LINGUISTIC IDEOLOGIES, MULTILINGUALISM AND ELT IN COLOMBIA: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Ideologías lingüísticas, multilingüismo y enseñanza del Inglés en Colombia: Una revisión de la literatura

Ideologias linguísticas, multilinguismo e ensino do inglês na Colômbia: Uma revisão da literatura

Por:

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**Abstract:** This review article analyzes recent studies in Colombian applied linguistics that reveal the interrelations between linguistic ideologies, multilingualism, and language learning in the country. To achieve this aim, 22 articles published during the last decade in ten Colombian journals were reviewed and grouped into thematic categories. After

a systematic analysis of the articles, three main thematic categories emerged: 1) Linguistic ideologies revealed in bi/multilingualism policies; 2) Interrelations between linguistic ideologies and learners' identity; and 3) Linguistic ideologies revealed in multilingual meaning-making practices. The conclusions suggest that dominant language ideologies, such as beliefs in the supremacy of English over other languages, native speakerism, and the reduction of "bilingual" education to monolingualism in English, tend to produce and reproduce stereotypes attached to languages and language values, discourses of linguistic hegemonies and purism, and the marketization of foreign languages in the country.

**Keywords:** Ideologies; Multilingualism; Language instruction; Language policy; Identity.

**Resumen:** Este artículo de revisión analiza estudios recientes en lingüística aplicada colombiana revelando las interrelaciones entre ideologías lingüísticas, multilingüismo y aprendizaje de lenguas en el país. Con este fin, se revisaron 22 artículos publicados durante la última década en 10 revistas colombianas y se agruparon en categorías temáticas. Después de un análisis sistemático de los artículos, surgieron tres categorías temáticas principales: 1) Ideologías lingüísticas evidentes en las políticas de bi/multilingüismo, 2) Interrelaciones entre ideologías lingüísticas e identidad y 3) Ideologías lingüísticas presentes en las prácticas multilingües de creación de significados. Las conclusiones sugieren que las ideologías lingüísticas dominantes, como las creencias en la suprem-acía del inglés sobre otras lenguas, el nativismo y la reducción de la educación

"bilingüe" al monolingüismo en inglés, entre otras, tienden a producir y reproducir estereotipos ligados a las lenguas y a los valores lingüísticos, discursos de hegemonías y purismo lingüístico y la mercantilización de la lengua extranjera en el país.

**Palabras clave:** Ideologías; Multilingüismo; Enseñanza de lenguas; Política lingüística; Identidad.

**Resumo:** Este artigo de revisão analisa estudos recentes em linguística aplicada colombiana revelando as interrelações entre ideologias linguísticas, multilinguismo e aprendizagem de línguas no país. Com esta finalidade, revisou-se 22 artigos publicados durante a última década em 10 revistas colombianas, agrupando-as em categorias temáticas. Depois de uma análise sistemática dos artigos, surgiram três categorias temáticas principais: 1) Ideologias linguísticas evidentes nas políticas de bi/multilinguismo; 2) Interrelações entre ideologias linguísticas e identidade; e 3) Ideologias linguísticas presentes nas práticas multilíngues de criação de significados. As conclusões sugerem que as ideologias linguísticas dominantes, como as crenças na supremacia do inglês sobre outras línguas, o nativismo e a redução da educação "bilingue" ao monolinguismo em inglês, entre outras, tendem a produzir e reproduzir estereótipos ligados às línguas e aos valores linguísticos, discursos de hegemonias e purismo linguístico, e à mercantilização da língua estrangeira no país.

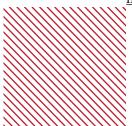
**Palavras-chave:** Ideologias; Multilinguismo; Ensino de línguas; Política linguística; Identidade.



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#### Introduction

Every reflection on the intricate relations among thought, language, and culture is, at the same time, a reflection on human ontology. Indeed, any answer to the question "Who are humans?" would likely involve a circular dialogue among words invested in sense and a series of verbal and non-verbal thoughts, feelings, and actions. The extent to which languages and ways of thinking and living in the world influence one another has been a matter of academic inquiry from the days of Plato's discussions about the nature of language in his *Cratylus* to contemporary scholarship in philosophy, linguistics, psychology, and anthropology. On the relationship between the world and words, for example, the American philosopher Rorty (1998) asserts:

The world does not speak. Only we do. The world can, once we have programmed ourselves with a language, cause us to hold beliefs. But it cannot propose a language for us to speak. Only other human beings can do that. (p. 6)

According to Colombian philosopher Julian Serna, we live in a worded worldun mundo apalabrado- affected by discourse and text (Serna, 1998). From this perspective, a myriad of questions about language, beliefs, and worlds might emerge, especially in environments where multiple languages come across. What is the impact of bi-, multi-, and plurilingualism on our belief system? How and why do we construct those beliefs? How do those beliefs, in the form of linguistic ideologies, shape our worldviews?

The preceding questions guide, in a general way, the main purpose of this critical review: To report on the study of beliefs about languages - or language ideologies<sup>2</sup>- in Colombian scholarship in applied linguistics during the last decade. The article specifically reviews contemporary investigations about the interrelations among language ideologies, bi/multilingualism, and language teaching in Colombia in 22 empirical studies extracted from national and international journals in the field. The review is epistemologically framed and influenced by linguistic ideology as a field of inquiry that emerges from linguistic anthropology and interrelates with other fields of linguistic and anthropological analysis to unveil how languages, cultures, and ideologies interact in bi/multilingual sites and how these interactions shape the way humans co-construct ourselves, our worldviews, and otherness while *languaging* the world (Cameron, 2006; Kroskrity, 2010; Ricento, 2000; Schieffelin *et al*, 1998).



The exploration of the relationships among language ideologies, multilingualism, and multilingual education is not recent. During the last five decades, different scholars have problematized the theme from different perspectives that vary in approach and theory (Cameron, 2006; Kroskrity, 2010; Ricento, 2000; Schieffelin *et al.*, 1998; Silverstein, 1985). Some studies in the past relied almost solely on Sapir and Whorf's linguistic relativity hypothesis to claim that language determined thought and, therefore, reality, while others, based on contemporary pragmatic and semiotic theories, sustain that languages, just like other products of culture, influence thought, culture, and hence, our worldviews (Saeed, 2015; Yule & Widdowson, 1996). The difference in the semantic load between the verbs "*determine*" and "*influence*" marks a pronounced distance between the two positions, corresponding to the first to the strong version of linguistic determinism and the second to a laxer understanding of the influential role of language on thinking and living (Saeed, 2015).

Regarding language contact, language learning, and the influence of linguistic ideologies on meaning construction in different languages, the realm of intercultural studies and the multilingual turn (May 2014; Melo-Pfeifer, 2018; Prada & Turnbull, 2018) has raised interest in applied linguistics in the influential role of different systems of beliefs on the co-construction and reproduction of discourses about language values, linguistic policies, native and foreign cultures, etc. Contemporary research in these fields questions the influence of "English only" ideologies and native-speakerism on the way multilingualism and multilingual education are understood in the country (Miranda & Valencia-Giraldo, 2019; Usma et al., 2018; Viáfara, 2020). Therefore, in the last two decades, research on the intersections among linguistic ideologies, social representations of languages, language attitudes, and plurilingualism has been produced. To put it in Rortyan terms, these studies have sought to unveil how we program ourselves with different languages, how those languages cause us to hold beliefs, and how those beliefs impact our worldviews. Consequently, this review on linguistic ideologies and multilingualism in Colombian applied linguistics attempts to provide an answer to the following question: What are the interrelations between linguistic ideologies, multilingualism, and

language learning in Colombian Scholarship in applied linguistics?

#### **Theoretical framework**

The concept of "linguistic ideology" is complex and multifaceted and varies depending on the philosophical schools from which theory departs that define language and ideology. For instance, for Eagleton (1991, as cited in Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994), the word "ideology" is itself a text, woven of a tissue of conceptual strands (p. 1). Kroskrity (2010) defines language ideologies as "beliefs,

feelings, and conceptions about language structure and use which often index the political economic interests of individual speakers, ethnic and other interest groups, and nation states" (p. 192). According to this conception, there is a relation of indexicality between an individual's or a community's political and economic interests and their ideas about language value and use, among others. This position, in consonance with other scholars' arguments, supports research trends in multilingualism and applied linguistics that focuses on how languages are valued according to what they politically and economically mean for nations in the globalized world. Many studies within this trend have explored language hegemonies in postcolonial contexts, the ideological effects of linguistic imperialism on linguistic racism, and the political and economic implications of the spread of English as a foreign language (EFL) in education, among other phenomena (Cameron, 2006; Ricento, 2000).

Similarly, regarding English and the English language market, critical studies on language ideologies, applied linguistics, and interculturality have investigated the nature of discourses regarding English teaching either as a foreign (EFL) or second (ESL) language, English as a lingua franca (ELF), and their effect on native languages and cultures. The main purpose of these investigations has been to describe the ideologies that cluster around English and how these relate to other linguistic ideologies and speakers' perceptions and attitudes toward languages. Concerning this, Ricento (2000) explains how the different linguistic ideologies that adhere to English, as well as their symbolic and functional roles in social life, should be explained from a comprehensive approach to the sociohistorical contexts where they have emerged. Ricento (2000) high-lights the importance of interpreting language ideologies in the context of a socio-historical continuum marked by particular cultural dynamics and diverse speech communities' systems of beliefs.

Cameron (2006) draws on Schieffelin et al., (1998) to define language ideologies as:

Ideas and beliefs about what a language is, how it works, and how it should work, which are widely accepted in particular communities and which can be shown to be consequential for the way languages are both used and judged in the actual social practice of those communities. (p. 143).

Besides ideological functions, the author also brings to the table discourses about social usage and judgments of value about the way languages "are" and "should be used". This conceptualization aligns with Silverstein's approach to the analysis of linguistic ideologies. Regarding language valuation and judgment, Silverstein (1985, as cited in Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994) states that "Ideological analysis addresses such questions as how doctrines of linguistic correctness and incorrectness are rationalized and how they are related to doctrines of the inherent representational power, beauty, and expressiveness of language as a valued mode of action" (p. 4). These arguments necessarily touch upon discourses about language education and problematize the assumptions behind linguistic policies and language teaching curricula. Under this framework, the systems of beliefs that support ideas on how language(s) should be taught and learned, approaches to monolingualism or multilingualism, or even attitudes towards language variation are also part of the scope of the study of language ideologies.

According to Kroskrity (2010), another common trend in research on linguistic ideologies pertains to the analysis of the impact of language ideologies on identity. The author argues that this tendency investigates "...the role of language ideologies in the production of social identities of various kinds, including ethnic, gender, indigenous, and national identities" (p. 203). Kroskrity also explains how "language, especially shared language, has long served as the key to naturalizing the boundaries of social groups" (p. 203). Therefore, this trend in the investigation of language ideologies has revealed how speech communities co-construct and position their identities departing from language differences, and the construction of otherness based on linguistic boundaries.

# Methodology

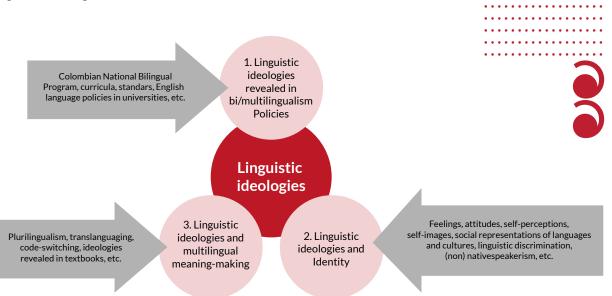
The methodology followed for the compilation and analysis of the articles discussed in this literature review consisted of three phases: a) Selection of papers, b) Synthesis, and c) Thematic analysis and categorization.

During the first phase, the databases of ten Colombian journals were reviewed in the following order: 1) Profile, 2) Íkala, 3) Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal (CALJ), 4) HOW, 5) Matices en Lenguas Extranjeras, 6) Folios, 7) Lenguaje, 8) Signo y Pensamiento, 9) Enletawa, and 10) Gist. The search was limited by the keywords "language ideologies, Spanish, English" and "language ideologies, bilingualism, multilingualism." In addition, only papers published in these journals after the year 2010 were considered. After this process of selection, the initial corpus of the review consisted of 19 articles.

During the second phase, the articles were organized into an Excel chart. The information in the papers was categorized into different columns under the following labels: a) Author(s), b) Topics/ objectives, c) Type of Study/Methodological Aspects, d) Participants, and e) Findings /Conclusions. This systematization of the information in the articles allowed us to deduce that, generally, research on linguistic ideologies, multilingualism, and ELT has mainly followed the principles of qualitative research through case studies, critical discourse analysis, and content analysis of texts.

The third phase consisted of three parts. First, the studies were collected and filtered in the excel chart, especially regarding the topics, objectives, and findings. Secondly, the studies were coded in different colors according to themes. Thirdly, after a first reading of the articles' abstracts and conclusions, three main categories of analysis emerged regarding the interrelation among linguistic ideologies and bi/multilingual national policies, linguistic ideologies and cultural identities, and linguistic ideologies and multilingual meaning-making practices. The following figure presents the main three categories and the sub-topics contained in each (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Categorization of the Studies



After a thorough reading and analysis of the initial corpus, I deemed it relevant to include other studies that were frequently cited in the literature and that could significantly contribute to the review. This included two articles that were published before 2010. As a result, the final corpus consisted of 22 studies, which were organized and categorized in three categories (see Annex 1).



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## Summary and analysis of the studies

#### 1. Linguistic ideologies revealed in bi/multilingualism policies

Any attempt to review linguistic ideologies in the context of ELT in Colombia should consider the claims of empirical studies regarding linguistic policies in the country, especially those concerning bi/multilingualism and bilingual education. A close look at the content of the different bilingualism programs launched by the Colombian government during the last two decades may shed light on the systems of ideologies behind them. Different Colombian scholars have approached the intersections between policy and ideology at various times during these two decades and from different academic perspectives.

According to the Colombian Ministry of Education (2006): "Bilingualism refers to the different degrees of mastery with which an individual manages to communicate in more than one language and culture" (p. 5). However, scholarship about bi/multilingualism and applied linguistics argues that although Colombia is a multilingual nation where more than 60 Amerindian languages and 2 creoles interact with the official language -Spanish- and other foreign languages (Miranda, 2016; de Mejía, 2006), linguistic policies tend to reproduce the idea that bilingualism solely stands for a certain degree of competence in English (de Mejía, 2017; Guerrero, 2008; 2010a; Miranda, 2016; Valencia-Giraldo, 2016). Colombian scholars critique how Colombian Foreign Language Educational Policies (CFLEP) are exclusionary in relation to indigenous groups' linguistic repertoires and symbolically position English as a superior language to the other languages spoken in the country (de Mejía, 2017; Miranda, 2016; Usma, 2015).

Regarding the National Bilingual Program (NBP), and based on authors such as Guerrero (2008), Valencia-Giraldo (2006, 2016), and de Mejía (2006, 2017), Miranda (2016) states that the term 'bilingualism' has been semantically limited to competence in English. "a bilingual person is one who can speak English in addition to Spanish, as we can conclude from mass media, casual conversations, and policy documents, such as the Basic Standards for Foreign Languages: English" (p. 20). It is important to note that the author refers to the way the understanding of *bilingualism as competence in English* is reproduced in public discourse and through different means such as the media, educational policies, and informal conversation.

In the same manner, as a result of examining the *Estándares básicos de competencias en lenguas extranjeras: inglés. Formar en lenguas extranjeras: jel reto!* from a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) perspective, Guerrero (2008) argues: "Bilingualism means speaking English; bilingualism is a packed, monolithic and homogeneous concept; and bilingualism is based on a set of myths" (p. 31). Similarly, Miranda (2016) stresses that the oversimplification of the term bilingualism to English, in educational policy, is exclusionary regarding other languages in the country. The standards document reproduces the ideology that English is superior to aboriginal languages and even to Spanish. Likewise, de Mejía (2006, 2017) and Miranda (2016) maintain that while bilingualism in Spanish and English is promoted as a sign of prestige and power, bilingualism in relation to aboriginal languages is ideologically linked to poverty and marginality.

The studies reviewed in this section aim to unveil some of the myths that support the hegemonic position English has reached in the Colombian collective imaginary. To borrow Eagleton's (1991) terms, it is necessary to distinguish which "conceptual strands" constitute "the tissues" of those ideologies. Guerrero's (2010b) critical discourse analysis of the Estándares básicos de competencias en lengua extranjeras: inglés is illuminating in this sense. The author states:

In the document analyzed here "Estándares", English is presented as a key that gives access to wonderland, meaning economic profits. In a rather naïve perspective, the MEN places English as the magic formula that will solve our social, cultural, and economic problems; speaking English grants us "access to the wide range of advantages associated to this language." (p. 305)

As can be seen, Guerrero's studies (2008, 2010b) disclose other "conceptual strands," myths, or ideologies that gravitate around the ideology of *bilingualism as competence in English*. These are, to mention a few, that English is the universal language that grants access to the Anglo-Saxon-speaking imagined community, to economic profits, and to "equity" in the globalized village. Thus, "if Colombians are able to speak English automatically, they will 'belong' to the imagined community of English speakers that enjoy the benefits attached to that language" (Guerrero, 2010b, p. 299).

Regarding the relations between the ideology of *bilingualism as competence in English* and ideologies of economic development and competitiveness, based on their ample ethnographic work in bilingual education and their analyses of Colombian linguistic policy, Miranda and Valencia-Giraldo (2019) claim:

Policymakers' rationale for the ELT policy is based on a KBE ideology (Fairclough 2006), which regards competence in English as a determining factor for the economic development of countries. The link between English, work, competitiveness, and

globalization is widespread in policymakers' pronouncements as well as in official documents of the national policy, from the genesis of the policy to the current year. (p. 284).

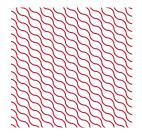
Like Guerrero (2008, 2010b), Miranda and Valencia-Giraldo (2019) highlight the interconnection between the linguistic ideologies that support the super-positioning of English in policy planning and the Knowledge Based ideology (KBE), anchored in a neoliberal conception and construction of the language.

Another myth linked to the ideology of bilingualism as competence in English has to do with the promise of equality. Different researchers demonstrate how, in Colombian linguistic policy, English is represented as the solution to bridge gaps in terms of inequality, while bureaucracy tends to accentuate and perpetuate educational disparities. Among the arguments scholars provide against the discourse of equity promoted by the National Bilingual Program are the following:

- If policy reproduces the ideology that bilingualism equates to Spanish-English or English only, it neglects the value of aboriginal and other foreign languages in the Colombian linguistic landscape and symbolically excludes the groups who use those languages in education and daily interaction (de Mejía, 2017; Guerrero, 2008, 2010a, 2010b; Miranda, 2016; Miranda & Valencia-Giraldo, 2019; Usma, *et al.*, 2018).
- If the National Bilingualism Program (NBP) promotes language teaching projects that privilege only a few (focalized) schools, as it currently happens in many regions of the country, it further widens the existing gaps in terms of educational quality in urban and rural areas of Colombia (Miranda, 2016; Miranda & Valencia-Giraldo, 2019).
- If educational policies equate foreign language development to "communicative competence" in English (in order to compete internationally for economic benefits), students are denied the learning of other characteristics, uses, and values of languages in intercultural communication (de Mejía, 2017; Guerrero, 2008, 2010a, 2010b; Miranda, 2016; Miranda & Valencia-Giraldo, 2019; Usma, 2015).
- Nonetheless, as Colombian scholars have criticized the ideological construction of the National Bilingual Program (NBP), they have also suggested more equitable and inclusive approaches to the multicultural and multilingual nature of Colombia. De Mejía (2017), for instance, maintains:



Official Ethno-education and the National Bilingual Programme policies need to be rethought as an inclusive National Languages Education Policy aimed at providing opportunities for educational actors to use their bilingual and multilingual repertoires for multiple purposes, in all aspects of their lives, both inside and outside the classroom. (p. 12).



#### 2. Intersections between linguistic ideologies and identity

Poststructuralist thought has problematized the impact that language has on our sense of self and axiological positioning. From this perspective, it is suggested that the languages we use to navigate the world are some of the symbolic vehicles we use to perform our individual and social selves (Butler, 2004; Kroskrity, 2010). Therefore, if we conceptualize identity as relating to our subjective feelings, beliefs, attitudes, and opinions, among others, it is possible to suspect that the values we confer to the languages we learn and use in our daily life may shape our behavior, self-image, and self-esteem. This coincides to a great extent with Norton's (2013) and Darvin and Norton's (2015) postulates. In line with post-structuralist positions, these authors share the view that identity is a site of struggle, where language, power, and ideology intersect.

In line with this trend, another important tendency in studies about language ideologies in applied linguistics, bi/multilingualism, and bilingual education in Colombia has to do with the exploration and critical analysis of the effect of linguistic ideologies and language valuation on identity. Under this frame, this review considered studies concerning in-service and prospective teachers' or students' self-perceptions, beliefs, socio-cultural representations, and attitudes regarding languages. Most of these studies describe and analyze linguistic ideologies about English and Spanish. However, similar research about the ideological conceptions of aboriginal languages, and their complex relations with other language ideologies associated with Spanish and English, was also taken into account.

A common linguistic ideology documented in international and national research is the native speaker fallacy. According to Viáfara (2016):

Native Speakerism, the set of beliefs about native speakers (teachers) and how closely they adhere to the ideal model of an L1 in its linguistic, sociocultural, pedagogical, and psychological implications (Holliday, 2006), has become one of the most influential language ideologies in EFL/ ESL today. (p. 12)

From the perspective of critical ethnographic research in language ideologies and foreign language learning, Viáfara (2016, 2020) has inquired into the interrelations of prospective language teachers' self-perceptions of their (non) nativeness as English and Spanish speakers and their self-images regarding these languages. The author studies two Colombian public universities, revealing that participants frequently reproduced different beliefs attached to the functions and communicative roles of their L1 and L2, predominantly related to (non)native speakerism. Regarding Spanish, Viáfara (2016) explains that even though students perceive their knowledge and performance in Spanish as "the ideal or close to the ideal", "they simultaneously express unease when their self-images do not concur with their desired standards" (p. 18). Concerning English, the author found out that "participants regard themselves as possessing an insufficient level of competence in English, which is not the ideal, and a substantial number of them aspire to speak like a 'native speaker" (p. 18).

Other linguistic ideologies Viáfara (2016, 2020) found to be present in the discourse of the prospective teachers who participated in his study relate to myths associated with doctrines of linguistic correctness and incorrectness. These include "the myth of non-accent"<sup>3</sup> and the "standard variety"<sup>4</sup> model. In line with research on self-perceptions, other studies in the field of Colombian scholarship in critical applied linguistics have touched upon the intricate relationship between language ideologies derived from doctrines of correctness -or purism- and linguistic discrimination. For instance, in descriptive research about linguistic discrimination in an English teaching program in Medellin, Vanegas et al., (2016) demonstrate that the idealizations of the "native speaker" and the "standard language", along with attitudes of disesteem of students' language level, strongly influenced their linguistic performance and self-perceptions as language users. In the context of the study, Vanegas et al., (2016) describe how some students felt discriminated against because they did not meet the "standards" closely linked to native speakerism that their teachers and peers expected them to demonstrate. This, in turn, associated their experience as English learners with feelings of frustration and low esteem.

On the other hand, the relationship between cultural identity and language ideologies is a phenomenon that has also been explored from the perspective of indigenous students in Colombian universities. Studies that have approached this theme from the perspective of language ideologies have inquired into indigenous students' views and socio-cultural representations of their ancestral languages, Spanish, and other foreign languages. Based on the results of these studies, some scholars have made suggestions to develop linguistic policies that genuinely consider the multilingual nature of Colombia and give aboriginal languages their legitimate place in language planning and education (Arismendi

Gómez *et al.*, 2016; Arismendi Gómez y Ramírez Jiménez, 2019; de Mejía, 2017; Usma, 2015; Usma *et al.*, 2018).

Arismendi Gómez *et al.*, (2016) conducted the research project "Retos académicos, lingüísticos y sociales en el aprendizaje del inglés y el francés de los estudiantes indígenas de un programa de licenciatura en lenguas extranjeras de una universidad pública". Drawing on social representation theory, the authors described and analyzed how indigenous foreign language students represented their ancestral languages, Spanish, English, and French, among others. Regarding indigenous languages, the authors explain that "la construcción de la identidad como indígena reposa para estos estudiantes sobre una identificación territorial y cultural específica, en la cual la lengua es el elemento central" (Arismendi Gómez *et al.*, 2016, p. 21). Most of the indigenous students who participated in the study estimated that their ancestral languages represented their roots and their belonging to their families and communities.

On the other hand, with regards to indigenous students' ideologies about English, Arismendi Gómez *et al.*, (2016) discovered that "el inglés es visto como la lengua que permite una apertura al mundo, a los viajes, a estudios en el extranjero y al acceso a la información. Es además percibida como una lengua relacionada con el conocimiento" (p. 92). Interestingly, these beliefs resemble the ideologies and promises contained in the discourse of the National Bilingualism Program. However, Arismendi Gómez *et al.*, (2016) did not provide any reference to the relationship between indigenous students' representations of the languages and the cited policy in their study. Nevertheless, the authors did mention the influence of cultural stereotypes associated with English that teachers pass on to students:

> En los hallazgos es claro que, al hacer referencia al inglés, en la gran mayoría de los casos, los estudiantes participantes lo relacionaban con Estados Unidos, Canadá, Inglaterra y Australia; igualmente el francés lo relacionaban solo con Francia. Esta situación refleja que las prácticas de los maestros en las clases de lengua privilegian materiales y temáticas provenientes de estos lugares. (Arismendi Gómez *et al.*, 2016, p. 95)

Finally, Arismendi Gómez *et al.*, (2016) stated that Spanish was given little exploration in the study. However, they found that indigenous students represented Spanish with positive affection since it permitted them to bridge communication gaps in quotidian interactions in their communities and to cope with general academic requirements.

Usma et al., (2018) also provide a complete description of the complex interactions among linguistic ideologies, aboriginal and foreign languages, and linguistic policies in a Colombian University. Through the close analysis of a "sociolinguistic profile of indigenous students at Universidad de Antioquia," the authors describe, among others, how indigenous students' identities are impacted by current phenomena such as the loss of aboriginal languages in their regions, difficulties to adapt to different academic literacies, the requirement to prove "proficiency in English" to obtain a university degree, ethnic and linguistic discrimination manifested in the university's linguistic policies, etc. Specifically, in relation to English and English teaching, Usma et al., (2018) explain that, even though the indigenous students who participated in their study showed a positive perception of English and English language learning, they also questioned the imposition of educational models that derive from "transnational ways of managing higher education that do not necessarily respond to a plurilingual, multiethnic, and quite diverse country such as Colombia" (p. 249). In line with Usma (2015), the authors conclude that if indigenous students' languages, their ancestral knowledge(s), and ways of life continue to be devalued in educational discourse, it is likely that they prefer to hide their indigenous identities as a strategy of "self-protection and survival" in educational institutions that "maintain rigid, monolingual, monocultural structures" (Usma et al., 2018, p. 250).

# 3. Intersections among linguistic ideologies and multilingual meaning-making practices

When discussing language ideologies and associated studies in Colombia, it is crucial to explore the interrelations among linguistic ideologies and meaning-making practices in language learning contexts. It is through interaction that human beings make sense of the world; meaning-making leads to learning, and ideologies are co-constructed, negotiated, and reproduced. Taking a critical stance, some international and national studies on bilingual education and meaning-making draw ideological connections among the discourses reproduced by hegemonic macro and micro-politics of language teaching and the way languages and cultures are implicitly or explicitly represented in classroom practices and discourse(s) (Canagarajah, 2011; Guerrero, 2008, 2010a, 2010b; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013; Miranda, 2016; Miranda & Valencia-Giraldo, 2019; Ricento, 2000; Valencia-Giraldo, 2006, 2016).

Another significant aspect of scholarship on the ideological impact of certain multilingual meaning-making practices is that it also sheds light on the way certain worldviews influence language use and communication in educational contexts, specifically in the foreign language classroom. Therefore, this literature

review also considers empirical studies that investigate pedagogical practices aiming to foster the development of linguistic skills in English or Spanish, which, in one way or another, reveal ideas, beliefs, attitudes, or representations attached to language ideologies. The studies included in this section often refer to the plurilingual nature of meaning-making in foreign language teaching and learning and touch upon pervasive topics in applied linguistics research, such as code-switching, translanguaging, biliteracy, bicultural interaction, and English textbooks analysis.

Valencia-Giraldo (2006, 2016) research has made significant contributions to the study of multilingual intercultural meaning-making in the Colombian context. In one of her ethnographic studies, the author analyzed teachers' and learners' interactional and pedagogical practices leading to meaning-making in bilingual classrooms in public and private schools in Armenia, Quindío. Valencia-Giraldo (2016) revealed how meaning was constructed and negotiated, as classroom interlinguistic dynamics were permeated by the linguistic ideologies contained in the Colombian National Policy on Bilingualism (NBP). Among those ideologies, she found the oversimplification of bilingualism to English only and the symbolic positioning of English as a language with a value superior to Spanish and other languages. Moreover, the author described episodes of interaction and literacy practices involving the use of texts that let her conclude that teachers used cultural modeling based on stereotypes to make meaning of the L2 cultural features for students. Although the author does not explicitly mention it, it is possible to deduce that teachers' and students' multilingual meaning-making practices were mediated by their ideological representations of languages and cultures, particularly their cognitions regarding the connection of English with Anglo-Saxon traditions.

Studies on classroom discourse that focus on the mix of languages in multilingual educational environments have also shed light on the way linguistic ideologies impact meaning-making practices. This is the case with empirical research on code-switching, translanguaging, and plurilingualism. Regarding the use of Spanish and English in multilingual meaning-making practices in public schools, I must refer to my research on code alternation and translanguaging in Social Studies classes at a state bilingual school in Armenia, Quindío (Arias-Alzate, 2016). One of the most significant findings of the ethnographic study, when analyzing language use and classroom discourse, was that Spanish and English were given different social and communicative values and statuses that directly related to teachers' linguistic ideologies associated with Spanish and English, as well as their ideas and beliefs about language teaching and learning.



In the cases studied, teachers also believed that bilingual education consisted of English teaching, content instruction in English (only), and the transmission and celebration of certain cultural practices from the UK or US. Spanish, on the other hand, was communicatively minimized and relegated to certain uses, such as the instruction of students with special intellectual needs (Arias-Alzate, 2016). Thus,

based on the results of the study, it was possible to observe how English was positioned in the classroom not only as the most important language for socializing and learning content but also as a language with a higher status than Spanish. This fact could also be deduced from the choice of the foreign language to create knowledge about Colombian history, geography, and culture (Social Sciences contents).

In relation to translanguaging, some studies in Colombian scholarship have showcased that the acknowledgment of diversity in students' linguistic repertoires and the use of those for meaning-making may result in effective and innovative pedagogic practices (Arias-Alzate, 2016; Ortega, 2019). For instance, in the context of ELT in elementary and secondary schools in Pereira, in a comprehensive ethnographic study about dynamic flexible bilingualism and translanguaging, Arias Castaño (2017) demonstrated that translanguaging can be used as a meaningful bilingual strategy in the target language and content classes. Besides, the combination of languages was perceived by teachers as a tool to facilitate the learning of subject themes in dynamic bilingual education programs. Similarly, Ortega (2019), based on his research on teacher uses of trans[cultura]ción<sup>5</sup> states that:

> Literacy and the validation of first languages can successfully be implemented as ways to remove barriers [...] by allowing students to engage in their first language, serious issues regarding social interactions (such as bullying and aggression) can be discussed in the class while simultaneously and effectively achieving English literacy skills. (p. 156)

Another important theme of analysis that arises in the empirical studies reviewed is how pedagogical resources reproduce language ideologies. Textbooks' discourse, among other resources, plays a crucial role in the formation and development of linguistic ideologies, cultural stereotypes, and prejudices (Nuñez-Pardo, 2019, 2020; Patarroyo, 2016; Valencia-Giraldo, 2006). From the perspective of decoloniality, Nuñez-Pardo (2020) claims that "the content of EFL textbooks operates and contributes to the naturalization and perpetuation of ways of being, knowing, and exerting power that hide, distort or misrepresent the multiplicity of sociocultural realities in local contexts" (p. 122). Based on international and national scholarship about the intersections among textbooks, ELT, and critical interculturality, the author lists pervasive themes in the literature that support the spread of coloniality and hegemony through the discourses that English textbooks spread. Among those topics, Nuñez-Pardo (2020) states that "the cultural component in the texts, learning activities, and iconography privilege the superficial, visible, aesthetic, and monolithic culture of Anglo-speaking countries" (p. 122).

Interpreted from the point of view of linguistic ideologies and meaning-making, it is possible to state that the way in which the discourse of textbooks is organized in its super-, macro-, and microstructure symbolically positions English as a superior language. Similarly, the cultures associated with English tend to be represented in textbooks based on common stereotypes and sociocultural representations of English-speaking countries, especially the United States and the United Kingdom.

Nuñez-Pardo (2020) calls for an approach to textbook design and analysis that genuinely considers students' real contexts and needs. According to the author, "contextualization destabilizes mainstream ways of developing standardized, homogenized, decontextualized, and meaningless materials" (Nuñez-Pardo, 2019, p. 19). In consonance with Nuñez-Pardo (2019, 2020), Patarroyo (2016) proposes that "textbooks should be designed by the community that is learning the language in order to combine the language and the foreign culture with the culture and immediate context that is being experienced. The context must match students' current needs and their background" (p. 99). Scholars like Patarroyo (2016) and Nuñez-Pardo (2019, 2020) align with contemporary approaches to language teaching that acknowledge the pertinence of combining the foreign language(s) and culture(s) with the local to co-construct knowledge meaningfully. Ortega's (2019) notion of trans[cultura]ción, for instance, may also contribute to the development of initiatives that truly embrace Colombian multilingual and multicultural diversity. These projects, as Nuñez-Pardo (2020) suggests, advocate other contextualized materials informed by locally emerging content and methods that are sensitive to cultural diversity, without omissions, distortions, or biases, favoring the development of politically and culturally-aware subjects in accordance with their ethnic origin, social status, gender, age, creed, identities, and capacities.

All in all, what the aforementioned studies confirm is that, as stated by Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) and Sercu (2005), theories and conceptions about language strongly impact the way languages are represented in meaning-making. Moreover, as can be inferred from different meaning-making practices described, "ideology is variously discovered in linguistic practice itself [...] and in the regimentation of language use through more implicit meta-pragmatics" (Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994, p. 9). In line with these arguments, the reviewed studies demonstrate that linguistic ideologies related to linguistic hegemony, colonialism, and doctrines of language correctness and purism might have a negative impact on meaning-making and classroom discourse. However, these studies also show that if the diverse linguistic repertoires that emerge in the classroom are allowed to function harmoniously and naturally in meaning-making, it is likely that meaningful learning will take place while acknowledging the values of all languages in communication.

#### Conclusions

This review has examined a meaningful sample of studies carried out in Colombia on diverse themes such as bi/multilingual national policies, ELT, multilingualism and identity, meaning-making practices, and textbooks' content analysis. All of the studies reviewed shed light on the interconnection of linguistic ideologies with diverse topics in contemporary Colombian scholarship in ELT education and revealed some gaps in research and theory in the field that could orient future investigations.

Regarding the main findings of research on the interrelations between linguistic ideologies, multilingualism, and language learning in Colombian scholarship in applied linguistics, the review demonstrated that linguistic ideologies anchored in hegemonic and colonial views of bi/multilingualism still inform Colombian educational linguistic policies to a large extent. Many of the authors consulted deem Colombian linguistic policies discriminatory due to the tacit oversimplification of bilingualism, reduced to English-Spanish or English only, at the expense of the diversity of languages in the country. Additionally, some studies showed that language ideologies associated with doctrines of linguistic correctness and purism (like those contained in the NBP) negatively impacted students' and teachers' self-perceptions as language learners who reflect certain cultural identities. For this reason, several scholars call for the promotion of inclusive policies and practices that acknowledge the plurality of Colombian languages and cultures. In such a way, it might be possible to confront the detrimental consequences of discriminatory and hegemonic linguistic ideologies.

Concerning the way language ideologies impact multilingual meaning-making in Colombian educational sites, specifically in the context of English language classes, it was possible to find out that while certain practices tended to perpetuate the superposition of English in classroom discourse, other practices leaned towards more harmonic and inclusive approaches to plurilingualism. Therefore, practices such as translanguaging and *trans[cultura]ción* proved successful for the development of linguistic skills while acknowledging the communicative and identarian values of the multiple linguistic repertoires that might converge in the language classroom. On the contrary, the analysis of English textbooks in Colombia suggests the need to rethink learning materials from a critical position. Scholars call for urgent contextualization and decolonization of the English textbook so that it matches students' cultural and linguistic needs.

Finally, looking across the studies, it is also relevant to note that little research has addressed the direct relations between language ideologies and meaning-making in state schools, or from the point of view of school teachers and students. Besides, even though the studies discussed call for the equal recognition of the communicative and pedagogical values of all the languages and linguistic repertoires that converge in the English classroom, just a few provide a thorough description of the linguistic ideologies associated with Spanish and other local languages and their impact on meaning-making and classroom discourse. The most important gaps identified in the literature lie here, and hence the need for more studies that look into language ideologies in Colombian educational sites where multiple languages, cultures, and identities usually converge, intersect, and sometimes collide.

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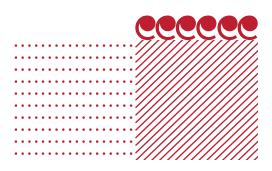
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#### Notas

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- <sup>2</sup> The terms "ideologies of language", "linguistic ideologies" and "language ideologies" are used interchangeably throughout the article with exactly the same connotation.
- <sup>3</sup> The idea that speakers' L1 accent should not be noticeable in their pronunciation of the L2.
- <sup>4</sup> The idea that one variety of the L2 (usually related phonetically and syntactically to American or British variations) corresponds to "the standard form" of the language.
- <sup>5</sup> "This is a process of making meaning during English-learning tasks while comparing specific linguistic variations as students learn about both their own culture and other people's cultures" (Ortega, 2019, p.155).

