourse. The problem that originated this study was the fact of considering students as static language entities, able to produce language just thanks to language stimuli, in contrast to conceiving students as social beings whose learning process can be affected by different variables, such as learner's beliefs and cultural background, which are present when they interact in the classroom.

The research questions were "What does classroom interaction unveil about students' identity construction as language learners in an EFL university classroom? What does this identity construction inform us about students' views on teaching and learning a foreign language?" (p. 62). The purpose of this study was to identify and analyze the construction of identity of students in an EFL setting, in order to unveil the unseen meanings of classroom interaction, explained below. The author also stated that another purpose was "looking beyond fixed categorizations and rather listen to how learners negotiate different identities as they employ diverse cultural and linguistic resources to construct knowledge in classrooms" (p. 60).

This study was a qualitative research, framed into the principles of Critical Classroom Discourse Analysis (CCDA). It was carried out in the north branch of the Journalism major of a private university in Bogotá. The participants were a male teacher and 18 students (7 men and 11 women) aged between 18 and 23 years old, who willingly signed the consent form and decided to be a part of this project. Transcripts from video recordings, field notes, and interviews were the instruments which supported and helped to give an account for what was observed and interpreted. The information gathered from the instruments had to do with the students' opinion about the class and how important it was for students to learn a second language in order to fulfill the needs of a globalized world. The instruments were designed in order to discover how

their social dynamics while they interacted in the classroom were developed and if their objectives and expectations towards the class were achieved. The researcher pulled together all the data collected through a specific period of time; then the researcher started a process of scanning of those data in order to get preliminary ideas and impressions from it. After that, the researcher figured out some general reflections that helped her to define the categories of analysis. Finally, she moved from the description phase to the articulation of concepts and the development of theories, giving theoretical support to her analysis.

The researcher claims that interactions can be examined from two different perspectives: The visible one, in which the students and teachers' roles are established through clear rules, and the invisible or informal one, in which attitudes, behaviors, and language learners' interactions reflected who they are as language learners and social individuals, beyond the roles established as a norm as students and teachers.

The results of this study show that issues such as the use of L1 (Mother tongue) in the EFL classroom, the teacher's beliefs about language learning and teaching, and the silent fight for power among the teacher and students represented important elements in the way students constructed their social and individual identities as learners within an EFL classroom setting. As an example, the researcher explained that the participants used their mother tongue for different purposes on different occasions, for instance, when students spoke in Spanish in order to check their understanding on what the teacher had said. An example that illustrated the teacher's beliefs about language learning and teaching and the silent fight for power between the teacher and students, is presented as follows: Teacher's long entries gathered from the transcriptions of the video recordings, compared to the short answers provided by students, led to the conjecture that

the teacher was the owner of knowledge, and students were merely reproducers of the language. This situation determined the way students constructed their identities in relation to the learning of this language.

Given that this study tried to identify the factors that influenced on the learners' investment and how this investment impacted on the construction of their identity as language learners and their interaction in an EFL classroom at a public school, this study is relevant to the present research as it showed the importance of analyzing the way students interacted in an EFL classroom and how this interaction helped them to construct their identities as language learners. Also, it was interesting to see how the analysis of classroom interaction could help teachers and students to improve the teaching and learning process.

The studies presented here show results on study phenomena related to the categories that represent the central axis of the present research, such as the concepts of identity, investment and interaction in the classroom, in very specific and at the same time very different contexts to the present study. What contributes greatly with theoretical foundations that allow me as a researcher to make an analysis and contrast between the notions, perspective and results of these investigations with the data collected in my study. Leading me to expand these notions within the field of teaching English as a foreign language in the particular context of public education in Colombia.

The experience and results presented in these studies have generated new perspectives and expectations in the field of learning and teaching English as a foreign language and second language by encouraging and motivating English teachers, as it is my case, to generate an investigative spirit within the field of Critical Applied linguistics and more particularly to

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review, reflect and rethink from a critical perspective teaching practices with the intention of actually generating a transformation within the field of language teaching and by extension within the classroom.

The achievements of these research contribute to the present research insofar as they provide updated concepts related to the notion of language learner. Topic that I consider important because over the years has been an issue of debate which is necessary to rethink in Colombia that allows teachers in practice and teachers in training to take a clear, open and more critical position respect to the identities constructed by EFL learners, their investment and interactions with the intention to carry out a teaching-learning process of a language successfully. And this is the contribution that seeks to make this study.

Chapter 3

Research Design

This chapter presents, defines, and describes the research methodology and approach that allowed me to describe and analyze the learners' investment and identity in an EFL classroom in a Colombian public school. I also describe the research type, the setting, the participants, the sampling, the researcher's role, and the description of the data collection instruments.

Research Approach

This study is framed within the characteristics of qualitative research. According to Denzin and Lincoln's (1994) generic definition, "qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world" (p. 4).

Denzin and Lincoln also point out that "qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them" (p. 4). According to my personal research interest, I also subscribe to what Merriam (2009) states, in the sense that the interest of a qualitative researcher is to understand the way people construct their meaning, sense, and experiences about the world.

For these reasons, qualitative research was the ideal research approach for my project, because my work focused on human subjects who were complex individuals, who were students of a particular context in an EFL classroom, a public school, and from whom I attempted to examine their identity as language learners in a setting that was complicated for them to learn the

target language. Thus, this qualitative approach allowed me to do an in-depth observation of students' performance to describe their behaviors and to analyze their perceptions and opinions generated during their interaction in the English class. It was useful to understand what kind of factors influenced on the investment and the construction of learners' identity, at a public school in an EFL class.

Consequently, this qualitative research study looked into describing through a deep observation, every single event generated when learners interacted in the English class. All the events that occurred during the class that could evidence their investment and the shaping of their language learners' identity were taken into consideration in this study. This happened thanks to the detailed observation during the development of the present project. A qualitative perspective allows the researcher to collect data through several instruments, which will be described later in this chapter.

Type of Study

The type of study adopted in this project is a descriptive case study. According to Yin (1994) "the case study is but one of several ways of doing social science research" (p. 1). In general terms, according to different scholars, the descriptive case study is defined as an investigation that studies unique interactions, by revising a particular phenomenon within a particular context. Data are collected from a single individual, group, or event and sometimes different cases or events could be studied. The main advantage of a case study is that it gives the researcher a chance to study a real-world problem in detail from many different viewpoints,

because it allows the researcher to use different data collection instruments. It does not just restrict itself to a single research procedure.

According to Yin (1994) a descriptive case-study is called “descriptive” because it aims at describing in depth a particular situation led by questions such as “what,” “how,” and “why” a certain phenomenon happens. That is to say, it tries to obtain information on the particular features of an issue. This type of case study requires a theory to take the data collection in the correct direction. Research questions here can again focus on “what” but lead to questions such as: What have been the effects of a particular situation, activity or issue? In other words, this type of case study is used to describe in detail an intervention or phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurred (Yin, 2003).

Yin (1994) suggested that the researcher must possess or acquire the following skills: The ability to ask good questions and to interpret the responses, be a good listener, be adaptive and flexible so as to react to various situations, have a firm grasp of issues being studied, and be unbiased by preconceived notions. Additionally, a descriptive case study does not require any pedagogical intervention or a plan of action to change the situation under observation. Its aim is not to intervene in order to produce a change or an improvement of the problem that had previously been detected. Through a case study, the researcher rather observes carefully and rigorously the situation of his/her interest. Once the observation phase is finished and the analysis of the phenomenon completed, the researcher can provide possible alternatives to improve or transform what has been observed.

In this sense, my research is a case study, since I tried to identify the factors that influence on the learners' investment and the construction of their identity as language learners in an EFL classroom at a public school. I neither used any new teaching approach nor attempted to modify or change the students' regular behavior, attitudes, and the way they interacted or performed during the class. I just observed in depth their performance in the classroom; in other words, I neither applied any pedagogical intervention nor implemented any methodological change which could influence or affect the classroom interactions that already existed. For that reason, I continued teaching my regular classes with the adopted methodology as it was planned in the syllabus from the beginning of the course and worked on the activities, tasks, and contents without having to make a great change. This decision helped me to analyze a natural environment without any external intervention or transformative influence, since the purpose was to observe and describe reality, meeting the requirements of a *descriptive* case study. I collected data from students' performance, while they interacted during the English class, their opinions about the language, the class, and their perceptions of themselves, as language learners.

Setting

This descriptive case study was developed at a public school, located in "Los Naranjos," Bosa, a neighborhood located in the southeast of Bogotá. It is an academic school that was founded in 1990. It runs all the grades from kindergarten to eleventh grade, there are three sites, two shifts, and it has around 5,000 students.

This zone is considered one with the lowest income socioeconomic levels of Bogotá. According to Gerardo Ardila, planning secretary of the city in 2013, in a public report informed

that Bosa has difficult urban conditions (insecurity, accessibility issues) and environmental problems (smelly, generation of waste and trash mismanagement) since it is one of the towns with the highest density of population and of households with children with low educational level. Besides, it shows overcrowding and unfavorable conditions in housing, lack of urban facilities, (hospitals, roads, parks) and restrictions on household socioeconomic conditions.

According to the PEI (Proyecto Pedagógico Institucional) document, which includes the administrative and pedagogical policies of the institution, this school is co-educational, that is, for boys and girls and it has an academic emphasis, which means that there is not any technological, commercial, technical emphasis or a bilingual mode. Moreover, in relation to the English language, there are not certified teachers to teach English to students in the elementary section. The teachers who work in primary school teach all the subjects, and are also in charge of teaching English, even though they do not have the certification and language competence to do it. Students in elementary school just study English one hour (50 minutes) a week, and sixth graders only have three hours of English class a week. In addition, the government has implemented a project called “40 x 40” (it is a way to extend the school hours to have students do extra academic activities), but it does not have an emphasis on English, that is, there is not an English Club or an English Forum. There is another project called “Media Fortalecida,” which is a way of articulating vocational education to higher education, but again it does not have any emphasis on English, in any of the programs offered by the university, in this case UNIMINUTO. The “Immersion Room Project” is another government project supported by the British Council; in this room, students have the opportunity to meet foreigners who speak English, but they are not teachers. However, sixth graders can attend this classroom to receive

English classes. In the school there are 5,000 students but just 400 students attend this room (200 in the morning and 200 in the afternoon).

English is not a subject matter of emphasis at school, the teaching practice at the institution is based on the framework of “Teaching for Understanding,” developed by the teachers and researchers Howard Gardner and David Perkins (Wiske, 1998). Its objective is to help educators take students beyond the simple mastery of facts, to being able to apply knowledge flexibly in unfamiliar contexts. This framework helps educators to identify topics, concepts, and skills that are worth understanding; frame goals that help students focus on the most important aspects of those topics; engage students in challenging learning experiences that help to build and demonstrate their understanding; and develop assessment practices that help to deepen students’ understanding. Although this framework started to be implemented five years ago, the planning and practice inside the classrooms do not reflect that at all, because teachers are still learning this approach and trying to adapt some strategies in order to implement some of its foundations in the real class.

The English program at school established the Communicative Approach as its prominent methodology. However, because of the large number of students per class, there are some difficulties to implement it. For example, to develop oral activities, it is not possible to make 40 of the students practice dialogues, or participate in role plays in just one class session, it is very time consuming to correct students’ errors on pronunciation, to evaluate their performance when listening activities are implemented, to involve all of the students in communicative situations, because most of them are not interested in the class. According to the school’s academic

foundations, English is conceived as a tool to be used for communicating, expressing feelings, and knowing a different way to get by in the world. There are activities which tried to develop and improve the four communicative skills. The observation took place during the development of seventh graders regular English classes.

Participants

This section complements students' profile, which was described in the statement of the problem in chapter 1. The students who come to this school have to face a lot of socioeconomic problems because most of them come from impoverished and dysfunctional families. According to the characterization of the population done by the school psychologists in 2015, 40 % of students had a step father or a step mother, 30% lived just with their single mother, 10% lived with a different relative and only few of them lived with their mother and father. Because of this situation, students faced family problems related to domestic violence, lack of communication with their parents or mentors, and they even felt lonely and bored with their families because they thought they were misunderstood by adults and some teachers (this information was provided by the school psychologist, during formal meetings carried out with teachers and coordinator in 2015). Based on the same characterization, it was known that 80% of the parents had no academic studies and a great percentage was unemployed or had informal jobs. They were also victims of violence, because they lived in a zone of drug dealers, so they had to face dangerous situations every day.

There was an average of 40 students per course, 30% of them were older than they should be to take the school courses, because they had failed academic periods. 50% of these students

were considered as problematic, because they constantly generated discipline problems as aggression, bullying or theft.

The participants in this descriptive case study, in particular, belonged to the morning shift in the main school branch (there are three). The students selected for this study were 40 seventh graders, 21 girls and 19 boys whose ages ranged between 11 to 15 years old. In order to do a better characterization of the group, I asked them some questions about their personal information, for example where they did their elementary school and what their English classes were like. (See Appendix E) As a result of this characterization it can be said that no student had a certified English teacher during his/her elementary school, neither did any additional face-to-face or virtual English course outside of school

In regards to students' academic level and based on their grades, their class participation, and the review and analysis of some of their writing tasks and oral production exercises, I can say that most of the students' English level was basic, because they could master a small amount of vocabulary and understand short readings, but they had serious difficulties to write a paragraph and communicate orally.

This group of students was selected because I was their English teacher when they were in sixth and seventh grade, so I had easy access to the group to make a detailed observation of what happened during the class and to collect data to analyze the phenomenon of this study. Most of these participants also exemplified students who do not want to invest in the English class, which was the problematic situation that generated this study, bearing in mind my research interest of identifying the factors that influenced the students' investment and identity as language learners.

These students had evidenced academic and discipline problems at different levels throughout the first and second semester of 2015, when they were in sixth grade, but some of them did a little better. For example, participating more or showing more dedication with their homework. They had shown constant resistance to listen to, speak, read, and write in English. Some of them frequently made fun of students who liked to participate somehow, some of them had notorious low grades, and their lack of investment in their language learning process during the class, generated continuous discipline problems.

Type of sampling

Sampling is the process of systematically selecting and defining a representative population that is examined and observed during the course of a study. To select the sampling, it is necessary to reduce the quantity of the participants. In this case, the sampling was the subgroup of 40 participants that were willing to participate in the project. There is a wide range of sampling strategies such as homogenous, critical case, theory based, extreme or deviant case, and stratified purposeful, among others. These are called purposive samples because the researcher selects the sampling participants, taking into account the specific purpose of the study, which implies to select the cases that provide the greatest wealth of information possible, to study in depth the specific phenomenon of the study (Patton, 2001).

This descriptive case study adopted the Stratified Purposeful Sampling (SPS), which focuses on characteristics of particular subgroups of interest that, in turn, facilitated comparisons. This strategy is similar to stratified random sampling (samples are taken within samples), except that the sample size (SPS) is typically much smaller. According to Patton

(2001), this sampling type can lend credibility to a research study, when enough information is known to identify characteristics that may influence on how the phenomenon is manifested. This type of sampling was selected because the present study aimed at analyzing different levels of investment of English language learners and its influence on the language learners' identities. Then, the participants, whose characteristics in relation to the way they interacted, constructed identity, and invested on their language learning were different, brought about a wide range of variation to identify how the phenomena of identity and investment were manifested.

In stratified sampling the researcher “stratifies” a sample based on a characteristic. Thus, if the study focuses on academic performance, the researcher would sample a group of below average performers, average performers, and above average performers. The main goal of this strategy is to capture major variations, although common themes may emerge. With stratified sampling the researcher should partition the population into groups (strata), obtain a simple random sample from each group (stratum), and collect data on each sampling unit that was randomly sampled from each group (stratum).

Sample size is an important consideration in qualitative research. So in order to decide how *big this sampling would be*, it was taken into consideration what Sandelowski (1995) points out, that researchers need to evaluate the quality of the information collected in light of the uses to which it will be put, and the research method, sampling and analytical strategy employed. So, determining an adequate sample size in qualitative research is ultimately a matter of the researcher's judgment and experience. Bearing in mind these considerations, the sampling

selected for this research was 12 students, who represented 30% of the whole group of seventh graders, 40.

The participants of this study were 40 seventh graders. As this was a descriptive case study, which implied to do an in-depth description of the phenomenon, it was necessary to select a sample which allowed me to focus the data analysis on a smaller group than 40 students. In this way, during the process of data analysis, I could do a reliable detailed description and analysis of interaction, relations of power, construction of identities, investment in the learning of English, and all the data collected during the data collection phase through the instruments used.

The whole group (40) was divided into three homogeneous subgroups. These subgroups were determined thanks to the following criteria: The revision of the academic results gathered during the first academic period from January 28 to March 30, and on the other hand, the decision of the teacher/researcher made thanks to the systematic observations while students interacted in the classroom (during the same period of time, mentioned above). The first group put together the students whose level of investment was low (14 students), the second subgroup was formed by students whose level of investment was average (15 students), and the third one grouped students above average (11 students). From each subgroup (there were 3) 4 students were selected for the sample. The selection of the sample from each of the subgroups was at random.

Researcher's Role

As a researcher, my role was that of a participant observer. Schensul, Schensul, and LeCompte (1999) define participant observation as "the process of learning through exposure to or involvement in the day-to-day or routine activities of participants in the researcher setting" (p. 91). The participant observer examines, categorizes, analyzes, and describes data, but does not manipulate any situation, event or do any pedagogical intervention, which could have an impact on the findings of the study. As a researcher, I decided to be a complete participant observer; this kind of participation, according to Spradley (1980), means that the researcher is completely integrated in the population of the study beforehand (for example, I was already a member of this particular population studied, as an English teacher). Spradley also states that there is the risk of losing all levels of objectivity, thus, risking what is analyzed and presented to the public. However, the researcher must have clearly established boundaries before the onset of the study, in order to maintain an ethical behavior during all the phases of the research.

I was the English teacher of this group, but I did not implement any specific intervention in order to change specific conducts, attitudes, or academic performance. I had my regular classes with them while I was observing them. I did not manipulate any of the events, which were a part of this study. It implied to develop the planning related to activities, topics, projects, etc, as it was determined at the beginning of the academic period; I did not make any change in the organization of the group with the intention of manipulating the kind of participants who were going to be a part of this study; and I did not ask students to have a certain behavior in order to lead a specific result.

As a participant, I had been the students' English teacher for two years. So, I was not a stranger of this community, which represented an advantage because I had a good level of knowledge related to students' behaviors, attitudes, abilities, interactions, and in general, issues related to the concepts that were the focus of this study. However, it is important to clarify that this level of knowledge about my students did not permeate the analysis of the data collected, because during the application of the instruments I, as a researcher, kept a neutral perspective. As an observant, I observed systematically how students constructed identity and invested in their English language learning while I taught the class, with the support of video and audio recordings. I interviewed a focus group, bearing in mind ethical concerns as respecting the answers of the participants, which were recorded and transcribed. Participants answered a questionnaire, but they did not give their names, with the intention of avoiding influence on the participants' answers.

Data Collection Instruments

Yin (1994) identified six primary sources of evidence for case study research. The use of each of these require different skills from the researcher. Not all sources are essential in every case study, but the importance of multiple sources of data to the reliability of the study is well established. The six sources identified by Yin (1994) are: Documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artifacts.

According to Yin (1994), the reason to use multiple sources of data is the triangulation of evidence. Triangulation increases the reliability of the data and the process of gathering it. In the process of data collection, triangulation serves to corroborate the data gathered from other

sources. For this reason, the instruments implemented in this study were field notes, one open-ended interview, and a semi-structured questionnaire.

The data collection procedure for this descriptive case study was carried out from January 28 to June 3 in 2016. It meant that the three instruments were implemented for 20 weeks, which represented around 50 hours of English classes. Table 1 presents the triangulated data collection plan that I followed, including the question that led this inquiry and the data collection instruments. The table shows which data collection instrument was more suitable to answer the research question:

Table 1: Triangulation matrix for data collection

Research questions	Data source 1	Data source 2	Data source 3
Which English language learners' identities are constructed by seventh EFL graders at a public school in Bogotá?	Field notes	Open-ended Interview	Semi-structured questionnaire

Now I describe each instrument implemented in the observation phase.

Field notes

Some ethnographers consider field notes to be the very essence of a study. According to Van Maanen (1998), field notes are “gnomic, short hand reconstructions of events, observations, and conversations that took place in the field. They are composed well after the fact as inexact notes to oneself and represent simply one of many levels of textualization set off by experience” (p. 223). Writing field notes implies a lot of important decisions, for example, what the

researcher should or must annotate and when. These decisions may have a profound impact on the final report of the case study; for this reason, I supported the field notes with audio and video recordings.

Field notes are meant to be read by the researcher to produce meaning and an understanding of the culture, social situation or phenomenon being studied. When observing a culture, setting, or social situation, field notes are created by the researcher to remember and record the behaviors, activities, events, and other features of the setting being observed, (Burgess, 1991).

The way the data were collected through field notes, was as follows: During the writing of these field notes, I not only took into account the research question that led this study, but the theory about identity and investment presented in the second chapter of this document. This focus let make an analysis in the light of the collected theories. In turn, this contrast allowed me to give theoretical support to what was observed during the different classes.

I took field notes by adopting a format (see Appendix F), created by Gómez (2016), there I wrote relevant information of the context observed, including the research questions. This format contained two main columns, one for writing observations related to the construction of students' identity and the other one for writing descriptions of events related to their investment. In the column "identity construction," I concretely took notes about students' interactions in such a way that I could identify and analyze how they established relations of power (dominant and dominated, and marginalized students) and how those hierarchical roles affected their language learning performance. Equally, I took notes related to issues about

exclusion and inclusion, including, for instance, how these EFL learners accepted or rejected others on the basis of their good or low academic performance, friendship, groups formation to work in class, respect or disrespect, social treatment, and the conditions or motifs that encouraged them to choose classmates to complete the tasks. I also took notes about how learners behaved and managed situations of peace and conflict when they had to interact with others. These aspects, as mentioned in the theoretical framework, helped me to determine the particular English language learners' identities built in this classroom. In the column "Students' investment," I wrote critical and reflective comments of students' academic performance in terms of the motifs, objectives, attitudes, motivations, as well as sense of compromise, commitment, and responsibility towards the English class; all of that would help me to determine aspects of their investment in class. The application of this instrument was useful because I could describe and analyze all the classroom events, situations, and social interactions generated by the participants, since I was aware, as the theoretical framework states, that identity construction is socially situated and context-dependent, and such identity inevitably influences on learners' investment in the classroom. Therefore, the field notes were used to give a detailed account of the phenomenon.

As a limitation, since I was the teacher and the observer who took field notes at the same time, there was the risk of forgetting important details. For that reason, the field notes were supported by video-recordings in order to make the best description of the events observed. Some scholars state that one major disadvantage of taking field notes is that they are recorded by an observer and his/her unique perspective can possibly bias the observation, so it is required that

the observer pay more attention to every detail as not to overlook anything and assume an ethical responsibility.

I took a total of 18 field notes, which corresponded to 50 hours of classes with seventh graders during the observation phase. They were recorded and spread over approximately 20 weeks. I also used jottings or scratch notes to generate the field notes. I included photocopies of academic work produced by my students, in order to extend the description and analysis of what was observed. At the beginning of this phase, class recording constituted a limitation since students were distracted or their behavior changed because of this situation. However, this situation changed due to the fact that with time, students ignored the camera and classes went on normally. Thus, recordings were a great advantage because as a researcher, I could watch them over and over again.

Field notes correspond to classroom observations during the classes, which had a time intensity of three hours per week. Field notes were taken each week on Fridays after collecting jottings or scratch notes and watching the video recordings. In these I narrated, described, reflected upon, and analyzed the interactions of all of the children (40), their performance in the process of learning English, both academic and attitudinal expressions and comments leading to obtain data to reach conclusions about their identity and investment during their interaction in the classroom (paying special attention to the sample group, and taking additional notes about it). English classes were on Mondays and Thursdays, the field notes were written on the following Friday.

The field notes were transcribed and saved in a computer file in order to do the data analysis. There, I described in detail the activities and topics of the classes, as well as the students' beliefs, attitudes, expressions, interactions, and actions that were related to the construction of identities, the way they invested in their English language learning or their resistance to do it. For example, I described and analyzed how some of them interacted with the intention of generating an image to their classmates and teacher as language learners, how they made some choices which affected their academic results in a negative and positive way, being these actions relevant data to understand identity construction and investment in language learning.

Open-ended interview

Bernard (1995) claims that “in unstructured interviewing, you keep the conversation focused on a topic, while giving the informant room to define the content of the discussion” (p. 216), he continues stating that it is important to allow the informant to provide the information that he/she thinks is important. Interviewing involves asking questions and getting answers from participants in a study. This instrument is used when the researcher needs to develop an understanding of participants' opinions, perceptions, beliefs, and experiences on the topics of study that are difficult to observe through other instruments such as field notes. In this sense, the questions of the interview aimed at answering the research question proposed for this descriptive case study (Appendix G). The interview focused on questions that could lead me to understand and get information related to their identity construction in the classroom (bearing in mind that students obviously knew nothing about such a concept, and therefore, I needed to ask questions that

allowed me to collect data related to this research topic). That is why the questionnaire contained questions about their relationships with other classmates, their opinions about why to study English, how they felt when participating in class, and how they felt about being learners of the English language. Each interview lasted 30 minutes.

Gubrium and Holstein (2001) state that when conducting semi-structured or unstructured interviews, the interviewer develops a guide, with general questions designed to open up a conversation about the topic. Often, this includes a series of follow-up questions or probes, prepared in advance, in order to elicit certain types of information from the informant. For this descriptive case study, questions were designed to be open-ended with the intention of having little control over informants' responses.

The interviews were conducted on Fridays, because I could not meet with the children after the school day, or take them out of their regular classes, nor replace classes for interviews, so we met on Friday at break time, we had two sessions for these interviews, one on May 27 and the other one on June 3, these dates correspond to the final stage of the data collection phase the first session focus the attention on their identity and the second session on their investment. The two sessions were conducted, with a focus group. The criterion to choose this focus group was the selection of 8 students from the sampling at random, in order to make a deeper data analysis. I decided to do the interview during this final stage because the designing of the questions was very time consuming and because I felt it was necessary to give time to the informants to build experiences, opinions, and beliefs related to the topics of the study. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and saved in a computer.

As a limitation, when answering the questions during the interview, the participants, informants or respondents, as some scholars name them, were a little shy, so it was necessary to encourage them to speak, in order to have better access to the respondents' true feelings on the topics of this study, but bearing in mind what De Marrais and Lapan (2004) state, "usually, the interviewer speaks much less than the participant, focusing the conversation on the participants' views and experiences" (p. 54).

Semi-structured Questionnaire

The third instrument used to collect data for this study was a semi-structured questionnaire (Appendix H), containing open-ended questions and close-ended questions. Open-ended questions are very useful for exploring sensitive issues and investigating topics concerning beliefs, attitudes, and practices. Close-ended questions usually provide a set of responses or options from which a respondent indicates his/her choice. When the study topic concerns factual issues, or is a familiar one with a limited range of responses, close-ended questions are particularly useful.

According to Fife-Schaw (2001), the questionnaire is probably the most common research instrument that is relatively well understood and its advantages are simplicity, versatility, and low cost. Following Nworgu (2006), the questionnaire is one of the most frequently used instruments in educational research and this popularity is evidenced by the number of published studies and projects in education that employ this instrument for data collection.

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This instrument provided relevant information to know all of the participants' perceptions, beliefs, and preferences related to English learning, mainly in the educational context of a public school. This information mainly allowed me as a researcher to collect data related to learners' level of investment in the classroom. The students' answers were transcribed, saved in a file, and used only to be analyzed with the intention of giving answers to the research question generated by the state of the problem of this study. It was applied to the entire group, Forty students, on June 3 during one of the class sessions. The questions were explained one by one at the beginning of the session in Spanish. However, some of the students needed an extra explanation to answer them because they had doubts about what was being asked. Students did not have to write their names, with the intention to allow them to answer it more freely. They spent approximately one hour answering the semi-structured questionnaire. The following table shows the time line in which I collected the data:

Table 2: Data Collection Schedule

Data collection instrument	Date for data collection	Quantity of data collected	Place
Field notes	From January 28 to June 3 2016	18 field notes were written corresponding to 50 hours of classes spread over approximately 20 weeks.	An English classroom at public school
	Two sessions of interviews were	Two days which correspond to two	public school

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Open-ended Interview	conducted, with a Focus Group, on May 27 and June 3 2016.	sessions, each one of 30 minutes.	
Semi-structured Questionnaire	Date of application June 3. It was applied to the entire group of 40 students.	Estimated time to answer: 1 hour	public school

Ethical issues

Doing research implies to take into consideration certain ethical issues, such as: (1) Having participants sign an Informed consent in which they agreed to be the human subjects of the research. Since the participants were children, consent forms were also signed by the Principal of the school, parents, and students (See Appendixes A, B, C, respectively). (2) Respecting confidentiality (the identity of participants was protected and their names were not announced), (3) being a neutral and objective participant observer, as a participant observer I kept an ethical responsibility for the effects and consequences that might have arose from the interaction with participants who were both students. In relation to data collection instruments, they were not manipulated with the intent to condition the responses of participants to lead to predetermined conclusions. The data were safeguarded in a confidential file, using them for analysis and conclusions of the current research only.

Data analysis and findings will be explained in the coming chapter.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis and Findings

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected, as well as the findings of the research study. It describes the data analysis procedures, the findings, and the categories and subcategories that emerged from the analysis. In this study, data were collected through three different instruments, which were, 18 Field notes representing 50 hours of lessons observed during 20 weeks, two sessions of an open-ended interview and one semi-structured questionnaire.

Data Analysis Approach

This research study took on the Grounded Theory principles since its purpose is to develop theory about a phenomenon of interest, ingrained on careful observation. The Grounded Theory is a research methodology, which consists of the construction of theory through the analysis of data. Implementing grounded theory implies to collect qualitative data. The data are collected, reviewed, re-reviewed, coded in order to be grouped into concepts, and then into categories. These categories become the basis for a new theory. (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The Grounded Theory implies a constant comparative analysis, which involves the researcher moving in and out of the data collection and analysis process, to compare, contrast or review data, this movement between data collection and analysis is sometimes called an “iteration”. The Grounded Theory research involves multiple iterations.

The use of this methodology requires a creative researcher, who is an essential factor in understanding the studied phenomenon. The researcher must also have a critical eye for asking the precise questions to meet the answers to the needs of data collection. Another requirement from the researcher is to always make proposals, for which his/her sensitivity and creative thinking must always be alert to reach the objectives. (Strauss and Corbin 1998)

Data Analysis Procedure

This part refers to the processes and procedures that I, as a researcher, followed to transform the qualitative data that I had collected into explanation, understanding, and interpretation of people, situations, and events that were researched. Consequently, I used the Grounded Theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The process of analyzing the data was done following the three levels of coding explained by Strauss and Corbin (1998). The first one was: Open Coding. It consists in segmenting or dividing the data into similar groupings to form preliminary categories of information about the phenomenon being examined. The second level is Axial Coding through which the researcher begins to bring together the categories he or she has identified into groupings. The third level, Selective Coding, allows the researcher to organize and integrate the categories and themes in such a way that a coherent understanding or theory of the phenomenon of study is articulated.

In this sense, the first stage in the analysis was assembling the data, which implied putting together all the data collected through a specific period of time. I started reading the data collected through the 18 field notes written from January 28 to June 3, in order to get preliminary ideas and impressions from them. After doing several readings, I started the procedure of identifying broad patterns that could emerge, what certainly helped me to come up with common

topics within the information collected by the different instruments. This process helped me to come up with some general reflections in order to define the categories of analysis, all this process was based on the research question.

Since triangulation represents the search of patterns of convergence to develop or corroborate a whole comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Patton, 2002), the same identification procedure was made with the data collected through the other data collection instruments, the open-ended interviews and the semi-structured questionnaire. Consequently, I continued with the open-ended interview, which provided information about opinions, beliefs and, in general terms, the point of view of the participants of the study. Since the answers of the participants were transcribed, I read all of the answers and, after doing several readings, I established patterns and started a reflexive process in order to compare the data collected in the field notes to the data in the open-ended interviews. This preliminary comparison helped me to contrast the students' expressions and beliefs given in the interview, with their attitudes and behavior when they interacted in the English class. This information was gathered in the field notes. In the end, following the same process, I read the information gathered in the semi-structured questionnaire several times, looking for patterns in order to make a comparative and contrastive analysis process of the data collected from the three instruments. In summary, this triangulation was a tool, which offered the alternative to view the problem from different perspectives and thus, increased the validity and consistency of the findings (Patton, 2002).

As it was mentioned before, in order to do the coding procedure, the process of analysis followed the three phases or levels proposed by Strauss and Corbin (1998) namely, open, axial,

and selective coding, which have become the most widely accepted phases in Grounded Theory Methods (GTM). Strauss and Corbin (1998) describe open coding as a procedure where “the data are broken down into discrete parts, closely examined, compared for similarities and differences, and questions are asked about the phenomena reflected in the data” (p. 102). Axial coding has been defined by Strauss and Corbin (1998) as “a process of relating categories to their subcategories” (p. 123), they define a category as a concept “that stands for phenomena” (p. 101). On the other hand, Glaser (1992), states that a category is a “type of concept” that is “usually used for a higher level of abstraction” (p. 38). So, categorization in GTM may be understood as grouping similar concepts, although not identical, but which retain a relationship among them, within a more abstract heading (LaRossa, 2005). Axial coding has been defined as “a process of relating categories to their subcategories” (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 123). Subcategories also are categories, but they are categories that answer the questions of “when, where, why, who, how, and with what consequences” around a focal category (p. 125). Finally, selective coding is the process of integrating and refining categories for building theory; it involves discovering the central categories of the research. After having identified the core categories, a network of concepts as a way of integrating categories and generating theory, is built around them. It is also important to recognize the cyclical connection among the three phases, which introduces an important dynamic to the coding process.

Bearing in mind the brief explanation of the three phases, the process was done as follows: First, I read several times the whole data collected through the three implemented instruments, in order to have a wide understanding of the phenomenon under study. At this stage, broad patterns started to emerge, so I unraveled some general previous reflections which were very helpful in

order to define the categories of analysis, as it was mentioned. Secondly, I started a process of coding the data in which I gave specific categories to the patterns previously found, in order to group common characteristics of the events, expressions, answers, opinions, interactions gathered from the data collection instruments, always keeping in mind my research question and its possible answers. The aim at this stage is to disaggregate data and group them into different categories, properties, topics or groups that give some meaningful data unit (Coffey and Atkinson 2003). Strauss and Corbin (2002) indicate that the encoding process cannot be thought of only as a data reduction, but it should also be seen as a complication thereof, in the sense of trying to interrogate them (data) in a wider way, to think creatively about them to test concepts, identify their properties and dimensions. Here is where categories and subcategories emerged. Then, I segmented data to establish patterns for coding them in order to convert them into different categories and subcategories. Hence, I had to pass to the creative work of connecting the data, thinking about different relationships between concepts in order to have an overall picture of the data, this is called recontextualization (Coffey and Atkinson, 2003). So having identified the patterns, I had to build a network of concepts around them, as a way of integrating categories to subcategories and generating theory.

After giving a general explanation of the procedure for data analysis, I am going to give some specific examples of this process. I started a microanalysis (a line by line analysis), it means that I separated phrase by phrase the expressions of the students used during the interaction in the English class, the answers given in the open-ended interview, and the answers given in the semi structured questionnaire. I separated these phrases and labeled them using a color coding strategy in order to encode text segments related to the same subject; for example,

the constant request of some students that the teacher speak Spanish instead of English during the class, expressions like “*Yo no entiendo, hable en español*” “*¿Por qué me habla en inglés?*” Comments of students such as “*¿En inglés porqué? ¡Noooo, en español!*” when they had to do a written production (*From field notes*), these segments were labeled by coloring them in red. So, all the segments that corresponded to expressions which had to do with a negative attitude toward the learning of English, were colored in red being that this pattern emerged in the analysis of the data as a factor that affected and at the same time was related to low investment in the learning of English. Besides, the negative attitude was connected to inequitable relations of power established by mainly low investors. In contrast, the segments which refer to expressions that had to do with students’ positive opinion about learning English, were colored in green. For example, in the answers given in the interview and in the questionnaire, most of the students (95%) considered learning English as something that was useful and necessary, as to study at the university or to travel abroad. These positive opinions and beliefs were colored in green. So, I continued trying to group all the segments bearing in mind the patterns found. Then, when I established the patterns found in the three data collection instruments, they were closely examined, compared for similarities and differences, and I gave a name to each group in order to establish concepts. A concept is the label of a phenomenon; it is the abstract representation of an object, action, interaction, or event that the researcher identifies as data (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). So, the names that I gave to each group of segments were: Behavior, actions, and interactions which evidence low investment (blue), negative attitude toward learning English (red), positive beliefs about learning English (green), actions and interactions which evidence high investment (yellow), inequitable relations of power (purple), friends’ influence (dark blue),

influence of family on the learning of English (grey), and school influence(orange). All of the names were selected, bearing in mind the main concepts established in the research question, and facts that were detected and which influence on investment and the construction of language learning identity.

As an example of the patterns established in the label of inequitable relations of power (purple), the data revealed that students who usually interrupted their classmates' participation and sabotaged their homework or tasks, used these actions to exert abusive power relations over them. Moreover, it was detected that these students who exerted abusive power relations were also low investors, due to the fact that they never or rarely participated appropriately in speaking or writing activities I made the decision to categorize them using the concepts of dominant and low investment/investors. Doing the conceptualization is a difficult and complex task, because the researcher must be able to identify data properties, understand the meaning of the data, use only relevant data, and be very sensitive and creative to select the appropriate concepts (Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

For example, when the concept of low investment/investors was examined, it was necessary to analyze what kind of investment students did, how this particular level of investment permeated learners' identities, and how relations of power influenced on the way students invested. So, the review of patterns found through students' interactions, behavior, and expressions described in detail in the field notes, was necessary. After doing this, I analyzed that the students' exercise of power was directly proportional to the low investment made in the learning. So, when the learner invested at a low level, she/he promoted inequitable relations of power, because his/her effort, time, and motivation aimed at being annoying in class. In contrast,

it was detected that students whose actions, behavior, and expression patterns placed them within the concept of high investors, were also positioned as dominated. Once I obtained the concepts, I began to categorize them. So, after analyzing the concepts of low investment/investors-dominant and high investment/investors-dominated, and after several reflections, this turned into the category called: Dominant and dominated language learners' identities based on power relations (see Table 3).

As the researcher must make a good characterization of the categories defining their properties and dimensions, I determined and defined them bearing in mind the different situations, considerations, and circumstances observed in this particular EFL environment. Then, I continued with the process of establishing the subcategories and the connections between categories and subcategories. So, as I mentioned previously, I found that learners with a high investment were dominated by learners with a low investment and somehow high investors resisted an unequal exert of power. These findings constituted the subcategories of the category called: Dominant and dominated language learners' identities based on power relations (See Table 3).

Hitherto, I have explained the data analysis process followed. This process was very demanding and time consuming, but at the same time, it was very satisfactory, because it allowed me to make a lot of reflections and connections between the information gathered through the data collected. All this process led me to know better and analyze my students from a different perspective, that is to say, from the lens of the researcher.

Now, I will turn to introduce the categories and subcategories that emerged from the data collected.

Categories and Subcategories that emerged from the Data Analysis

As the aims of this study are to identify which language learners’ identities are constructed by seventh EFL graders at a public school in Bosa, Bogotá, to describe the (social) factors that influence on their investment and to examine how their investment in the English class influenced on their English language identity, I identified the following categories and subcategories which emerged from data analysis (Table 3).

Table 3: Categories and subcategories that emerged from data analysis

Research Questions	Categories	Subcategories
Which English language learners’ identities were constructed by seventh EFL graders at a public school in Bogotá?	<p>1. Some language learners constructed unstable and strategic identities to impress others</p> <p>2. Some language learners built dominant and dominated language learners’ identities based on power relations</p> <p>3. Some language learners shaped language learners’ identities as high investors,</p>	<p>1.1. Identities influenced by academic demands</p> <p>1.2. Identities influenced by family demands</p> <p>1.3. Identities influenced by friendship ties</p> <p>2.1. Learners with a low investment dominated learners with a high investment</p> <p>2.2. High investors resisted an unequal exert of power</p> <p>3.1 High investors were dedicated for academic success</p>

	hoping to achieve better life conditions	3.2 High investors were goal-oriented for a better future
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Category 1. Some language learners constructed unstable and strategic identities to impress others

As it was stated in the theoretical background, understanding identity is a dynamic and complex process because language learners, like every human being, never have a fixed identity; it is constantly changeable depending on social circumstances or relations socially rooted. Some of the elements to understand language learners' identity in this particular research study were which reasons these learners had for learning the foreign language, how they felt as language learners despite the fact that they had to take an English class as a requirement, and which social variables in the classroom influenced on or contributed with successful language learning. Based on the data analysis, it was found that some of the participants involved in this class were not really committed to learn the foreign language, and some others were constant and committed. This fact showed that language learners developed different levels of investment in their learning process. There were language learners who were considered high investors, and there were learners whose level of investment was merely acceptable and very low.

Data evidenced that identities constructed by EFL learners in this particular classroom were unstable and strategic as they were concerned about impressing other people that were a part of their lives depending on factors such as academic development, family demands, and their

friendship ties. These factors generated the construction of unstable and strategic identities. Each factor is explained as a subcategory.

Before starting explaining the subcategories, it is important to explain why unstable and strategic were the characteristics given to the identities constructed by these language learners. The first reason was that this study is framed into the poststructuralist perspective of the language learner stated by Norton (1995), who argues that the learner is not a fixed individual. So, as a researcher, I assumed the pose to perceive the participants of this study as language learners with diverse, multiple, and dynamic identities. The second reason was that data evidenced that these learners' behaviors, attitudes, performance, and positions were changeable, not firm, but unsteady as they always attempted to impress the people around them. Thus, language learners constructed unstable identities depending on social circumstances, academic demands, and ideals of pretension, popularity, and self-image, as they were concerned about making themselves look good and successful to others. It also showed that students were tactical, they established social relationships with specific intentions and depending on convenience, as explained below. They made strategic decisions during their learning process with the specific purpose of getting benefits, as the circumstances forced them to make themselves look good, cool, and successful learners to others. "The others" refers to the individuals that were around them in this particular context and in some way contributed to influence on their decisions and identity construction, including their teacher, their family members, and their friends and classmates. Hence, this category will be explained in terms of three subcategories which enclose how learners constructed unstable and strategic identities in order to impress and show off as

good and dedicated learners or just popular to others, as being influenced by academic and family demands, and friendship ties.

Subcategory 1.1: Identities influenced by academic demands

This category represents how the participants in the English classroom constructed unstable and strategic identities as being influenced by academic demands at school. In order to explain this subcategory, it is important to clarify that academic demands refer to how the educational system, the school, and the rules in the English class determine the requirements that students have to meet in order to be a part of the institution and pass the courses. In fact, Darwin and Norton (2015) indicate that in order to understand language learners' identity, it is important to observe that their identity is determined in part by the systemic patterns of control imposed by educational institutions. Educational organizations establish an ideology and a set of rules that learners are expected to follow. So, it was observed in this study that learners' attitudes, behavior, and academic performance in the English class changed gradually as they were influenced by the ideology and the rules established by the school. This means that students' identity and investment were influenced by the ideology of discipline and academic demands inculcated by this institution. That is to say, one of the main factors that shaped English learners' identity was their strategic and convenient response to academic demands to impress the community of the school. Initially, learners were indifferent and careless about their language learning process, at different levels, that is, some were more interested than others or more indifferent than others. But they gradually changed and were more interested in and concerned

about the English class duties, because they discovered that it was convenient for them to meet the school demands and impress teachers and classmates.

In order to contextualize this subcategory, it is necessary to explain which academic demands were imposed and how the requirements that students had to meet operated in order to be a part of the institution and pass the courses.

There are four academic demands that determined the rules that language learners had to meet to be a part of this institution. First, the whole academic period that lasted from January 21 to November 14 in 2016 was divided into four terms. Second, the whole academic period had a total score of 100 % in terms of qualification. So, each academic term, there were four, had a value of 25 %. Therefore, when students were evaluated in each term, their score or qualification constituted 25% of the whole academic period.

Third, one of the main requirements of the institution was to pass the subjects with a minimum score of 3.0, at the end of the whole academic period to be promoted to the following grade. This implied that the approval of each academic term required getting a minimum of 3.0, too. After finishing each term, a written report was given to the parents. This report showed the scores obtained by the students in each subject, corresponding to one academic period. Fourth, if students did not meet the elementary academic requirements and by extension, they could not get a score of at least 3.0 in each academic period, it meant that they could fail their academic year, they had to do extra activities, which were called “Nivelaciones”. When they did the “Nivelaciones” satisfactorily, they improved their score. If they did not do it, they would keep

their low grades which, as it was mentioned, would drive them to fail the academic year, and be seen as losers by parents, teachers, and friends.

Previously, I explained the four academic demands that language learners had to meet to be a part of this institution. Now, I will describe and analyze how these learners constructed unstable and strategic identities to impress and make themselves look good to others being influenced by these academic demands. It involves mentioning the changes evidenced in learners' behaviors, expressions, attitudes, and academic performances during the two academic periods that the study lasted. It also involves describing in detail the strategies used by these language learners to meet these academic demands. Thus, the next paragraphs explain how these unstable and strategic identities were evident in order to make a good impression on others.

At the beginning of the first academic term, most of the students were careless, indifferent, irresponsible, and low participative learners because they just did not see that the English class was an important subject for them. They constantly asked the teacher to speak in Spanish instead of speaking English, they preferred avoiding any contact with the English language whether in oral or listening activities, and they showed no effort to speak English. That is, they preferred to answer questions in Spanish instead of trying to answer a question in English. Students asked the teacher to speak in Spanish and asked her to eliminate any kind of expressions in English. They did not care about their English academic responsibilities for the class. For instance, most of them did not do the English homework, whatever it was, bring material to work in class or consult about new language topics. They looked indifferent toward the teacher's admonitions or advice, because they kept their negative attitude or performance, despite knowing that this would

contribute to lose the opportunity to get a wide range of linguistic resources and consequently, they would start getting low grades (Field notes, from session #3 February 12 to session # 7 March 11, 2016). The previous paragraph described the language learners whose level of investment was very low. The unstable and strategic identities detected were more prominent in them than in language learners with a high level of investment.

Therefore, these students' language identity at the beginning of the academic year was characterized by attitudes of indifference and apathy, since they did not like the English class and did not think it was a useful language in their lives:

“At the beginning of the school year, most of the students showed resistance to listen to and participate in the English class. They often asked the teacher not to speak in English and neither answer questions nor speak in English. Some of them told me: ‘Profe, pero ¿Por qué nos habla en inglés si no sabemos? Además estamos en Colombia. No nos hable en inglés’. They constantly gave an argument, trying to convince the teacher to speak in Spanish. This attitude showed that they did not care about learning the language” (Field notes, session 2 February 5, 2016).

This excerpt indicates that these students did not find English a useful subject in the classroom because they would not use it as a language to communicate with others immediately, in daily activities. Bearing in mind that the students whose level of investment and English proficiency was low, because they barely understood greetings and maybe some words in English, they considered that using English as a tool to communicate in class, positioned them at an unequal level, because they felt they were not able to be a part of the activities proposed in class.

Excerpt: “It has been three weeks since the beginning of the academic period, and I have detected the students whose level of investment is low because I have asked for three assignments and the same group of students has failed with these responsibilities. I have revised students' grades and the same have gotten low qualifications in English evaluations, activities, and oral participation. In summary, so far they have demonstrated lack of responsibility, interest, and commitment to learn the language” (Field notes, session 3 February 12, 2016)

The last example shows that these students did not have a good sense of responsibility because they were not willing to invest more time and effort to improve their English performance and development both in the class and at their home. Instead, they were more concerned about hanging around with friends and mocking others. They were relaxed because the period to give a final evaluation was still far, and they just wanted to live the present, promote indiscipline, and fool around, demonstrating that they were not committed to learning English.

Despite students' indifference, apathy, and poor sense of responsibility for the English class, it was observed at the end of March that these learners' identities were unstable and strategic when the evaluation period was involved. That is to say, because of convenience, these participants started to change their attitude and role as language learners as they were influenced by the grade. That is to say, students were strategic as they wanted to pass the first academic term with, at least, a score of 3.0 in order to impress others. They did not really care about improving their linguistic capital through the use of more expressions in English, increasing their oral participation in the English class or outside the classroom, but they just worried about the grade. They felt pressure because, as being influenced by the grade, they wanted to show the teacher that they could pass the course. Their identity was unstable because at the beginning they showed indifference, apathy, and they demonstrated a poor sense of responsibility. But when the evaluation period started, they strategically started to show a good attitude in class, listening to the teacher's recommendations, following instructions, and handing in English activities. It did not happen at the same level of instability and strategy with the high investors, because they were more constant.

Learners who evidenced a low level of investment, were only motivated by the grade because the only interest they had was to pass the course, as it happened with other subjects, at the institution. Also, they wanted to have a good grade because they did not want to be seen as losers either by parents, the teacher, or their friends in their academic process (Field notes 17, 2016). Everything they did in the English class was because of convenience to show themselves as good language learners towards others. This situation implied that these students were not interested in improving their English level for communicative purposes or for increasing their linguistic resources, to create a dynamic environment of learning, but to make a minimum effort to get a score of 3.0. It also meant that these students kept this “vicious circle” during the second period.

When the first academic period was about to finish in March, and students whose level of investment was low noticed that they were going to get bad final grades, they started to change their attitude, behavior, and performance, showing a special interest in changing their bad partial grades by improving their scores. This allowed them to barely approve the course. These students started to change because they realized that I, as their English teacher, was revising their learning process through their grades to give a final qualification and they knew they were failing the first period. For example, this special interest was evident when they started to be more respectful with their classmates and the teacher, they took notes, they handed-in homework more frequently, they asked for extra activities to improve their partial scores with the intention of obtaining a good final score, or at least the 3.0 that they needed to pass the course. These changes were also supported by strategies such as moving from the back of the classroom to a place nearer the teacher. Since these students knew that the teacher was the person with the

power of helping them to change their low grades, they developed an interest to make themselves look good to the teacher (Field notes, 9, 2016). This interest led them to make different decisions related to classroom arrangement. For this reason, their strategy of moving from the back to the front of the classroom was a tactical decision to improve their scores with the intention of meeting academic demands. This movement also implied to be nearer students whose level of investment in English learning was high, as they wanted to pass the academic period despite the fact that they dislike speaking in English or did not like the class. This is evident through the following excerpt (the real names were changed to protect learners' identities).

Excerpt: "The first academic period is about to finish and I have detected some changes. For example, Paola whose desk was always located in the back of the classroom, and usually disturbed the class and rarely finished an activity, today sat down next to Jenny, one of the best English learners. Jenny always sits near the teacher's desk, shows her homework, her English proficiency level is high. I noticed that Paola was more interested in taking notes and consulting with Jenny before making a decision with respect to the activity. At the end of this class, Paola got an excellent qualification." (From field notes, entry 8, lines 1-8, March 18, 2016)

This excerpt shows that Paola was motivated to improve her grade and did a better investment in her language learning process. This achievement placed her in a position of power thanks to her strategic social identity with the intention of demonstrating her teacher and classmates that she was able to be a good language learner. What Paola and other students did was an example of what McKay and Wong (1996) state in regards to students' identities, "they constantly conduct delicate social negotiations to fashion viable identities" (p. 603).

Another change that constituted a tactical action that demonstrated the unstable and strategic identity constructed by these language learners with low investment was related to the period of "Nivelaciones," "Nivelaciones" is the name of the complementary activities that students had to present at the end of the academic year if they wanted to pass the course when they had failed it. It is also important to clarify that if students got a score of 3.0 or more, it was not necessary for

them to do extra activities of “Nivelación,” because the passing grade was 3.0. But most of them did not do it. Because of this, the delivery of extra activities, required a higher level of investment that they were not willing to do. They just found strategic solutions to pass the class with 3.0 points.

The following example evidences the changes in the language learners’ attitude, behavior, and academic performance that demonstrated that they constructed unstable and strategic identities to look good to the teacher. Unstable identities because their behavior, attitudes, and positions were quite different at the beginning of the first period and at the end of it; thus, most of the students who got low grades suddenly started to change their academic investment and social performance during the class. They were strategic identities because they applied some tactical strategies to improve their scores.

During the “Nivelación” period, the students whose level of investment was low and average, (from the sample group, eight students) constantly asked me: ‘Profe, ¿cuándo es la Nivelación?’ ‘¿En qué consiste la Nivelación?’ ‘¿Cuándo recibe la Nivelación?’ ‘Me recibe ya la Nivelación?’ These expressions were a part of a series of strategies used by students whose level of investment was very low and they needed to improve their scores somehow. Presenting “Nivelaciones” was one of the best ways to do it. Some students also increased their oral participation in class. For example, sometimes they did not know how to pronounce a word or expression but they tried to do it, just to show the teacher that they were improving their academic performance, or at least had the intention to do it. Another way of showing their improvement was when they showed a better attitude, following the teacher’s commands. Some

of them constantly asked the teacher “¿Profe cierto que me estoy portando bien?” “Profe, ¿cierto que estoy mejorando?” Through these expressions, they wanted to confirm that their strategies were working.(From field notes, session 9, April 1, 2016)

Unfortunately, the data evidence that through “Nivelaciones” these students were not interested in improving their English level for communicative purposes or for increasing their linguistic resources (symbolic capital), but just to improve their scores in order to fulfill the academic demands established by the institution. Such was the case when during the “nivelación” period I told some students that I had to collect and revise their work carefully for them to correct later, but they said “Ay profe póngame el 30 y ya”(From field notes, entry 9, April 1, 2016). Similar situations took place when I was assessing my students’ writing performance through the revision of animal descriptions done during the previous class, and one of them told me: “Profe ¿qué necesito para sacarme 30?” I told him “Don’t think about it, just do it to learn.” He replied: “No,solo necesito pasar.” (Field notes, entry 12, lines 2-5, April 22, 2016). Another example was when Paola showed me a description of her family and she just wrote 4 lines, I explained to her that I hadasked themto write at least 10 lines, but she asked me “¿Y para pasar con 3.0, cuántos renglones hago?” (From field notes, entry 12, lines 7-9, April 22, 2016).

The expression of “just write a 3.0” to qualify students’ academic development was a common expression used by most of the students who wanted to improve their academic results, just to pass the English course. So, the academic demands influenced on the construction of unstable and strategic identities.

The data collected through the questionnaire also showed that the identity of students as English learners was unstable and contradictory. For example, in the questionnaire (June 3, 2016) (See Appendix H) in questions 1, 2, and 3, most of them (85 %) answered that they liked the English language, liked the English class, and that they believed English was important and useful to know foreign people and to enter the university, among other reasons. However, not all of them invested enough in their learning process. Here there are some examples of their answers to the question:

¿Te gusta el inglés? si no ¿Por qué?

Si, porque mi sueño es ir a Estados Unidos a trabajar y tengo que hablar el idioma.

Sí, Porque aunque sea difícil nos da una oportunidad para viajar en los países en los que hablan inglés.

Sí, Porque quiero estudiar en una universidad de inglés. (from questionnaire June 3, 2016)

In the interview (May 27, 2016) (See Appendix G), the whole focus group answered to question 2 that learning English was very important by giving some reasons as to get a good job and enter the university. But the behavior, attitude, and performance of most of them during the class demonstrated the opposite. So, one thing is how they behaved in the classroom and another what they thought about the importance of learning English. In summary, the investment of some of them did not evidence what they believed about learning English, this led them to generate unstable and contradictory identities. Here there are some examples:

Albert: Para mí estudiar inglés es importante porque es una manera de progresar avanzar en la vida, ampliar los horizontes.

Camila: “Para mí el Inglés el Inglés es muy importante porque pues es un idioma que pues mucho mucho mundo lo conoce y.. aa.. hoy en día si uno no sabe inglés para ir a la Universidad es muy difícil hacer una carrera porque casi todas las carreras tienen el inglés entonces es muy difícil, uno tiene que saber inglés para poder subir subir para llegar a la meta de graduarse bien. Además, a mi mamá le gustaba mucho el inglés y le iba bien y yo quiero ser como ella y que se sienta orgullosa de mí. (from interview May 27, 2016)

As it has been shown, these English language learners with a low level of investment had a changeable behavior and positions that constituted unstable identities and tactical behavior and attitudes which constituted strategic identities. They constructed these identities with the intention of making themselves look good to their friends, classmates, the teacher, and their family. Those language learners whose level of investment was higher, showed more subtle, unstable, and strategic identities, in such a way that they were almost unnoticeable. McKay and Wong (1996) state that the way students try to position themselves in an academic context becomes their main coping strategy, in this case to accommodate to the academic demands of this specific institution with a final convenient purpose: to pass the English class in order to impress the teacher and be promoted to the next level, even though they didn't invest responsibly in their learning process.

Subcategory 1.2: Identities influenced by family demands

Family demands refer to all the ideologies inculcated into the family structure which influenced on students' construction of identity as language learners. Data show that language learners' identities were shaped by family requests and demands as to learn a foreign language because students needed to maintain the reputation of being good students to respond to their family demands in two aspects. First, in the near future: To pass the English subject as it was their duty to their parents, because they put pressure on students to pass the academic year. Second, in the more distant future as learning the English language as a requisite to enter the university could improve their life conditions at professional level. So, the language learners'

unstable and strategic identities were constructed to impress their family members, who had influenced as well with their demands.

To contextualize this subcategory, it is important to remember that the family constituted the habitus of the participants of this study. Habitus is defined as a system of dispositions. The spread of capital between generations is given from habitus, that is, the practical operator of provisions and representations socially shared between those who are in a certain social position, resulting from the internalization of social structures (Bourdieu, 1983). According to Bourdieu (2005), the family is a fundamental institution in social reproduction through the transmission of various types of capital (economic, cultural, social, symbolic) to the children. The social order is maintained, since the amount and form of capital lead agents that possess it to occupy a certain position in the social space, shared between those who are subject to similar constraints. In summary, family influences on individual identity, because it strongly shapes learners' beliefs, choices, and decisions. This is evident through the observations made of the language learners' attitudes behaviors, and positions developed during the two academic periods.

It is also important to remember that the students who come to this school have to face a lot of socioeconomic problems because most of them come from impoverished and dysfunctional families. The description of the participants and their context was presented in detailed in chapters 1 and 3. Data evidenced that students needed to please their parents by meeting their demands in the near future (To pass the English subject as it was their duty to their parents) because parents inculcated constantly their sacrifices to send them to school. For example, parents frequently mentioned the kind of hard jobs they had to do to earn an unfair salary. In

addition, the poor economic conditions constituted a situation that forced some learners, especially those whose level of investment was high, to show their parents they were good and responsible learners because somehow, they did not want to reproduce the same material conditions in which their parents had grown up.

The following excerpts from the questionnaire, evidence how the ideology imposed by family experiences in relation to the benefits of learning English influenced on learners' beliefs. In the first excerpt, a student answered the question *¿Te gusta el inglés? Sí--- No --- ¿Porqué?* In the next excerpt, one of the students whose level of investment was mainly low, answered the question:

Excerpt: "Si. Me gusta el inglés porque puedo hablar con extranjeros y me podrían contratar y el inglés lo facilitaría. Así hizo mi tío" (from questionnaire, June 3, 2016)

Excerpt: "Albert: Si, me gusta aprender inglés porque mi prima sabe inglés y gana bien" (from interviews, May 27, 2016)

These previous excerpts show how family beliefs and previous experiences about studying English influenced on the decisions of some students whose level of investment was mainly high. However, language learners' identities were unstable when, despite their academic compromise with their parents' ideals and expectations, they were careless about investing in their learning because they did not finish their tasks, they forgot to bring their homework, or they just simply didn't like English. Yet, their family demands made them try to continue working to achieve near future academic goals in order to impress their parents and relatives as the examples show, even though they disliked English. Those examples also evidence learners' unstable and contradictory identities because one fact was that parents wanted their children to learn English as an opportunity to succeed in life. An opposing fact was that students did not invest that much

in the classroom because they did not care about learning English since, for them, it wasn't a useful future goal in life because they were not committed with their English learning process all the time. Because of family pressure, learners were sometimes confused, whether to please their parents' demands to make a good impression on them or follow their own interests.

The following excerpts also show how learners' identity was influenced by their parents' and other relatives' views on the importance of learning English as a determinant factor to gain economic and symbolic capital:

¿Qué significa para ti aprender inglés? ¿Tiene o no alguna importancia en tu vida?

Excerpt:: "Yuri: para mi estudiar inglés es necesario para ser alguien en la vida." (from interview, May 27, 2016)

Jenny: "Mi mamá me dice que si uno estudia inglés puede llegar a convertirse en alguien."

Researcher: "¿Cómo así ser alguien?"

Yuri: "Pues es un decir de mi familia que sólo estudiando se llega a ser alguien, porque se consigue un trabajo en el que uno gane bien"

Jenny: "Sí, entrar a la Universidad, tener una profesión, ganar mucha plata."

(from interviews, May 27, 2016)

¿Consideras útil estudiar inglés para tu vida? Si—No—¿Por qué? " Si. Para ser un (a) profesional. Y ser el primer universitario de la familia. Ellos estarán felices" (from questionnaire, June 3, 2016)

Becoming "someone" in this case meant for these learners being owners of a great economic capital. They understood that learning English, as being inculcated by their parents, involved entering the university in order to increase the symbolic capital represented in a professional title and money. But as a requirement, it was necessary to be the owner of a set of cultural capitals represented in the linguistic resources that they could get when learning a foreign language, in this case English. The ideology that learning a language was to make them really become

“someone” was inculcated into the family structure, this ideology led some students to desire to be a part of an imagined community, in this case a community with a better social class and with better economic resources. “*Imagined communities* refer to groups of people, not immediately tangible and accessible, with whom we connect through the power of the imagination” (Kanno and Norton, 2003 p. 241).

However, there was a discrepancy between what students’ parents demanded them to achieve in the near and more distant future, and the actual performance and investment in the classroom. This discrepancy between ideals of economic success (economic capital) and working hard to improve life conditions, showed that these English learners constructed unstable and strategic identities because some of them did not keep a constant level of responsibility during all the first and second academic periods, as most of the time they were worried about looking cool and popular, and were not committed with their learning process. It was only in the “Nivelaciones” period that, they tried to overcome their lack of responsibility with different strategies such as participating more in speaking, trying to demonstrate that they had good pronunciation, knew a lot of idiomatic expressions, with the purpose of showing their parents their good academic results and avoid any punishment or reprimand if they did not have a good academic performance at school. But their desire to respond to their family demands motivated them to change this situation by applying certain strategies, such as behaving better in class and presenting English tasks and homework to improve their low scores. These changes and strategies aimed at impressing their parents when their written reports were delivered to them.

With respect to all these findings, it is important to explain that the influence of family demands on the construction of learners’ unstable and strategic identities, focused on the need to

learn English as an academic resource (economic capital) and requisite to enter the university (symbolic capital). This motivated some students to study English to make themselves look successful to their family members. Therefore, the fluctuating changes in their behavior, attitude, and performance in the class and their strategies to gather more and better linguistic resources were also permeated by their wish of being positioned by their family members as good language learners.

Furthermore, it should be noted that part of the data analysis showed another interesting finding related to learners' dilemma for studying English, and such dilemma strongly influenced their English learners' identity. Although most of the students' identity was influenced by both their parents' strict demands to pass the academic year and by the ideology that they should study English for economic, professional, and social success, that is to say, to learn a language to increase their economic and symbolic capital in the future, about 20% of learners' parents just wanted their children to finish school and get a job to help the family. So, there was a complex discrepancy between what this group of parents dreamt of their children to get educated and become professionals and successful, and the fact that their children needed to start working soon to solve money problems at home. A few learners (20%) said that their parents wanted them to help with economic responsibilities of the house because the families had several needs. Thus, their investment in the class and language learners' identity depended on the fact that they needed to graduate soon from high school in order to work in informal jobs such as vendors, assistants, helpers, etc. Therefore, these learners considered that they did not need to make a great effort to learn English because they would never use it in their practical life, as these data show:

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“Brayan is a student that constantly disturbs class, walking around the classroom, interrupting his classmates’ work, he rarely shows his tasks, but finishing the first academic period, he insisted in presenting his “nivelacion” with the following argument: “profe, no puedo perder su materia, si pierdo me pegan, mi papá dijo que tengo que terminar el bachillerato para entrar al Sena y ponerme a trabajar” (from field notes, entry 13, , April 29, 2016).

Since 20% of students wanted to please their parents and had the spirit to help their families, the only thing they cared about was passing the academic year, including the English course. For the particular needs of these learners, their identities as language learners were unstable, strategic, and context-dependent as they were not really good students, but had already been given a family responsibility to assume after school, and English was not a part of their future lives due to their poor economic conditions and social disadvantages in which they lived. Whether they liked it or not, they needed to pass the course because their parents expected economic support from them. Therefore, for these students, English did not represent any kind of economic or symbolic capital.

Subcategory 1. 3: Identities influenced by friendly ties

This subcategory explains how language learners constructed unstable and strategic identities influenced by their friendly ties to make themselves look good to others and impress specially their friends.

Norton (1997) claims that the construction of identity has to do with learners’ desires-In this case, I argue that learners had the desire for affiliation, especially for being a part of this EFL group of seventh graders because they had their best friends there. So, their desire for continuing being members of this particular group made them want to find strategic ways to pass the course even if it was necessary to make a higher investment to develop the communicative skills proposed by the teacher, and in this way, to not only make a good impression on their friends,

but make sure they will continue being together in the next grade. In this sense, students' language learners' identity was determined by strong friendship ties.

Data revealed that some students gave more importance to friendship than to their language learning progress and academic performance. This was evident through the following reactions some students had when the coordinator told them that if they did not improve their grades, they were going to be moved to another classroom. Their answers were:

Excerpt: "Danilo answering to the coordinator '¡No profe, aquí están mis amigos! Allá no conozco a nadie. Los de ese salón me caen mal". After this situation, some subtle changes were detected in the academic performances of some of the students whose problems of discipline and academic responsibility made the coordinator scolded them. These subtle changes were the improvement of certain behaviors as they started to arrive earlier to the class and handed in their tasks at the end of the class" (from field notes, April 29, 2016)

They were more interested in hanging around with friends than actually studying English to improve their academic level, and this was incongruent and unstable with the ideas they had about learning English as being influenced by their parents' ideologies and hopes to improve their lives. Even though a great percentage of students answered in the questionnaire and in the interviews that learning English was very important for them because it represented a way to improve their economic and social conditions in the future, there was another facet of their identity as language learners: friendship was more valuable than academic and family demands, and they had to struggle with these dilemmas, whether to please parents and teachers or stick together to their closer friends.

As it was shown in the previous data, most students did whatever it took to be together in their groups and with their close friends, including becoming better English language learners and becoming more responsible when they were told that, if they did not improve, they were going to be separated. In other words, their progress in the language learning process and in the

“Nivelaciones” period was also conditioned by their friendship ties, as they did not want to be separated. The idea of being separated from their friends forced them to become better English students, do the activities and tasks, and pass the grade despite they were reluctant to speak English. Once more it was detected that their identities as language learners were unstable, strategic, and context-dependent based on their need to be together and despite their low or high language level.

Data showed that students’ expectations were partly based on their need of being a part of a group where they had constructed a strong self-position. In other words, their language learners’ identities were strategic because they strove to be positioned as good English learners with the second intention of continuing being a part of this particular group, and making themselves look good to their friends; but at the same time, they had to impress the coordinator and the teacher by showing better academic results. This fact implies how language learners’ identities can be complex and unstable depending on social circumstances.

As it was previously mentioned, most of the students’ academic performance, behaviors, attitude, and also social performance were very different at the beginning of the first academic period compared to the end of the same period. These performances, behaviors, and attitudes changed along the two academic periods the study lasted. Students’ choices also evidenced their strategies to get academic and social benefits that made themselves look good to their friends, teacher, and family. This implied that their identities were considered unstable and strategic.

The following excerpts from the questionnaire and the interview show the answers given to the question *¿Te gusta aprender inglés? ¿Sí o no? ¿Por qué?* These answers connected the

learning of English to experiences lived with friends, which demonstrated that students' friendship affiliations were an important influence on their academic decisions.

Excerpt: "Si. Me gusta aprender muchas cosas en inglés y yo chatear con mis amigos en inglés" (from questionnaire June 3, 2016)

Excerpt: "Si. Porque me gusta aprender a charlar con mis amigos en inglés y hemos aprendido harto de inglés" (from questionnaire June 3, 2016)

Excerpt: "Ronald: "Me gusta cuando mis amigos me dicen: uyy Usted sí que sabe cosas en inglés y me buscan para preguntarme cosas" (from interview June 3, 2016)

As the examples indicate, English learners constructed strategic identities that helped themselves to preserve and strengthen friendship ties with their particular group of friends.

This category shows the unstable and strategic identities that seventh graders constructed as language learners during the English class, to make themselves look good to others. An example of this was that they wanted to impress the teacher who was the direct agent who assessed them in order to pass the English course; their family members, that inculcated them the need to increase economic, cultural and symbolic resources/capital, with the main objective of increasing their economic status in the future; and lastly, their friends, that were the people who positioned them as "good" "strong" "popular" English language learners.

In summary, learners' habitus, structured by hegemonic ideologies, imposed by the family and institutions predisposed them to think and act in certain ways. But their desires and imagination moved them to invest in specific practices, at different levels because some of them did not care so much about increasing their possibilities for the future, but others wanted to increase the value of their cultural, social, and symbolic capital, which represented a better economic status in their future, recognizing that the valuing of this capital is a consolidation of their identity. The identity that learners constructed and performed in unstable and strategic ways

responded to their need of showing off and making themselves look as good learners to others in the English classroom while they interacted with teachers, parents, and friends in different social situations, as suggested by Darvin and Norton (2015).

Category 2. Some language learners built dominant and dominated language learners' identities based on power relations

While the previous category focused on explaining how learners' language identity was determined by family and academic demands, this category focuses on how learners built their identity depending on the social relationships established in the classroom. In this case, the category explains how relations of power determined dominant and dominated language learner' identities. For this reason, it is important to remember the poststructuralist perspective assumed in this study, based mainly on Norton's work. As it was indicated in the theoretical framework, Norton (1995) proposes a theory on social identity, which takes into account the language learning context in which the language learner is immersed. She argues that the language learner is a subject who constructs a complex social identity and this complexity must be seen with respect to social structures which are reproduced in every day social interactions and relationships which are generally inequitable.

Norton (1997) has based her work on identity and investment on the statements presented by several authors and her own research. In regards to power and power relations, one of the authors mentioned by her is Cummins (1996). He distinguishes between coercive and collaborative relations of power. This distinction explains that coercive relations of power lead to the detriment of others, because the exercise of power is done by dominant subject or subjects

that contribute to increase the inequitable possession of resources in society. On the other hand, collaborative relations of power lead subjects to generate and construct together relations that allow them to be empowered rather than marginalized. Summarizing, Norton (1997) states that “relations of power can serve to enable or constrain the range of identities that language learners can negotiate in their classrooms and communities” (p. 412).

According to Norton (1995), relations of power affect social interactions between language learners and target language speakers. She also states that under certain inequitable social conditions subjects create, respond to, and sometimes resist opportunities to speak English. Her proposal of the theory of social identity assumes that language constitutes and is constituted by language learners’ social identity. For this reason, she considers that language is determined by the specific situations developed at a specific time and context. By citing Heller (1987), Norton (1995) confirms that “it is through language that a person gains access to or is denied access to powerful social networks that give learners the opportunity to speak” (p. 13). So, power relations are defined in terms of particular situations permeated by social structures. These social structures are also evident through daily interactions.

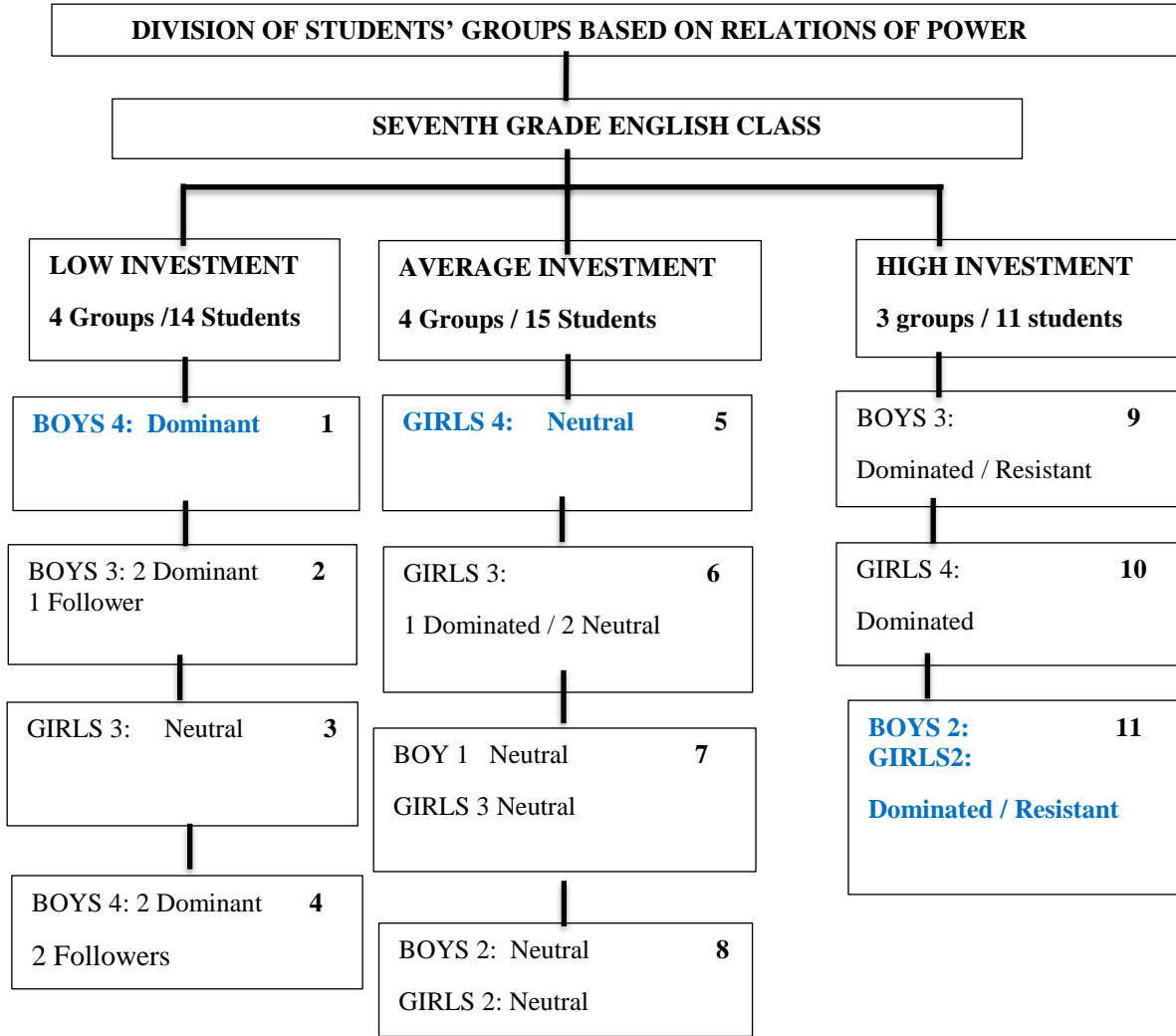
Taking into account the previous insights about power in the language classroom, the data evidenced that during learners’ interaction in the English class, abusive relations of power and conflicts emerged during the time that this study was conducted. These relations influenced on the way students positioned themselves, positioned others, and were positioned by others as language learners. Findings revealed that relations of power determined dominant and dominated language learners’ identities, due to violence and conflict generated mainly by students whose investment was very low in the classroom and attitudes of resistance to power exerted by

students whose level of investment was high. These statements become subcategories that are explained below.

Before talking about the relations of power that were detected in this group of seventh graders, it is important to explain the way the whole group was organized, because this organization reflected the way how certain students positioned themselves or were positioned by others as dominant, dominated, resistant, followers or neutral. These positions are explained below (graph. 1) in light of Norton's social theory of identity.

The total group shown here consisted of 40 students, and the 12 students who were a part of the sampling group selected are highlighted in blue. This graph does not pretend to classify language learners into fixed characteristics or categories of power, but aims at showing the prominent positions detected during their interactions.

Graph 1: Language Learners' Power Relationships Division based on their Level of Investment



Graph 1 shows the division of the 40 students into 11 groups, based on their power relations. It was detected that these power relations were established mainly according to their level of investment. The sampling group is highlighted in blue. I identified five English language identities in the English class framed in the concept of power relations: Dominant, followers, dominated, neutral, and resistant learners, as can be observed in Graph 1. These identities will be explained as

follows: Dominant learners were those subjects who wanted to rule the decisions of others by controlling the situations and imposing their beliefs or points of view. This influence did not pretend to benefit the others, but rather harm them. Followers were those subjects that subscribed to the dominant leaders' beliefs or orders by coping with, imitating or following their decisions. Followers' actions were generated by the decisions of others who were positioned as dominant learners in the class. Dominated, in this case, were those students who were victims of domination and unfair power, as others influenced on their decisions and positions, even though this influence oppressed them. Neutral learners were subjects who did not support dominant, dominated or resistant students because they were afraid of getting involved in conflict. So, neutral learners were silent, cautious, and indifferent many times. Moreover, their actions did not pretend to control or affect anyone else or influence on others' actions or decisions. Resistant English learners refer to those that through their exercise of agency acted against dominant learners' power. They acted in such a way that they were not affected or harmed by dominant subjects. Their decisions aimed at benefitting themselves.

Graph 1 shows the division of the whole class into eleven groups. The graph shows how the eleven groups were organized mainly according to their level of investment. Therefore, there were four groups formed by students whose level of investment was very low, they were groups number 1, 2, 3, and 4. These low investors were mainly dominant learners supported by dominant followers. There were four groups with an average level of investment, they were groups number 5, 6, 7, and 8. There were also three groups whose level of investment was very high, they were groups number 9, 10, and 11, but although they were high investors in the English class, they were

dominated by the coercive power of low investors. However, this exert of coercive power in turn motivated few of these high investors to invest more.

Low investors or learners with low investment refer to the learners who never or rarely participated appropriately in speaking activities and rarely or never presented written works with a high quality. On the contrary, they presented their written production with a lot of grammar, vocabulary, and spelling errors, which evidenced poor effort, interest or little time dedicated to this production. For some of them, their relations and interactions were characterized by an abusive exert of power which promoted inequitable situations and conflicts, generating others' dissatisfaction, distress, and distraction during the class. This promoted their establishing a negative relationship to the academic world, because they wasted their time promoting indiscipline problems, instead of studying.

On the other hand, high investors or learners with high investment were those learners who participated actively in the class through their English interventions. They presented written assignments with a high quality evidenced in the use of grammar structures, appropriate and wide use of vocabulary, and correct spelling. The extension of their written productions also evidenced the great effort and time dedicated to do the tasks. Their relations and interactions were characterized by cooperative learning, most of the time. They used to help each other to overcome academic and social difficulties. They rarely promoted discipline problems or conflicts that generated a bad environment during the class. All this description constitutes the symbolic resources.

Average students or learners with average investment were those who worked, participated or took advantage of the teacher's help and friendship relationships most of the time, making a

worthwhile effort to get good grades, but their performance during the class was not excellent. They made an acceptable effort in class that led them to pass the English course. They were not usually conflictive learners.

The following description is about the 12 students selected as sampling for this study. In chapter 3, the criteria to select this sampling was explained. In the graph 1, the 12 participants are identified in blue font and belong to three types of learners:

Four low investors who were also dominant learners: They were, four dominant boys who belonged to group number 1. They were described as dominant because their actions, use of language, attitudes, and social position in the English class made their classmates feel uncomfortable and face inequitable situations of power relations. The four dominant learners' level of investment was very low and they had many discipline problems. Their English investment in the class was low and they evidenced some discipline problems.

Four average investors who were neutral girls belonged to group number 5. They were not involved in situations of indiscipline, they had a low participation in speaking activities. They merely did what they needed to pass the course.

Four high investors who were dominated and resistant learners to power. They were categorized as dominated students, because they were victims of abusive exerts of power. They were two boys and two girls who belonged to group number 11. They participated a lot orally and their exercise of agency allowed them to resist their classmates' exert of power. This resistance is explained in detail in subcategory 2.2.

As this study is drawn on Norton's poststructuralist perspective of the language learner as a subject whose social identity is characterized by its multiplicity in a site of struggle and change over time, it was not my intention to give fixed labels to participants that belonged to each group detected during the time of the observation phase. Norton (1995) claims that "subject is not conceived of as passive; he/she is conceived of as both subject of and subject to relations of power within a particular site, community, and society" (p. 15). For this reason, the identities constructed by this group of seventh graders during their interactions were multiple and variable. But it is possible to say that they mostly positioned themselves and were positioned by others into the five identities already mentioned, without the intention of classifying them as passive subjects. Thus, learners' identities were determined by the following power issues in the classroom, established as the following subcategories.

Subcategory 2.1: Learners with a low investment dominated learners with a high investment

A crucial finding reported in the field notes is that English learners with a high level of investment in their learning process and English knowledge were dominated by learners whose low level of investment in their English learning process was very low. These low investors exerted power on responsible learners by generating conflicts and situations of inequity during their interaction in class. Three main conflicts and situations of domination were considered exerts of power by those who were the dominant students who, in turn, had a low level of investment. It is important to clarify that the three conflictive situations of power presented here could be considered, at first sight, as just discipline problems. However, this analysis will show

that what initially started as an indiscipline issue, later generated inequitable relations that promoted a disagreeable environment into the classroom, which affected the identities constructed by all of the English learners somehow, and especially the sampling group.

The three ways in which dominant students exercised power over dominated ones were as follows. First, they ridiculed the high investors by mocking their pronunciation with laughter and imitating them. Second, they interrupted the participation of the dominated, who were high investors too, by making comments in Spanish or speaking about topics that were not pertinent to the class. Finally, dominant students sabotaged other students' work or task by taking their notebooks or hiding their homework or the material used to work in class.

I start explaining the first kind of domination, dominant learners (in this case those who were low investors) ridiculed the high investors during their learning process by mocking their pronunciation with laughter and imitating them in many occasions when high investors participated in class. These dominant students disrespected their classmates' participation by laughing at them with no reason, or with the intention of making them feel inferior or imitating their pronunciation in English, just to make fun of their classmates.

Such was the case with Daniel, a student who positioned himself as dominant, because his attitudes and actions sought to control others' actions. He did not waste his time when he saw the opportunity of laughing at Camila, who used to participate in the English class by asking and answering questions in English. She was positioned as resistant, because most of the time she exerted her agency to resist dominant learners; she also increased her investment in her learning, despite dominant control. However, in certain circumstances, as described here, she was annoyed

and stopped participating. On the other hand, Daniel did not like to work in class. He merely wrote the instructions given by the teacher on his notebook, despite I constantly asked him to work or told him that he could ask for what he needed, but he did not obey. I called his parents several times but they were not available to go to school. I talked to the psychologist to start a follow up procedure with him. I observed that he felt satisfaction when he interrupted Camila, when she was speaking. This interruption caused Camila to get angry and stop her participation.

The last class Camila was saying the date, as part of the routine of the class a different student each time says the date of the class) and Daniel started saying it in Spanish, he did not care that Camila was upset because he interrupted her and spoke in Spanish with the intention of ridiculing her. He did not care that teacher was correcting his behavior, he continued mocking Camila. (field notes, entry 12, 2016)

This example shows that the situations generated by Daniel, who was positioned as a dominated student, affected Camila, who was a participant with a high level of motivation, investment, and proficiency in English. Despite Camila was an excellent student in the English class, Daniel's power to dominate and ridicule her made her decrease the opportunities to participate in class, as she became afraid of being ridiculed. With this situation, she went from being a resistant learner to become a dominated learner in terms of participation in this class and, as being mocked, the class labeled her as a "nerd" girl that knew it all. This fact points out the idea that under certain inequitable social conditions individuals respond reluctantly to speak in English as they become afraid of and hesitant to use the foreign language when power is exerted. Norton and Toohey (2011) also state that affective descriptors such as motivated or unmotivated, introverted or extroverted features can sometimes co-exist in contradictory ways within a single individual. In this case, Camila was mostly resistant, but under this situation of mockery, she positioned as dominated. This fact supports the argument that language learners constructed

unstable and strategic identities. Thus, learners' language identity can be determined and shaped by the unequal social relationships created in educative contexts.

The data gathered from the interview reveal how social issues of power in the classroom among learners directly affected other English learners' identities and investment. This is another example in which Albert, positioned as a dominated learner and a good investor in his English language at home and sometimes in the class; he was also a victim of abusive power. This is his answer to the question:

1. ¿Qué haces para aprender inglés, independiente de si te gusta o no el inglés?

Albert: Pues yo hago las tareas, identifico muchas palabras en los video juegos. ¿Eso también cuenta cierto? Yo sé que hablando puedo mejorar la pronunciación de palabras en inglés pero me da pena. Es que muchos son tontos y se burlan si uno pronuncia mal (from interview June 3, 2016)

These data indicate that Albert had a high level of investment and motivation mostly at home, but in the English class he was reluctant to participate orally because others' mockery affected his identity as a language user. The power exerted by dominant learners through derision made him feel inferior and restricted him to speak because he felt ashamed.

Coercive power generated by dominant learners through mockery was inequitable because Albert felt forced to change his actions and participate freely in the class or answer questions asked by the teacher, with the intention of avoiding to be the target of ridiculing situations. In addition, with mockery, dominant students controlled Albert's actions and investment; this, in turn, affected his English level because it is a fact that to learn a language it is necessary to develop the four communicative skills, through exposure, practice, and participation. Thus, if these are restricted, learning will be, too.

Another point to bear in mind is the role of the followers, because when Albert said that ‘many are fool’ and that he felt ashamed because of those who mocked him, he implicitly indicated that not only the dominant ones interrupted and mocked, but their followers supported these exercises of power that allowed them to cause a greater effect in the dominated ones.

The key point to be explained in this subcategory is that learners with a high investment in the English class were dominated by learners with a low investment. As it has been said, data show that dominant learners were those students whose investment was poor in class. It was detected that these low investors spent most of their time interrupting and mocking others instead of making a greater effort in their English level such as doing homework, paying attention to the teacher’s explanations and instructions, or developing team work strategies to improve their English proficiency. Therefore, if they wasted most of their time promoting conflictive situations, they did not receive the benefits that a good investor had. For example, among other things, a good academic recognition as high grades. These low investors did not accumulate greater English knowledge (symbolic capital) because they did not practice, read or write enough to enrich their knowledge. Their effort was oriented toward the generation of situations that made their classmates, especially high investors, feel bad and they wasted their time, too. Moreover, their behavior sought to position themselves as those that influenced the level of investment of those with a high investment. This was evident through the two examples described before. These examples show how low investors’ interruption and mockery deconcentrated, bothered, and annoyed those high investors in such a way that they were forced to decrease their investment levels, sometimes.

The second conflictive situation of abusive domination and power in the English class was that dominant learners intentionally interrupted the participation of the dominated ones, who were also high investors, by making comments in Spanish or speaking about topics that were not pertinent for the class. The following example taken from the field notes evidences this situation.

In one of the classes, students had to make Power Point presentations about an exotic animal in Colombia. As usual, not everybody prepared the presentation. Students who were irresponsible most of the time and who were also low investors and dominant students, did not to show interest in their classmates' work, as can be seen in this example:

Juan Pablo and his close friends interrupted Alejandra's group during the presentation on animals. They constantly made fun of the words that Alejandra and her group pronounced. Juan Pablo laughed at the photographs and talked to his friends instead of being in silent. They intentionally spoke about other topics in Spanish to distract students. Alejandra and her group had to stop their presentation because they lost concentration. I talked with Juan Pablo about his conduct (from field notes entry 17, May 27, 2016)

We can observe in these data, that Juan Pablo and his group had a low investment in the English class because they just did not care about preparing their own presentation and working hard to pass the course with good grades. However, they spent their time interrupting others' participation. It is deduced that as Pablo's group did not spend its time working hard, they disliked those classmates who invested in their learning because hard working students, such is the case of Alejandra and her group, made Pablo's group look as mediocre and irresponsible language learners and, as it was explained in the previous category, low investors were concerned about impressing others even though they did not do much in class. In this case, again the role of Juan Pablo's followers had a critical influence on the power exerted because he was supported by his friends to interrupt and disturb Alejandra's group.

By contrast, Alejandra and her group were positioned as high investors thanks to the accumulation of different symbolic, material, and social resources that they thought were important for their learning process. Alejandra's group symbolic resources were their creativity, English knowledge, sense of responsibility, their desires to be better students evident through their expressions, and effort made in different classes. (Field notes entries 5 feb 23, 9 Ap 1,18 June 3,2016). Their material resources, such as their notebooks, were the material that they used to do the presentation, because they had to consult information gathered in there and the technology equipment because the computer and programs were virtual tools to concrete their work. Their social resources were their constant feeling of promoting cooperative learning during their interactions that generated positive results. Thus, the accumulation of these resources increased their cultural and symbolic capital, represented in their English learning and their excellent academic results and recognitions. Unfortunately, high investors were a minority, as most of students, as explained in the first category, did not identify as being good English learners and as being interested in learning it.

On the other hand, interruptions and lack of respect generated by low investors, not only established unjust power relationships in the classroom among learners, but affected negatively the performance of high investors and good learners who, due to mockery and interruptions, lost their concentration and became afraid of speaking and participating actively in class. Low investors' negative domination positioned high investors as dominated subjects because good learners tried to avoid problems and discussions by assuming most of the time a submissive position. Through these two types of abusive power, mockery, and interruptions, I was able to establish an interesting correlation in this particular English class: It was observed that the more

learners invested in their English learning, the more they were targets of domination in the classroom. That is to say, learners who constructed their language learners' identity on values of responsibility, dedication, and participation were socially discriminated and mocked by the abusive power of those students having low investment. Low investors were abusive, authoritarian, and dominant while high investors and excellent students were positioned as dominated, nerds, and losers in the social context of this group. These situations led to consider that, as stated by Heller (1987) and Norton (1995), learners gain or are denied access to powerful social networks that can give them or restrict their opportunities to speak in the classroom. So, power relations in this particular setting affected dominated students' opportunities to speak the foreign language, as their language performance was affected and permeated by unequal social structures. In the interview, the answer given by Camila, a high investor, to the question *¿De qué manera el ambiente del curso y tus compañeros influyen en tu dedicación a la clase de inglés?* reflects a similar situation:

Camila: "Si es "jarto" cuando molestan burlándose de uno, por que sueltan la risa y lo hacen sentir como un 'zapato'así quien va a querer arriesgarse....por ejemplo, al grupo de Juan Pablo no se le puede decir nada... Ellos molestan y no quieren que uno les haga nada. Así le quitan las ganas de estudiar." (from interview, June 32016)

Camila expressed that conflictive situations generated by those students who promoted mockery, affected the way she invested in the class, what conduced her to lose her desires to study. When she stated that she felt like "a shoe," it means that she did not feel like a person who deserved respect. So, in this way, low investors positioned her as dominated because they controlled not just the way she felt, but the way she reacted afterwards, because when she expressed that after mockery nobody wanted to take a risk, she was confirming that this kind of exert of power affects directly the way learners invest in their learning and by extension, this

situation decreases their desire to study. According to Norton and Darwin (2015) desires determine to what extent learners invest in their learning. In other words, Camila's investment was restricted by interruptions generated by subjects who promoted unequal relations of power. This restriction affected her level of investment and, therefore, they influenced on the way she positioned herself as a good student (from interview June 3, 2016).

These examples about how high investors in the class were victims of unjust social relationships of power, can be related to the findings already analyzed in the first category when I explained that learners wanted to show an image of being good students before their parents and close friends, but in real practice some of them did not work hard and rather spent their time making fun of others and ridiculing those who wanted to invest in their learning. Low investors' identity, who were also socially dominant in the classroom, was contradictory and unstable because, for instance, they did not make a great effort to learn to pass the course, but wanted to keep an image of being powerful by establishing unequal relations with high investors. The fact that low investors worked poorly, but controlled high investors through rude mockery and interruptions, indicated that they created a reputation of being dominant and authoritarian in the classroom, while they showed themselves as obedient and committed students to their parents. Paradoxically, good students or high investors were positioned as dominated, precisely because they were obedient, responsible, and committed with their learning all the time. Hence, high investors were excellent and exemplary students for their parents, but they were also dominated and object of jeering and teasing by their dominant partners. Therefore, we can observe with these examples how language learners' identities in the classroom are complex and changeable

depending on social situations based on dominance, struggle, injustice, and power in the classroom.

The last conflictive situation that evidenced inequitable relations of power based on domination was that dominant learners sabotaged other students' work or tasks. It was observed that dominant power was established when low investors took without any permission or hid high investors' notebooks, homework, or the material they needed to work in class. The way students sabotaged their classmates' work or tasks to establish unbalanced power help us to analyze one important idea in the understanding of identity and investment in the language classroom: how material resources can sometimes constrain or enable access to more and better conditions and to accomplish personal goals. It means that according to the way the learner uses and operates materials such as notebooks, books, the dictionary or computers, just to mention some, can restrict or potentialize their symbolic capital and more and better material resources.

It is important to clarify that students should use appropriately the materials (textbooks, photocopies, notebooks, etc.) as a means to have the opportunity to increase their symbolic capital which, in this case, is to getting high scores and academic results in order to pass the English course and gain social and family recognition. For example, when students do any homework, they do not only invest in time, effort, and preparation, but also in material resources, including money, paper, and books to complete the English homework in order to get better grades. High grades represented students' main recognition and desire after having invested much in their learning. So, high grades represented for these students a great source of symbolic capital. Taking Norton and Darwin's (2015) words, "the valuing of their capital is an affirmation

of their identity” (p. 46). Language learners use material resources to increase their capital and this capital confirms what they are or how they perceive themselves (identity).

For that reason, when dominant students sabotaged their classmates’ work through material resources (by taking their classmates’ notebooks without their consent, hiding others’ homework or tasks intentionally, or interrupting their participation in class) high investors’ language identity was affected by unequal and abusive power.

The following example, taken from the interviews, shows how some students were subjects of sabotage. This is a part of the answer given by Jenny, a good investor, to the question *¿De qué manera el ambiente del curso y tus compañeros influyen en tu dedicación a la clase de inglés?*

Jenny: “...cada que la profe nos da las fotocopias para trabajar, David siempre las coge y no deja trabajar. A mí por ejemplo me tiene aburrída de que me esconda el cuaderno, cada rato..

Albert: “Tampoco falta el que le quite a uno el cuaderno abusivamente para copiar la tarea, luego queda uno mal porque toca aclararle a la profe que uno no la copió”(from interview June 3, 2016)

Jenny and Albert confirmed that dominant students’ sabotage such as hiding their partners’ notebooks or the photocopies, and taking others’ notebooks without permission and with the intention of copying homework, promoted a bad environment in the class and affected the learning process negatively. The material resources, represented in the notebook and the photocopies were crucial factors that influenced on their learning process. The use of these material resources reflected partly the investment done during the class because those resources constituted significant capital materials. Learner always projected themselves through the material they used and created, such as with their notebooks or workshops developed in

photocopies. It is observed in the second data sample above that, David's sabotage affected Jenny's investment negatively because David interrupted her work and made her feel disappointed with this situation. In regard to Albert's position, he had to give explanations to the teacher that, although he had done the homework on his notebook, it was missing because someone else had taken it without his consent.. Therefore, losing their notebooks or the photocopies and having to give uncomfortable excuses and explanations to the teacher, meant to lose a part of the relationship established between knowledge and the effort invested to acquire knowledge. Due to all these situations of sabotage, I had to apply, as a teacher, different strategies to verify that all of the students worked by their and weren't involved in sabotage practices. For example, I asked all students oral questions related to the tasks or homework they had done to verify if some dominant learners had taken their partners' materials and copied their answers. . Also, as a teacher, I had to apply disciplinary corrections related to these serious conflictive situations.

This subcategory has shown how English learners with a high level of investment and English knowledge were dominated by learners whose low level of investment in their English learning process was very low. Three were the ways in which dominant exercised power over dominated learners: Ridiculing, interrupting, and sabotaging, practices that generated inequitable relations of power and promoted a disagreeable environment in the classroom that affected the identities constructed by the English learners. We might conclude then that in this particular setting, there were language learners whose identity was characterized by being dominant and reluctant to invest in their learning, and those who were dominated, but good students who

started to be reluctant to invest in class due to unfair power, despite their motivation and sense of responsibility for learning.

Subcategory 2.2: High investors resisted unequal exert of power

In this subcategory attitudes of resistance to coercive power are defined as reactions and strategies assumed by some dominated students to stop actions of mockery, interruptions, and sabotage. Despite the power practices by eight dominant students detected in the whole group, there were some dominated students who sought to resist the conflictive and problematic situations generated by those dominant students. For this reason, dominated learners became resistant learners. High investors resisted power by increasing their investment through a high sense of responsibility. It is important to clarify that not all of the high investors resisted exercise of unequitable power established by low investors. However, all of the resistant learners were high investors.

The first case to be analyzed is how some high investors exerted their agency in such a way that they became resistant. The following example was taken from the field notes when Nicolás tried to exert abusive power on his classmates, but found resistance from Camila. Nicolás was a low investor, because he usually made a minimum effort to comply with his academic responsibilities, both homework and exercises in class. On the contrary, Camila positioned herself as a high investor because she liked English, as she affirmed in the interview (from interview May 27, 2016). She participated freely in class, it means the teacher did not have to ask her to participate, she also summited her homework with a high quality. Bearing in mind that

learners with a high investment were dominated by learners with a low investment, Nicolás was dominant and Camila was the victim of that domination.

As it was described in the previous subcategory, in one of the classes, students had to do presentations about an exotic animal in Colombia, they had to organize groups to prepare the presentations using Power Point. Not everybody prepared the presentation. Nicolás and his group were among the people who did not do anything. They did not select the animal, consult information, and they did not create the slides. This situation promoted that students who were irresponsible most of the time, that is, dominant low investors did not show interest in their classmates' work. Instead of being respectful and pay attention, Nicolás and his group threw things with the intention of interrupting and sabotaging the presentation of Camila and her group, who prepared and showed a very good presentation. Camila was upset but this bad feeling moved her to fight for her right to be listened to. She argued that they had made a great effort to do the presentation and nobody was going to prevent them from showing it.

After being interrupted few times by Nicolás and his group, Camila, very upset, told him: 'Nicolás deje de molestar, ustedes no hicieron nada y si vienen a molestar. Esto nos costó mucho para que usted nos venga a interrumpir.' After that and the intervention of the teacher to solve this problem, Camila and her group finished their presentation. (from fieldnotes entry 17, May 27, 2016).

The previous example shows how the sense of responsibility based on the effort made to comply with academic duties, motivated Camila to ask for her right to be listened to. She fought because her investment was high enough like to deserve to be appreciated by others. As it was indicated previously, some strategies were applied to exert resistance. In this case, the need to be listened to and motivated by the firm desire to show her efforts, evidenced in her excellent presentation, were strategies used by Camila to resist the abuse and disrespect exercised by Nicolás and his followers. Sometimes, resistant high investors answered back verbally to dominants'

oppression, as Camila did with the intention of opposing Nicolas' power. She wanted to defend her democratic right to speak and be listened to.

Since motivation is a construct used in the analysis of the data of this study, it is important to remember that this concept is a psychological construct that is complemented by the sociological construct investment (Norton 1995, 1997, 2011). This implies that a learner can be motivated to learn, but do not necessarily invest much in his/her learning. Also, a learner can be demotivated, but invest a lot or selectively in his/her learning process. In the early case, it can be conjectured that Camila was demotivated due to Nicolas' unfair exercise of power, but as she disliked oppression, this incident motivated Camila to react against this unfair exercise of power.

In summary, Camila faced this conflictive situation generated by Nicolás, who pretended to position her and her group in inequitable situations, strongly motivated by her effort and her desire to show the evidence of this effort. An important point to bear in mind in this subcategory is that in the previous subcategory it was showed an example in which Camila was a silent victim of abusive power for a long time as, she positioned herself as dominated because she did not exert a resistant action. In this example, after experiencing much oppression, Camila decided to resist abusive power and face the bullies. These two cases which involved the same learner operating at a different time and space, as passively dominated and then as a resistant leader, support the finding that learners' identities were unstable and context-dependent.

Another example from the interviews of how these high investors faced and resisted abusive power exerted by low investors/dominant is presented here. The following is a part of the answer

given by Jenny, a good investor, to the question *¿De qué manera el ambiente del curso y tus compañeros influyen en tu dedicación a la clase de inglés?*

Jenny: Si, el ambiente del salón influye porque, como dice Yuri, uno no busca problemas, pero uno tampoco se tiene porque dejar. Si a uno le esconden el cuaderno o le hacen otra cosa pues uno tampoco se tiene que quedar callado. Entonces que haya mal ambiente en el salón a uno le afecta. (from interview June 3,2016)

Jenny confirmed that dominant students' sabotage, as hiding their classmates' notebooks, promoted a bad environment in the class and affected the learning process negatively. This implies that high investors, who were also dominated, were positioned in inequitable situations because, as it was analyzed, the notebook was one of the most important material resources in the learning process for a student. Therefore, losing the notebook meant losing a part of the relationship established along his/her learning process. In this case, Jenny, as it was said, was considered a good investor. Because she took notes properly, asked for help when she needed, completed her task with no errors, and used language frequently; as a result, her academic results were pretty good too. Jenny's strategy to resist dominance was to exert her right to be respected as she respected others, because she argued that as she was not abusive, others did not have to be abusive with her either.

A similar situation of resistance that had to do with the material resource (their notebook) is presented in the following paragraph.

"... Some of the students whose level of investment was high tried to hide their homework, exercises or tasks because they didn't want low investors to borrow or take by force these assignments, since those low investors were irresponsible and intimidated those who didn't let them copy their class work .Strategically, high investors made up excuses by saying low investors that their parents did not allow them to lend their notebooks, homework, and materials. Low investors thought that it was unfair to give their work to dominant low investors because they were abusive and did not make any effort to comply with their own work." (from field notes, entry 18, lines12-15, June3, 2016).

High investors' refusal to lend their notebook to dominant learners by force was considered an exert of resistance to power, because although initially low investors did not feel free to say "no" to dominant learners' imposed request, they gradually developed a strategy to resist low investors/dominant power by giving excuses. As being tired of abuse and domination, high investors constructed a strategic identity as being children who had to obey their parents' orders. This strategic way to resist unfair power through the support of the parents' authority image helped them to reduce their possibilities to be victims of violence and sabotage as they justified that they had first to obey their parents than their abusive partners. This exert of resistance to power indicates that, although abusive power relations took place, dominated learners, as possessing a high level of investment and a desire to increase their English level, fought strategically against these relation of abusive power by making up excuses. This was a useful non-violent weapon that allowed high investors to take care of their cultural resources such as their knowledge, their academic production, and their communicative skills. These were the actions that made some high investors be positioned as high investors who resisted the power of those who had positioned as dominant partners.

Some of the dominated students invested a lot in their learning because they not only constructed an identity of good students, but because they wanted to react wisely against their classmates' bad words and attitudes. However, defending themselves from unjust power, intimidation, and bullying was not that easy, it involved a slow process as they had to be victims of so much aggression to finally make the decision of fighting for their dignity as responsible students and high investors. High investors, who were few, resisted the power imposed by those who did not like the English class and who took advantage of dominated learners by not only

intimidating them verbally, but also taking their tasks and disrespecting their rights as students and language learners.

In summary, this category explains how power relations influenced on the construction of language learners' identities as dominated and dominant. Data revealed that learners with a high level of investment and English knowledge were dominated by learners with a low level of investment. And some high investors resisted an unequal exert of power. According to Norton (2000) identity is understood as "how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how this relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future"(p. 5). Therefore, these relations of power made students understand that their world is full of conflictive and aggressive situations that forced them to construct different identities in order to generate a strategic relationship with the world, that they had to face daily. The school context provided them with difficult situations that constrained and motivated them to construct strategic, unstable, dominated, and dominant identities. Bearing that in mind, Norton (1995) takes the position that power can serve to empower or disable the set of identities that language learners can negotiate in their classrooms and communities; hence, the power relations established by this group of seventh graders permeated the set of identities that they constructed during the months that the study lasted.

Category 3: Some language learners shaped language learners' identities as high investors, hoping to achieve better life conditions

This category is dedicated to analyze how some language learners who belonged to this group of seventh graders, empowered themselves as high investors in such a way that they could

have better personal life conditions. Readers of this research study should not confuse this subcategory with the first category already explained, and here I clarify the difference due to the fact that issues of identity are always complex and may cause confusion: While in the first category (*Learners constructed unstable and strategic identities to impress others*) it was argued that students were unstable and strategic in order to pass the English subject because they abhorred English class and because they did not identify as language learners, this subcategory, on the contrary, points out the identity of those few learners who were identified as conscientious, diligent, studious, and dedicated high investors, since little has been said so far about their outstanding effort and sense of responsibility.

Therefore, the interest in addressing a category about true and straightforward high investors is due to the fact that there were also positive data in the instruments that highlighted the dedication, desire, responsibility, and agency that these language learners carried out throughout their learning process. Despite their struggle with unfair power and bullying, they continued investing in their learning because of personal convictions, desires, and plans for the future.

Data show that some learners' plans, desires, and projects for the future in the long and short term influenced on the way they constructed their identity as high investors. We might remember that there were only eleven high investors in this group, six girls and five boys. Data also made me reflect as a researcher that high investors' dedication is often unnoticed because teachers generally pay more attention to low investors who generate problems of indiscipline or are not committed to their learning process and, therefore, get low grades. In addition, as it was established in category 2, the high investors were those who had to face situations of inequality

imposed by learners with a low investment. Despite these situations of conflict that positioned them in unfair conditions, it is important to recognize that these high investors empowered themselves in such a way that they positively dealt with and overcame problems of power. Data revealed that these dominated students who endured abusive social structures, developed the great capacity to invest more in their learning process and, thanks to this commitment, they empowered themselves as high investors in a site full of pressure, disrespect, aggression, and verbal violence. Thus, this positive language learners' identity deserves discussion. To analyze this finding, two subcategories were determined:

Subcategory 3.1: High investors were dedicated to academic success

Data collected evidenced that some language learners empowered themselves as high investors to increase opportunities to achieve personal life conditions and, therefore, a better future.

During the observation phase, I noticed that a few students stood out as high investors because they completed efficiently the following tasks: They presented written work with a high quality evidenced in the use of grammar structures, appropriate and wide use of vocabulary, and correct spelling. The extension of their written productions also evidenced the great effort and time dedicated to do the tasks. They developed reading strategies correctly, showing their high level of reading comprehension. They did oral presentations which evidenced a lot of preparation in terms of the topic consulted and pronunciation, showing their oral skills. Their listening skills were good enough to follow oral instructions given by the teacher, fill in the blanks appropriately with information listened to, and keep a short conversation with the teacher or classmates. In

addition, they did all the reading, listening, speaking, and writing tasks with a high level of proficiency and responsibility. Their relations and interactions were characterized by cooperative learning, most of the time. They used to help each other to overcome academic and social difficulties. They never or rarely promoted discipline problems or conflicts that generated a bad environment during the class. This description constitutes students' symbolic resources, that is to say, all the material supplies, social relationships, knowledge of English, and language strategies that these few learners had and used were essential as a part of their language learners' identity to operate effectively during English class. All these actions described above represented high investment. So, these few language learners were identified as possessing a positive language learners' identity who worked hard in order to have a better future.

A clear example of investment for achieving academic success took place when high investors worked hard to get excellent grades. For example, they did not need to present "Nivelaciones" at the end of the year, that is, complementary activities to improve their grades when students got less than a 3.0, that is the minimum passing grade for the English course, because these eleven high investors never got less than 4.0 in their grades. However, when "Nivelaciones" period started, the first students that submitted these "Nivelaciones" were high investors, even though they did not have to submit any work during this period. I, as a teacher, did not know how, when or when to assign or add these extra points or scores when they got 5.0 because they did not need them. To solve the situation, I negotiated with them to put the extra points on the next period but the same situation occurred. They invested a lot in their learning, so they got excellent grades and again they presented the "Nivelaciones" to gain extra points. (From

field notes entry 18, June 3, 2016). This is an example of their positive attitude as language learners:

Camila again presented her work of "Nivelaciones" but she did not need the extra score, She gleefully told me: "teacher me los guarda para el otro año" (from field notes, entry 18, June 3, 2016)

The grade was an important symbolic capital for this high investor since good grades represented for these language learners the challenge of improving their English communicative skills and meet the requirement of passing the academic year. These eleven high investors knew that they would benefit from getting high scores in their academic world because they assured to be promoted to the next academic year. Grades are instruments to categorize students' achievement; this achievement in the educational system is evident not only through the experiences acquired during the development of the English classes and showed by students' proficiency, but also through the scores represented in their grades. For that reason, the learner who gets high grades is convinced that he/she is developing a high level of proficiency in the use of a foreign language and his/her grades represent that. Besides, it is a fact that they are aware that they need certain score to meet academic requirements to advance to the next academic year. So, grades, and in this particular case, good grades represented for them the main vehicle to progress academically speaking.

In summary, getting high grades was an important reward and symbolic capital for these learners because they not only advanced in their academic world, but it also meant academic success that implied to gaining their family and friends' recognition. Nevertheless, it was detected also that these high investors were motivated by their desire of personal satisfaction.

That is, high investors not only wanted academic, social, and family recognition, but they also had their own desire and satisfaction to be the best of the course, academically speaking. To analyze this, I include the following excerpt taken from the answers given by two high investors to the question asked in the interview ¿Qué palabras o expresiones usarías para definirte con respecto al aprendizaje del inglés?

Alejandra: juiciosa, inteligente, dura (Smart) en inglés (risas) porque no sólo me saco buenas notas, sino que de verdad siento que sé muchas cosas de inglés. Porque a veces puedo entender cosas que no me preguntan en la clase. Y casi siempre saco mejores notas que mis amigos y casi siempre ocupo el primer puesto.

Camila: Pues me considero muy buena. Participo. Creo que tengo buena pronunciación, entiendo muchas cosas y cuando escribo se me entiende, me parece que entiendo muchas palabras. Alejandra saca mejores notas ..a veces ..pero yo también sé muchas cosas por eso me considero muy inteligente. (from interview May 27, 2016)

When these students defined themselves as intelligent and good at English, they were showing the high perception that they had of themselves. Moreover, they did not base their conception of intelligent just on the grades they got, but also on the way they usually operated during the class and outside. Understanding the language and being understood when they used the language, represented for them a reason to be proud and consider themselves as intelligent language learners, no matter if they could not always prove that they were intelligent in the class, the fact that they were able to use the language in other spaces, satisfied them.

In addition, the personal satisfaction of using the language appropriately to communicate, allowed students to position themselves as learners with better conditions to solve academic situations in the short term. This situation of making gradually a better use of the foreign language was developed by them mainly because they were proud of themselves for being academically successful. This was evident through the field notes.

The eleven high investors also found the class activities fun, and they liked them regardless they were to be graded or not. The next excerpt taken from field notes, exemplifies what was said.

“Alejandra was very excited while she solved a soup of letters that we developed in the class about exotic animals, even though she knew that the teacher would not grade it. She was very competitive with her classmates. She wanted to finish first, and was already deciding what exotic animal to select to prepare her presentation and was asking for help to plan her project, which would be evaluated, at the end of the period” (from field notes entry 16, May 20, 2016)

Based on the last excerpt, it can be conjectured that the satisfaction of being academically successful motivated Alejandra to be competitive, she was not only developing her work, but she was also thinking about her project. The activity developed at that moment was not going to be graded but she worked enthusiastically, anyway. However, she knew that this activity provided her with ideas to plan her project. And this project was a challenge that would give her more academic successful, which at the same time satisfied her a lot.

A connection found between academic and personal satisfaction and the level of investment is shown through the following excerpt. This is taken from the questionnaire. The following are the answers to the question:

Tu desempeño académico lo consideras:

<i>alto</i>	<i>basico</i>	<i>bajo</i>	<i>¿porqué?</i>
<i>1. alto</i>	<i>Por poner atención tener los materiales adecuados para la clase entregar los trabajos</i>		
<i>2. alto</i>	<i>Casi siempre saco buenas notas y se me defender con el inglés</i>		
<i>3. alto</i>	<i>Porque me esfuerzo en una materia que es difícil (from questionnaire June 3, 2016)</i>		

These examples evidence that the academic level is directly related to the effort made to learn the language. The academic effort for these eleven high investors represents academic

satisfaction that involves not only a high score, but also personal pleasure, pride, and satisfaction, important features that define their learners' language identities in positive terms.

In summary, they invested a lot because they knew that they would gain high benefits and personal satisfaction. Kramsch (2013) claims that the notion of investment stated by Norton “accentuates the role of human agency and identity” (p.195), what was evident through the high investment made by these learners, throughout the time that this study lasted. Because most of them had to face a lot of problematic situations and inequitable relations of power, but in spite of that, they did not make noticeable negative changes in their academic and personal performance and in the investment in their learning. For example, revising high investors' academic grades along the two periods, that lasted the observation phase it was detected that they kept good grades, it means over 4.0, along this time, no matter what kind of activity, skill or task was developed. In summary, one relevant finding in this research study was that there were positive data about language learners' identity, as at the beginning I was somewhat disappointed with the fact that most learners disliked English and did not identify as language learners. These eleven high investors exerted their human agency to overcome social and academic difficulties with the intention of carrying out their plans and wishes in terms of short term goals in the academic and personal space and, in this way, getting better personal life conditions for the future. Their language learners' identities were characterized by a great sense of responsibility, commitment, investment, and personal interest in their successful learning process.

Subcategory 3. 2: High investors were goal-oriented for a better future

This subcategory aims at analyzing how eleven English language learners empowered as high investors to achieve personal life conditions bearing in mind their long-term goals for the future. To analyze this finding, the data presented showed how high investors related their investment in the English class to their own lives and professional growth for the future, as it was found in the data that these few learners thought the English language could be useful for them. Being goal-oriented implies to carry actions that show learners' discipline and commitment to their wishes and plans for the future. It involves to set responsible and concrete long-term goals as language learners and specific actions that lead learners to fulfill them. Therefore, the language learners that empowered themselves as high investors to achieve better personal life conditions, were goal-oriented for a better future because they projected their image of themselves as language learners based on their own goals.

To analyze this finding, data collected from field notes represented the main source of information. The following excerpt describes the way two of the eleven high investors related their investment in the English class to their lives and professional growth for the future, developing some specific actions that lead them to achieve their goals.

“Today I conducted a survey asking how they looked in 10 years in advance. When I collected the information, I realized that Alejandra and Camila had similar plans in what they considered to be successful. Among other things, they will study a career in the university. Both coincided in saying that for this reason they must learn English very well because they needed to enter the university” (from field notes entry # 4 February 19, 2016)

Camila and Alejandra were language learners who had openly told how they liked to study English. They constantly talked about their dreams, plans, and goals. For example, as it was detected through the survey applied as a part of an exercise during the class, their dreams were

related to traveling to a country where they could speak English, they planned to get a good job, and their goal was to enter the university when they finished high school. So, as can be seen, all of their goals were related to English learning. Alejandra and Camila really worked daily in the class to achieve these goals. This is evident through the following comments made by them during the same class:

“ When we finished the exercise of the survey I asked Alejandra what kind of job she wanted to have in the future, she answered in English “Teacher I want to be teacher of English because I like.” I asked the same question to Camila and she told me “ English secretary” she explained that she would like to work in a company where she could speak English” (from field notes entry # 4 February 19, 2016)

Camila and Alejandra did their best to keep their conversation in English. They were not worried about grades only, they asserted they liked English, and because of that, they worked on their dreams such as getting a good job where they could speak English permanently, this being initial steps to achieve both economic and symbolic capital based on a goal-oriented disposition.

To continue analyzing this finding, that is, that some language learners empowered themselves as high investors to achieve better personal life conditions and were goal-oriented for a better future, data collected from the interview is presented. The example is taken from the answers of some students to the question *¿Te gusta aprender inglés? ¿Sí o no? ¿Por qué?*

Albert: Si, me parece chévere conocer otro idioma y en la casa me recalcan que con eso me puedo defender en la vida. Me gusta aprender inglés porque mi prima sabe inglés y gana bien, eso me llama la atención. Si digamos porque el inglés abre puertas.

Camila: Si, pues yo soy buena para inglés porque mi mamá también me motiva para estudiar porque ella era buena para inglés entonces yo le he encontrado gusto al inglés. Además, quiero viajar al exterior para estudiar secretariado bilingüe y trabajar entonces necesito el inglés (from interview May 27, 2016).

Data showed that there was coherence and consistency between the ideas that the families of these eleven high investors had about learning English and the way learners constructed their identities in the classroom in a positive way. It was detected that the families influenced on these learners' motivation to study English hard, a situation completely opposed to the low investors, as explained in the first category. These few high investors worked hard to get educated, gain knowledge through English learning, and improve their possibilities for the future life. This was evident through their actions, attitudes, and behaviors observed during the observation phase.

On the other hand, Camila whose answer to the same question showed her motivation and pleasure to study English, really worked hard and constantly to acquire a high level of proficiency in the use and understanding of the language. Her performance evidenced her dedication in time and effort in her English learning process, during the whole two academic periods that the observation phase lasted. For instance, she always did her homework, which she presented with a high level of quality, because it was clear and creative. She frequently incorporated English to her daily performance. For example, she asked for permission in English or asked about the meaning of a word using English. Even though we were outside the classroom, she greeted in English. Those actions, strategies, effort, and dedication placed her in the position of a goal-oriented high investor. The fact of being goal-oriented defined high investors' identity as language learners because their goals for the future motivated them to improve constantly the use of the language, get the best grades, and promote cooperative learning during the class.

The next example is taken from the questionnaire. It shows the answer of some students to the question *¿Te gusta el inglés? sí no ¿porqué?*

1. *Si. Porque me gustaría viajar a Estados Unidos*
2. *Si. Porque las universidades piden un buen nivel de inglés para uno graduarse*
3. *Si, Porque mi sueño es ir a Estados Unidos a trabajar y tengo que hablar el idioma (From questionnaire June 3, 2016)*

These answers show and support the ideology that learning a language, in this case English, provides the learner with better possibilities for the future as far as long term goals is concerned. In this case, these language learners are not worried about grades for the current academic period. They are mentioning their desires for a distant future. This implies that they have a social representation about learning a language as an activity that allows them to achieve better conditions in the future. But as being goal-oriented is not only to “say” or “believe,” it also involves action, agency, setting goals, completing goals, and taking risks. It is important to say that the answers given in the questionnaire just evidenced that they had dreams, plans, and wishes, but only high investors exerted their human agency to apply strategies, techniques, and actions that led them to reach their goals.

The next examples taken from the questionnaire, also provide crucial information about learners’ beliefs about the usefulness of learning a language. This information is crucial because the first step to establish a goal is to establish a belief in order to start a process of planning and developing that goal. The following are the answers of some students to the question

¿Consideras útil estudiar inglés para tu vida? sí no ¿Por qué?

1. *SI Porque quiero estudiar en una universidad de ingles*
2. *SI Hay posibilidades que gracias al inglés pueda salir del país*
3. *SI Si estoy en otro país puedo entender. Tener un buen trabajo. (from questionnaire June3,2016)*

Although it is not possible to verify that these answers correspond to high investors, they show that a great number of learners associate the learning of a language to the improvement of conditions that allow them to have a better future. This is deduced from the answers given by the majority of students, since 95 % responded that learning English is important for life. What is important to point out here is that, in the end, just high investors are the ones who make the decision to take that belief for their own. In other words, just high investors exercised their agency through their effort and dedication and stood out in spite of adversities, both those they faced at home and during the class. The way high investors' goals defined or shaped their identity as language learners was shown by their dynamic and positive attitude toward the class, evidenced in an infinite desire to know more about the language and a great interest to use it both inside and outside the classroom.

In summary, these eleven high investors empowered themselves to increase opportunities to achieve better personal life conditions in the future, because they really understood that a great effort could turn into great benefits at short, medium, and long term, just like passing the English course, meeting new people, having access to university education, getting better professional opportunities for study or work abroad. What made the difference was the way learners operated during the class. That is, 95 % of the seventh graders believed that learning English was important for life, but just 25 % worked hard to demonstrate that they really believed that this was true. They acted as they thought. They empowered themselves as high investors in such a way that they could achieve better personal life conditions in the future.

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This chapter presented the analysis of the data collected, as well as the findings of this descriptive case study in which the research question was answered through 3 different categories and 7 sub-categories, all related to the issue of the construction of identity and the influence of investment on it, in the particular EFL context of a public school. Further, I described in detail specific situations that exemplified this particular learning environment, learning English at a public school in Bogotá. The conclusions, limitations, implications for the EFL Colombian community, and some recommendations for further research on the issues or phenomenon under study will be guided in the following chapter.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Implications

This chapter presents the conclusions derived from the data analysis and the implications for the EFL Colombian community, for the institution where this study was conducted, and for my own teaching practices. It also contains the limitations of the study and some recommendations for further research on the issues or phenomenon under study.

Conclusions

In this chapter, the following conclusions were established from the research study which aimed at identifying the identities constructed and the influence of investment on this construction by a group of English learners.

Three main findings were established. The first finding was that these EFL learners constructed unstable and strategic identities to make themselves look good to others. This finding emerged from the analysis of the language learners' behavior and attitudes detected during their interaction in the class in two academic periods, and data collected through an interview and a semi-structured questionnaire. The data collected showed that their attitudes of good reputation towards others were influenced by academic and family demands and their friendship ties. Data evidenced that the educational institution as a systemic pattern of control influenced on the way students constructed their language learning identity. Its influence was based on academic demands established by the school. The academic demands of keeping a minimum score in students' academic results determined the kind of strategic and unstable identities constructed as students of a public school, the family as a social structure constituted the habitus of the students

in which they built their ideologies that in turn influenced on how and which identities they constructed. So, family members inculcated the need of studying and passing the school year with the main objective of increasing the cultural capital and learning English to get a symbolic capital by entering the university, increasing the economic capital in the future, and getting a good job. Moreover, students' desires, social, and individual expectations such as being the first of the class, studying abroad, being the first of the family to enter the university, and friendship ties influenced on the identities that they constructed during two academic periods, in this EFL class.

The second finding was that these EFL learners established dominant and dominated language learners' identities based on power relations. The data evidenced that abusive relations of power were exerted by some language learners during their interaction until they were positioned as dominant. It was also detected that these dominant learners were mainly low investors in their English class. It was also found that high investors were considered as dominated because they had to face inequitable situations that positioned them as submissive subjects. However, some of them exerted resistance to these unequal relations of power, by increasing their investment through a high sense of responsibility and a high level of motivation.

Abusive relations of power and conflicts influenced on the way students positioned themselves, positioned others, and were positioned by others. So, findings revealed that relations of power affected dominant and dominated language learners' identities and academic performance due to violence and conflict generated mainly by students whose investment was very low. Power relations were also expressed through attitudes of resistance to power exerted

by a small group of students whose level of investment was high. It can be concluded that some high investors resisted an unequal exert of power by increasing their investment through a high sense of responsibility, rather than using violence to attack those who abused them. This finding is very interesting because dominated and abused learners found civilized and intelligent strategies to cope with violence. Despite the fact that they were victims of certain conflicts, they actually became successful learners during the learning process. On the contrary, authoritarian learners who thought they dominated and controlled the group, ended up with a low academic performance.

The third finding in this research question is that some language learners empowered themselves as high investors to have better personal life conditions, despite the oppressive environment in which they learned the foreign language. Data showed that some of these learners also defined their language identity on genuine and personal desires and plans to have a better future, based on their investment and interests, and not just to study due to social and family demands and academic duties. Data showed that some of the high investors who were also positioned as dominated students who endured abusive social structures, developed the great capacity to invest more in their learning process. Thanks to this investment, they empowered themselves as high investors in a site full of pressure, disrespect, aggression, and verbal violence. This finding was analyzed from two perspectives. The first one had to do with short term goals that high investors had for the near future. This means that some language learners became high investors because they wanted to be academically successful during the current academic period. So, they were dedicated to academic success. The other perspective was related to long term goals that learners expected to accomplish in a more distant future. It means that they were goal-

oriented for a better future. This implied going beyond the time and space of the current school context.

Data evidenced that the high level of investment made by some students influenced positively on the construction of a variety of identities that these students shaped to be a part of this group of seventh graders, because they increased the accumulation of their symbolic capital and improved their possibilities for the future.

Findings showed that there is a close relationship between identity and investment, because the level of investment influenced on the way students constructed their identities as language learners and which identities were constructed. In other words, the level of students' effort in terms of using of the material and symbolic resources in the language learning influenced on the way students behaved, interacted, positioned others, were positioned by others and positioned themselves, and vice versa; that is, their identities influenced on their investment.

As the construction of identity and investment are dynamically correlated, the level of investment is also determined by identity factors. For this reason, academic and family demands, learners' expectations and desires, relations of power and the lack of responsibility, motivation, and autonomy determined the level of English language learners' investment.

Also, it is important to remember how power can transform language learners' identities so easily. The fact that some learners were afraid of speaking in class, despite the fact that they liked the English class, demonstrated that relations of power in this case constrained the investment of some language learners, affecting their identities, too, because they took certain

positions as language learners that they would not take otherwise. For instance, avoid participation when they really wanted to take part in the class.

Another conclusion is that identities were unstable and transformative depending on the circumstances of learners' life. For example, in this study I was able to identify different facets of identity: Identity determined by social reputation and social norms, by the establishment of power among learners when they did not have any supervision of their teachers, identity determined by academic investment, and identity determined by personal goals and desires in life. So, when I, as a teacher-researcher, talk about identity, it is imperative to bring up Norton's definition (2000) about identity which is as "how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how this relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (p.5).

This concept of identity also challenges teachers and researchers with certain complications, because since there is a constant construction of self, "fluid, context-dependent, and context-producing, in particular historical and cultural circumstances" (Norton and Toohey 2011, p.419). This challenges teachers and researchers to do a systematic and careful observation of learners' interactions and performances, in order to identify their complex and dynamic identities and how they lead learners to invest in their learning, with the intention of applying pedagogical practices more effectively.

In addition, this Norton's conception of identity, which is closely related to the conception of investment, evidences the difference between motivation and investment. As many teachers still believe that students have motivation problems instead of investment problems. It is

concluded then that a student can be motivated to learn English, but do poorly in class because he/she has to face power relationships or social pressure, positioning him/her in inequitable situations. These situations might force learners to decide making changes in their investment.

Implications

The development of this study contributed to provide a detailed description of what happened in an EFL classroom in regards to the construction of English language learners' identity and investment. It also contributed to help me to be more conscious of the wide range of language learners' identities that my students constructed and how their performance during the class responded to their investment. As a teacher, I started to understand that the learning and teaching process implies a set of factors which influence on the construction of identity and investment.

English teachers should not only focus on teaching language because the process of teaching and learning a language implies a set of situations, relations, and interactions that permeate this process reciprocally. Therefore, teachers should pay attention to students' interaction and power relations in order to detect how those relations of power can affect their learning process and how power can motivate or demotivate learners to study the foreign language.

As teachers, we must reflect upon how students position themselves, position others and are positioned by others, because these positions reflect relations of power that are mainly inequitable and abusive, factor that definitely influenced on learners' identity and investment in the foreign language. Reflecting on these topics under study, will help teachers to challenge and change teaching practices and beliefs, as to assume that just applying certain hegemonic methods

without considering the learners' context can result in effective classroom practice that does not contribute to the improvement of learning processes and the generation of better learning environments. Teachers having a poststructuralist view of the learners allow them to recognize learners' wide variety of identities and ways of investing in the class, considering them as individuals with multiple, contradictory, fluid, unstable and strategic, dominant, and dominated identities that can increase or reduce their opportunities to invest in their learning process.

For Colombian teachers, it is important to know about students' language identities and investment, and the factors that influence on their construction, because in that way they will be able to plan, develop, and apply specific and contextualized pedagogical practices that generate more comfortable and accessible learning environments for our Colombian language learners. Teachers' knowledge about the way these learners construct their identities and how they apply their agency to make their investment, will provide teachers with theoretical foundations to question and reflect upon hegemonic pedagogical practices imposed by international standards which do not consider the learner's context. These hegemonic practices, as teaching merely certain grammar structures or using just certain methods, might place some teachers in a kind of comfort zone, because they probably feel they are doing well because they are applying what has been imposed for years and years around the world.

However, to assume this poststructuralist perspective will give teachers a different and wider way of defining language teaching because they will have the opportunity to reconceptualize the notion of language learner, as an agent with multiplicities of identities and agency to operate in class according to specific and unrepeatable conditions. This

reconceptualization will provide teachers with different tools to plan and develop their classes in a more innovative and creative way.

The implications for the institution where this case study was conducted are quite linked to what was mentioned previously, since this research contributes to encourage teachers to analyze and reflect upon their teaching practices and to re consider how we see our language learners as agents of their own learning. This case study led me to restate not only the topics I selected to teach, but also the way to do it, that is, the strategies and methods used to encompass them. This is due to the fact that I had to think and rethink about my language learners as agents with unstable, strategic, dominant, and dominated identities which influenced on the way they did their sometimes selective, low, average or high level of investment. This process of restating my beliefs about my language learners allowed me to consider different activities, projects, and tasks in order to optimize and encourage language learning. When teachers broaden their vision of what a learner is, their practice and beliefs change.

Limitations

The development of this study was a hard process which gave me as a person, a teacher and a researcher a lot of satisfaction. However, this process implied lots of difficulties, too. They were:

During the data collection phase I had some difficulties to record the classes because the classroom did not have electricity, and sometimes the equipment turned off and I could not turn it on again to continue recording the same session class.

At the beginning of the recordings sessions, most of the students behaved differently because they were not used to being recorded, so they began to make gestures, draw attention, or fix their hair in front of the camera. Just after about four recording sessions they started to change these behaviors.

Another difficulty during the observation phase was the continuous class interruptions, because other students, teachers or the coordinator interrupted the class to announce or invite students to different academic or extracurricular events. Moreover, the indiscipline of some students outside of the classroom affected the good development of the class.

As a limitation, when answering the questions during the interview, participants were a little shy, so it was necessary to encourage them to speak, in order to have better access to the respondents' true feelings on the topics of this study. As a researcher, I had to be so careful, because I did not want to bias students' answers. It was necessary to clarify that they could answer what they felt, thought, or believed, as opposed to what they thought the researcher wanted to listen to.

As a new researcher, I must admit that doing research is a very hard process. From making the most important decision as to think critically about the research problem, select the relevant literature about it, assess the methods and instruments for collecting data, decide which data are relevant to answer the research question, and be focused on the research question to analyze the data. In summary, the development of all the phases of the study required a lot of time, effort, and sacrifices. Fortunately, I had the support of my tutor advisor who could understand my ideas,

decisions, and desires very well. Thanks to his guidance and corrections, I could develop this study in a rigorous way.

In regards to the limitations of this study, it could be said that being a participant observer and focusing the data analysis on the phenomenon of the study in the interactions of the students, I limit the perspective of analyzing in depth the role of the teacher in the construction of the identities of the students, taking into account that the process of teaching and learning in this particular educational context has the important presence and influence of the teacher in this process.

Further Research

For further research, I suggest English teachers to continue exploring, analyzing, and reflecting upon the construction of identity from the poststructuralist perspective. There is a need to do research on identity and investment in Colombia because there is poor research on this field. For example, issues such as how Colombian EFL students see themselves as speakers of a globalized world, how their identity as language learners is influenced by the ideals of the American dream as presented in the media, and how their identity as language learners is really useful for their future lives, might contribute to improve the teaching and learning process in the country.

Another suggestion has to do with power in the EFL classroom, because as it was mentioned and showed throughout the data, relations of power can constrain language learners, leading them not to invest or do it selectively, or empower them to invest at a high level.

Conducting research on identity and investment in the EFL classroom can also provide teachers and researchers with theoretical foundations to restate their conception of motivation, which is a psychological construct complemented by the sociological construct of investment (Notron1995). Since there is poor knowledge of the concept of investment, many teachers misunderstand it with the term motivation and this study has clarified the difference between them.

Research on identity and investment is needed to determine how English teachers can contribute to improve EFL learners' investment in their English learning process, as many students at Colombian public schools do not give too much importance to English and they are usually reluctant to speak it. Sometimes they do not think they need English in their lives. In these cases, the role of the teacher is so relevant because through his/her pedagogical practice, he/she might provide language learners with better tools to allow them to have a more successful leaning process, that is, to help learners become high investors.

This study was focused on language learners' identity and investment, but it is also important to explore more about teachers' identity and investment and how these affect or influence on learners' identity and their investment.

Taking into account that in the construction of the student's identity the presence, practice and discourse of the teacher within the classroom could have some influence on such construction, this would be a topic of interest to be analyzed in future research.

This descriptive case study can also provide English teachers with theoretical bases to broaden their personal and professional view of the conception of a language learner. It means,

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to reconceptualize the conception of language learner from a post-structuralist point of view.

According to Norton and Toohey (2011) “language teaching is most effective when the teacher recognizes the multiple identities of students, and develops pedagogical practices that enhance students’ investment in the language practices of the classroom” (p. 1).

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Appendix A

Institutional Consent Form

Institutional Consent Form

COLEGIO

Respetado Rector:

En la actualidad me encuentro desarrollando estudios de Maestría en la Universidad Pedagógica Nacional en Enseñanza de Lenguas Extranjeras, para los cuales requiero llevar a cabo un trabajo de investigación cuyo objetivo es hacer un análisis descriptivo de la inversión (en términos académicos) que hacen los estudiantes en el aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera, en este caso el inglés y cómo esta inversión forma su identidad como aprendices de la lengua. Dicho análisis busca brindar un camino para la reflexión que todo docente, especialmente de lenguas, debe hacer con respecto al desempeño lingüístico de sus estudiantes.

Por lo tanto, solicito a Usted la autorización para aplicar los instrumentos con los que pretendo recoger los datos que permitirán dicho análisis, para lo cual espero muy comedidamente me permita hacer grabaciones de audio y video durante mis clases de inglés con los estudiantes del grado 706 en la jornada de la mañana, aplicar cuestionarios, tomar notas y recoger trabajos que los estudiantes realicen como tarea o trabajo en clase.

Cabe anotar que los estudiantes que participen lo harán de manera voluntaria y libre. De igual forma, podrán retirarse en el momento que lo deseen, sin ninguna consecuencia y su identidad será protegida. La participación de los estudiantes en el presente estudio no generará ningún gasto económico por parte de los estudiantes, padres o Institución. Igualmente, se garantiza que los datos recogidos durante el proyecto de investigación serán de total reserva y que sólo serán usados para el presente proyecto de investigación con fines académicos.

Luego de analizar la información recolectada durante la aplicación de los instrumentos mencionados, la institución tendrá acceso a los resultados de la investigación a través del documento escrito (trabajo de tesis), y si lo desea a través de una socialización en reunión extraordinaria de docentes. Agradezco su atención y apoyo para el desarrollo de este proyecto. Atentamente,

Maritza Collazos

Docente de Inglés Jornada Mañana.

Yo _____ rector del Colegio Carlos Albán Holguín, una vez informado del trabajo a realizar por parte de la profesora de inglés, estoy de acuerdo y doy mi aval para llevar a cabo el proyecto de investigación y utilizar los datos recogidos.

Firma _____ Fecha _____

Appendix B

Parental consent Form

Colegio

CURSO:

Queridos Padres de Familia:

Actualmente estoy adelantando una investigación que tiene por objetivo hacer un análisis descriptivo de la inversión (en términos académicos) que hacen los estudiantes en su aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera, en este caso el inglés y cómo esta inversión forma su identidad como aprendices de dicha lengua. Dicho análisis busca brindar un camino para la reflexión que todo docente, especialmente de lenguas, debe hacer con respecto al desempeño lingüístico de sus estudiantes. Esta investigación hace parte del trabajo de grado para la Maestría que adelanto actualmente en Enseñanza de Lenguas Extranjeras de la Universidad Pedagógica Nacional.

Cabe anotar que los estudiantes que participen lo harán de manera voluntaria y libre. De igual forma, podrán retirarse en el momento que lo deseen, sin ninguna consecuencia y su identidad será protegida. La participación de los estudiantes en el presente estudio no generará ningún gasto económico por parte de los estudiantes, padres o Institución. Igualmente, se garantiza que los datos recogidos durante el proyecto de investigación serán de total reserva y que sólo serán usados para el presente proyecto de investigación con fines académicos.

Luego de analizar la información recolectada durante la implementación, Ustedes tendrán acceso a los resultados de la investigación a través de la Institución.

Por lo tanto, solicito a Usted la autorización para aplicar los instrumentos con los que pretendo recoger los datos que permitirán el desarrollo de mi investigación. Agradezco su atención y apoyo para el desarrollo de este proyecto.

Atentamente,

Maritza Collazos

Docente de Inglés Jornada Mañana.

Nosotros _____ padres
de familia del estudiante _____ del curso _____
teléfono _____ manifestamos estar enterados del proyecto que realizará la
profesora de inglés, que será aplicado a los estudiantes del grado 706 y doy mi permiso para que
mi hij@ participe en la realización de este proyecto de investigación.

Firma _____ Fecha _____

Appendix C

Students' Consent Form

Colegio _____

CURSO: Queridos estudiantes:

Actualmente la profesora de inglés está adelantando una investigación que tiene por objetivo hacer un análisis descriptivo de la inversión (en términos académicos) que hacen los estudiantes en el aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera, en este caso el inglés y cómo esta inversión forma su identidad como aprendices de dicha lengua. Dicho análisis busca brindar un camino para la reflexión que todo docente, especialmente de lenguas, debe hacer con respecto al desempeño lingüístico de sus estudiantes. Esta investigación hace parte del trabajo de grado para la Maestría en Enseñanza de Lenguas Extranjeras de la Universidad Pedagógica Nacional.

Es por eso que para la continuación del trabajo adelantado, se hace necesario contar con su autorización para participar en el desarrollo de las actividades que tengan relación con la propuesta de investigación.

Cabe anotar que los estudiantes que participen lo harán de manera voluntaria y libre. De igual forma, podrán retirarse en el momento que lo deseen, sin ninguna consecuencia y su identidad será protegida. La participación de los estudiantes en el presente estudio no generará ningún gasto económico por parte de los estudiantes, padres o Institución. Igualmente, se garantiza que los datos recogidos durante el proyecto de investigación serán de total reserva y que sólo serán usados para el presente proyecto de investigación con fines académicos.

Ustedes, como parte importante en el desarrollo del presente trabajo, tendrán derecho a conocer las conclusiones a las que se lleguen a través de este estudio.

Por lo tanto, solicito a Usted la autorización para aplicar los instrumentos con los que pretendo recoger los datos que permitirán el desarrollo de mi investigación. Agradezco su atención y apoyo para el desarrollo de este proyecto.

Yo _____ estudiante del
curso _____ teléfono _____ dirección _____
NUIP _____ una vez informado del trabajo a realizar por parte de la profesora
de inglés y previa autorización de mis padres, estoy de acuerdo y doy mi consentimiento para
formar parte activa del mismo.

Firma _____ Fecha _____

Appendix D

Characterization of the Group

Colegio

Docente:

A continuación, encontraras algunas preguntas que tienen el propósito de conocer más sobre ti y tu experiencia como estudiante de inglés. Por favor contesta las siguientes preguntas de la manera más sincera. No escribas tu nombre.

1. Escoge tu género

Masculino_____ Femenino _____

2. ¿Cuántos años tienes? _____

3. ¿Con quién vives?

Padres (madre y padre)

Abuelos

Tíos

Otro (¿Cuál?) _____

4. ¿Dónde estudiaste tu primaria?
5. ¿Cómo era tu profesor de inglés?
6. ¿Cómo eran las clases de inglés con ese (a) profesor (a)
7. ¿Has realizado algún curso de inglés virtual o presencial?

Construction of Seventh Graders Identity as Language Learners in a Public School in
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Appendix E

<p>Research question: 1. Which English language learners' identities are constructed by seventh EFL graders at a public school in Bogotá?</p>	
<p>Activity: First Class, review.</p>	<p>Objective: To know the group and give information related to the class.</p>
<p>Entry #1 Date: January 29th, 2016</p>	<p>Class observation: January 28th, 2016</p>
<p>Time: 100 minutes</p>	<p>Site School: English Language Classroom</p>

Sample of Field Notes

Field notes on students' language learning identity	Field notes on students' investment in the EFL classroom
<p>Today I met the students who are in 706. The group which I selected to develop my research project. According to the information that I had about this group, in primary they studied English with teachers who were not certified, as English teachers, I noticed that this information was important to give an answer about the reaction of my students when I started the class speaking English. They showed surprised faces, because their previous teachers did not speak English. So, they were not used to listen to the</p>	<p>When I asked my new students to greet in English, after their surprised reaction, some of them tried to do it, some of them with pleasure, some of them with difficulty, and some with a bad attitude told me, why don't you speak Spanish?</p> <p>I will try to analyze this variety of reactions in order to identify the level of investment of the group in general and some of the students in particular.</p> <p>Bearing this analysis in mind, I believe that if they show resistance to speak or listen to English they are also probably showing an</p>

foreign language and neither they were asked to speak it. I realized that this is a challenge for them.

I established with them a routine. This is as follows: They arrive to the class and for now they decide where they sit down, it means the location they place during the class, but I explained that if for any reason, it is necessary to change that place, I ask them to change it. Then, we greet in English, say what the date is, we talk about homework, what happened the last class, what activity, topic or objective we have for the present class. And start the class for the day, I told them that in the beginning of each period, I would explain what would be the rubrics to bear in mind to evaluate their work or performance into the class, what would be the topics, activities or projects to be developed. They seemed to be interested in activities that we were to develop for this period.

Then, we talked about the rules for the class. In order to make them participate in the decisions related to the rules of the class, I gave a word and in groups they wrote the rule for the class related to this word. They had to draw a flashcard illustrating the rule assigned. In the beginning, I noticed that they worked very well with their classmate. I noticed that some of them were new in the school but it seemed to me that they did not feel uncomfortable, because they talked about different topics related to their lives.

As I already knew some of the students, I could identify the same groups of friends that were organized the last year when they were in sixth grade

identity of resistance toward the language or the possible social status that this language represents for them. It is probably that their resistance to this language reflects their frustration because they do not have a lot of opportunities to access to it.

During the activity of making the flashcards about the rules not all of them participated in the final decisions but I could notice that they contributed to do the final product. Each group had to give me a flashcard that illustrated the rule established for the class. The rules were 10.

I walked around the classroom and I noticed that students that were together last year in the same group were more extroverts to participate.

I noticed that the groups that kept together from last year tended to work similarly as they worked last year. It means, if they participated a lot or showed their work constantly, they did so in this year too.

To practice the alphabet, we played the hangman game. In this game students tell letters of the alphabet in order to complete a word if they don't guess it the teacher draw a hangman. If the teacher completes the drawing they lose the game.

Most of them were involved into the activity, participated, gave ideas and I noticed that they enjoyed the activity. However, some of them were very passive because they did not know the alphabet in English or they were not sure about the pronunciation and for that reason they preferred to be silent, despite the teachers' insistence. Bearing in mind that most of the students that preferred to be silent were new in this group, I speculated that the lack of friendship ties promoted that they did not feel comfortable to speak English. And if they made a mistake they were not willing to tolerate any mockery. As it was happening

I started the review of sixth grade topics with the review of the alphabet. I think that bearing in mind that some of the students avoid to speak in English is better if they start with short sounds, so they can feel confident in the use of the language.

To do this review we played the hangman game. During the game, I could notice and start identifying how competitive and collaborative were some of them into the groups. I also noticed that not all of them did a great effort to participate or collaborate to the group.

At the end of the class I felt students enjoyed the activities and they created some expectations related to the class. For example, some of them told me: “profe pida la otro clase y sigamos jugando” “Profe ¿la seguimos la próxima?”

with some other students. For example, Nicolás laughed at Camilo because Camilo did not pronounce very well the letter G, however Camilo was not angry because they were friends. Besides, these actions did not reveal any disrespectful attitude, because nobody said rude words only laughed at pronunciation even though this pronunciation was right. They laughed because it was fun for them to listen to English or practice it.

Appendix F

Open-ended interviews Questions

IDENTITY

1. ¿Te gusta aprender inglés? ¿Sí o no? ¿Por qué?
2. ¿Qué significa para ti aprender inglés? ¿Tiene o no alguna importancia en tu vida?
3. ¿Cómo crees que te ven tus compañeros y profesora de inglés como estudiante de inglés?
4. ¿Qué palabras o expresiones usarías para definirte con respecto al aprendizaje del inglés?

INVESTMENT

1. ¿Qué haces para aprender inglés, independiente de si te gusta o no el inglés?
2. ¿Tienes un nivel alto, medio o bajo de motivación en la clase de inglés? ¿Por qué?
3. ¿Cuál es tu nivel de participación y dedicación en la clase de inglés: ¿alto, bajo o medio?
¿Por qué?
4. ¿De qué manera el ambiente del curso y tus compañeros influyen en tu dedicación a la clase de inglés?

Clarification

These questions were asked to the focus group but others emerged from participants' answers.

Appendix G

Semi structured Questionnaire

CUESTIONARIO

INVESTMENT IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

Por favor contesta las siguientes preguntas de la manera más sincera con respecto a tu experiencia como estudiante en la clase de inglés. No escribas tu nombre.

1. ¿Te gusta el inglés? SI_____ NO_____ ¿POR QUÉ?

2. ¿Te gusta la clase de inglés? SI_____ NO_____ ¿POR QUÉ?

3. ¿Consideras útil estudiar inglés para tu vida? ¿SI_____ NO_____ POR QUÉ?

4. ¿Qué tipo de estudiante consideras que eres por lo general en la clase de inglés? (señala todas las que consideres pertinentes)

- a. Dedicado
- b. Interesado
- c. Diligente

- d. Responsable
- e. Desinteresado
- f. Apático
- g. Descuidado
- h. Poco comprometido

¿POR QUÉ?

5. ¿Tu desempeño académico en inglés lo consideras?

ALTO _____ BÁSICO _____ BAJO _____

¿PORQUÉ?

6. Marca con una X la frecuencia con la que haces las siguientes actividades en la clase de inglés:

SIEMPRE: S FRECUENTEMENTE: F ALGUNAS VECES: AV CASI NUNCA: CN

- a. Preguntas a la profesora..... _____
- b. Preguntas a algún compañero/a..... _____
- c. Te esfuerzas por hacerlas actividades solo/a..... _____
- d. Copias de alguien que sepa..... _____
- e. No te interesa realizar las actividades..... _____
- f. Participas en clase..... _____
- g. Haces la tarea de inglés..... _____
- h. Tratas de hablar en inglés lo más que puedas..... _____
- i. Traes los materiales para la clase..... _____
- j. Repasas inglés fuera del salón..... _____
- k. Estudias para las evaluaciones..... _____

7. ¿Qué te gustaría hacer en la clase de inglés?

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