Original Paper

Patterns of Regularity, Stability and Interdependence in Research Related to Communities in ELT

Julia Posada-Ortiz[1*]

[1] Facultad de Ciencias y Educación, Doctorado Interinstitucional en Educación-DIE. Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas, Bogotá, Colombia

Abstract

This paper presents a review of studies on communities in ELT in English-speaking countries and Latin America, including Colombia. The purpose of the article is to show that it is necessary to understand the senses Language Preservice Teachers make of the concept of communities and the ways they relate to each other and their teachers. Also, there is a unitary concept of community in the policies related to English Language Teacher Education in Colombia, a naturalization of the concept of community and patterns of regularity, stability and interdependence in research related to communities in English Language Teaching that make invisible how the English Language Preservice Teachers make sense of the concept of community in their affiliations or no affiliations with particular groups. Understanding the senses the English Language Preservice Teachers make about communities might bring to the fore other ways of knowing that can contribute to the improvement of the design of teacher education programmes.

Keywords

community, communities of practice, preservice teacher education, teacher education programme

1. Introduction

This article makes up part of a doctoral research project which claims that English Language Teacher Education programs (ELTEPs, henceforth) and the Ministry of Education (MoE, hereafter) in Colombia, exert coloniality of power, being and knowledge over the English Language Preservice Teachers (ELPTs, hereinafter) not only in terms of what they have to learn and do, but also in the communities with which they should affiliate. The research project also contends that the concept of community in ELT has been naturalized.

According to Higgins (2012), "it is necessary to complexify the concept of *community*…investigating

whether and to what degree learners affiliate with particular groups…and…with particular…identities" (p. 4). This is a relevant issue as "selves are often imposed on learners, due to dominant discourses, othering or hegemonic processes, but learners can and do choose to resist these ascribed positionalities, developing positions based on their projected visions of who they are" (Higgins, 2012 p. 10).

Higgins' assertion is particularly relevant in the context of ELTEPs in Colombia where the Ministry of Education (MoE, henceforth) has made explicit what the ELPTs should learn and do through Resolution 18583, which organizes the names of the programmes, the curricular components and methodologies that the ELTEPs should have and implement (Resolución 18583, 2017).

The aforementioned Resolution also states that in terms of the second or foreign language, the ELTEPs must show that the students should have achieved Level C1 in the language of emphasis at the end of their studies, in accordance with the standards of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) (Resolución 18583, 2017). According to the Resolution, the ELTPs should have also developed pedagogical and research skills. In this way, not only the teacher educators, but also the ELPTs "are portrayed as passive followers whose willingness to cooperate is taken for granted" (Guerrero, 2010, p. 41). Furthermore, it is clear that the current vision of the ELTEPs in Colombia that underlies this Resolution is a representation of "colonial, traditional, and central discourse in ELT" as "it is imposed as a top-down strategy" (González, 2007, pp. 325-326).

As part of the Educational policies, the MoE has also stated that "the creation of, and affiliation with academic communities should be a professional goal for anyone involved in the field" (Rodríguez, 2014, p. 309). For this reason, the document *Política y Sistema Colombiano de Formación y Desarrollo Profesional de Educadores* (2013), clearly states that part of the support for beginner teachers is "their integration into the communities of practice and learning that each educational institution must create" (Política y Sistema Colombiano de Formación y Desarrollo Profesional de Educadores, 2013, p. 155). On designing ways to support the beginner teacher by envisioning communities of practice as a way to support them, it is just another way to keep alive the coloniality of power "in the criteria for academic performance" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013, p. 2).

The ELTEP, in which I will carry out the doctoral project, offers an integrative and interdisciplinary curricular proposal to bridge a gap between theory and practice and different kinds of knowledge; it also allows transformative pedagogical interventions (Proyecto Educativo de LEBEI, 2010). This curricular proposal also seeks to integrate the ELPTs into an educational and social community (Méndez & Bonilla, 2016). The ELTEP is described as an educational community that forms innovative teacher researchers who consider teaching English not as a goal, but as a means of social construction to empower the ELPTs to take an active part in and out of the classroom (Quintero & Samacá, 2013). Even though the ELTEP seeks to form ELPTs who look for social transformation in their schools, are able to reflect and go beyond traditional methodologies, and the fact that the programme is structured to promote interdisciplinarity, one may assert that the view of learning is basically based on the same contexts described by Johnson and Golombek (2011); namely, language teacher education, and the

practicum and the research skills based on reflexivity. The MoE proposes the same tenets in Resolution 18583, of September 15, 2017. The ELTEP designers seem to presuppose that the members of the programme and the schools where the ELPTs carry out their practicum make up a community. However, it is not clear what a community means for them.

Therefore, both the guidelines of the MoE and the formative purposes of the ELTEP exercise power relations that affect the construction of the subjectivity of the ELTEPs, in the same way that certain practices and discourses do their part with the in-service language teachers (See Méndez, 2017). Consequently, the communities the ELTEP and the MoE offer for the ELTPs are just another way in which the university exert the coloniality of being, the coloniality of knowing and the coloniality of power (Castro, 2013).

In this sense, as Higgins (2012) above expresses, the MoE and the ELTEP impose the ELPTs' discourses, practices, and selves within the educational, social, and research communities that are available for the ELTPs. However, the ELPTs might resist these discourses, practices and selves by making other senses of communities, as well as adopting other practices and ways of being for themselves.

Hence, it is necessary to bring to the fore the analytical category community, because the groups of people the ELPTs affiliate with are related to their agency in their learning process, an aspect they have been dispossessed of in the top-down mechanism that is ruling ELTEPs at the moment in Colombia. Getting knowledge about the senses of community that the ELTPs make is one way of replacing the *monoculture of knowledge* established by the ELTEPs transiting to an *ecology of knowledges* (Santos, 2016) by identifying *other knowledges* (Medina, 2013); that is to say, the knowledge to which the ELPTS resort to and through which they exert agency.

In the first part of the article, the reader will find the concept of community from a sociological and philosophical view from the North and sociological view from the South (Santos, 2016) (Note 1). Next, there is a description of the soundest concepts of community in ELT, namely, Target Communities (TCs), Imagined Communities (ICs) and Communities of Practice (CoPs). Then I will present the method that was carried out for the review with all its limitations; the results will be associated with the communities that have been the subject of research trends and finally, I will describe the implications and conclusions derived from the review.

2. The Concept of Community

The term *community* was coined by Tonnies (1887) "who sought to differentiate society and community to account for the expansion of a bourgeois and capitalist society with its characteristic elements: individualization, growth of the State and market relations, 'public opinion', science and industry, among others" (Liceaga, 2013, p. 60). By doing so, community and society became organizing axes that allowed structuring social reality in its various dimensions (economic, political, cultural and so on). As community and society organize and structure social reality, one might infer that

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they also homogenize. For Tonnies the fundamental feature of a community is perhaps that of unity and, for this reason, he defines it as a "metaphysical union of bodies or blood" which has by nature "its own right with respect to the wills of its members" (Tonnies in Liceaga, 2013, p. 60). For this reason, a community is associated with the lasting, the stable, the intimate, the authentic and with the territory. The characteristics of the community as defined by Tonnies (1887) are opposed to the ones of the society since for Tonnies a society is ruled by individualism, economy, and is always expanding, therefore territory, union and stability are not part of it.

For Tonnies (1887), community precedes society, and it is characterized by identity bonds; for example a territorial or ethnic identity, which is what the members have in common. Authors such as Durkheim (1970), Weber (1944) and Parsons (1971), who developed different visions about the connection of community and society, picked up the dichotomy society/community.

According to Torres (2013) there are three areas of knowledge within which the greatest production around the concept of the community has been carried out; namely: sociology, philosophy and the investigations and reflections on and from the problems of Latin America.

Torres (2013) states that sociology embraces the concern for the term community from three different perspectives: Firstly, from the question about the nature of the social bonds in current society, adopting the classic authors such as Tonnies (1887) and Durkheim (1970). In this line of thought, the work of Marinis (2010) is framed; the second concern of authors such as Sennet (2001 and 2002), Touraine (1997) and Bauman (2003b) addresses the proliferation of community experiences and discourses, interpreting them as escape behaviors in the face of globalization. Finally, sociologists such as Maffesoli (1990) and Lash (2001) see the new forms of sociability as an expression of the decline of modernity.

Torres (2013) states that contemporary philosophy has taken up the debate on the community from three issues: The first one, from the debate that began in the 80s in the Anglo-Saxon world between liberals and communitarians. In the second issue, authors such as Mouffe (1999) vindicate the community as the ethical basis of a pluralist democracy. Finally, the question of being and being in common with human beings makes it possible for authors such as Nancy (2011) and Esposito (2003) to ask the question about the community, moving away from the assumption of identifying it with the possession of "common properties" and exploring its subversive potential, seeing it as heterogeneity, difference, plurality and debt.

In Latin America, sociologists such as Liceaga (2013) consider that the category of community revives with greater force in Latin America, since this part of the world has been a victim of capitalist practices of dispossession not only in terms of land, but also in terms of social and cultural practices. Within this scenario, the concept of community in the original settings, was very similar to the one of Tonnies in "the sense of solidarity, reciprocity, mutual dependence on human beings" (p. 82), as well as "to traditional and rural ways of life" (p. 66).

According to Liceaga, some authors such as Mariátegui (2001), Flores Magón (1911) and Bautista

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(2011) were interested in the community forms of indigenous peoples, especially because of their similarities in structure and organization with the ideas of communism. Some of these authors, especially Bautista (2011) in Bolivia, suggested that in order to improve life in Latin America it was necessary to return to these community forms. However, the decolonial sociologist Rivera Cusicanqui (2010) in Bolivia, thinks that the turn suggested by Bautista is not possible as now some indigenous and peasant communities resemble the capitalist organizations. For that reason, she states that instead of returning to the past, it is necessary "to produce in the present and into the future human relations of [a] community type that really overcome the social relations that capitalism and modernity produced" (Rivera Cusicanqui in Liceaga, 2013, p. 72). According to Liceaga, Rivera Cusicanqui believes that one of the aspects that we must recover from indigenous communities is the ways in which the members of the community relate to each other as human beings. It is also necessary to recover the relationship of human beings with nature (Cusicanqui in Liceaga, 2013). Out of this, for Liceaga, community then is "a word of struggle that refers simultaneously to tradition and the future, to what it was, to what it is and what it could be" (p. 80).

The approaches to the term community that I have described up to now have in common the influence of the economy that underlies them. For Tonnies (1887), the concept was born in opposition to society, a form of grouping in which human beings unite for contractual purposes, in a rational way to produce well-being and progress (Poviña, 1949). However, this well-being and progress is understood here more in terms of a project in which what counts is the logic of the economy and the market. Although the concept developed by Tonnies (1887) highlighted the union and the territory, the fact that these characteristics became organizing axes which the members of the community have in common, the Italian philosopher Esposito (2003) argues that this concept homogenizes and denies the individual. For Nancy (2000) communities are inherent to human beings; we all live in communities, we live in families, and we work with others. However, this does not mean that we are alike or that we are subsumed by our "community" identity. Therefore, it is necessary to think of a community in which it is possible to be with others even though you do not have anything in common with them.

In Latin America sociologists, politicians, philosophers and social leaders such as Liceaga (2013), Rivera Cusicanqui (2011), Bautista (2011), Mariategui (2001) and Flores have engaged in reflections on the term community associated with indigenous peoples and peasants, groups of people dominated, denied, subdued and subjugated by Western modernity, and whose forms of organization, way of life and worldview tend towards something different from the modern and Western tradition. Liceaga (2013) asserts with Rivera Cusicanqui (2011) that it is necessary to contemplate the possibility of establishing human relationships beyond economic interests. According to Liceaga, this is a project that should start now and should be an ongoing process in which human beings should consider not only the relationships they create with other people, but also their connection to nature. This concept of community is dynamic in the sense that it refers to the past, present and future and, at the same time, it is integrative because it incorporates other elements such as nature.

Next, I describe some of the soundest communities in ELT and English Language Teacher Education; namely, Target Community, Imagined Communities and Communities of Practice (CoPs). I focus on these three types of community concepts for two main reasons: Firstly, these concepts are connected to the ways people construct their identities in their process of language learning and teaching (Higgins, 2012), and secondly, because these concepts prevail in recent research in ELT in English-speaking countries and Latin America, including Colombia.

2.1 Target Communities, Imagined Communities and Communities of Practice

Target community (TC) is a term that refers to "the idea of a mostly cohesive group of people who speak a (standard) language in relatively homogeneous ways, and whose cultural practices likely differ significantly from those who study the *target language* of that community" (Higgins, 2012, p. 5). This view of community constructs the ELPTs through the dichotomy Native Speaker (Ns) vs. Non-Native Speaker (NNs). Within this vision, ELPTs are seen as English language learners whose dream is to achieve Ns' level of language proficiency as well as the Ns' social competences (Higgins, 2012). According to this author, TC, Ns and NNs are monolithic fixed labels which we need to question.

In social approaches to language learning, the notion of community has been addressed by Lave and Wenger (1991) through their work on CoPs in which learning is conceived as a situated activity and "an evolving form of membership" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 53). In CoPs, imagination contributes to the development and expansion of identities and therefore the "feelings of being part" of and "identified with". In this view of community, people who seek to affiliate with particular groups usually try to adapt to the community norms. In this sense, the ELPTs would adapt and seek to be accepted by the target community by adopting the role of apprentice (Higgins, 2012).

Poststructuralist perspectives on ELT have resorted to imagined communities (ICs), a term first coined by Anderson (1983) that refers to "groups of people, not immediately tangible and accessible, with whom we connect through the power of imagination" (Norton, 2016, p. 8). In this postructuralist view identity is seen as "a site of struggle, and continually changing over time and space. Identity is a struggle of habitus and desire, of competing ideologies and imagined identities" (Norton, 2015, p. 45) The ELPTs in this view perform different identities: they are Colombian English language learners, they are language learners at a state university, they are practitioners, etc.


3. Method

3.1 About the Review

Using the key words "community", "communities", "communities of practice", "teacher education" and "ESL/EFL" context, I conducted a search on Scopus, Redalyc and Scielo. The criteria for inclusion and exclusion of the articles were established with the goal to identify the relevant literature related to communities and English Language Teaching from 2008 to 2018. At this point, it is worth mentioning that most of the studies on the topic of communities have been mainly carried out in the USA. According to the search conducted in Scopus, during the last ten years a total of 1119 studies were

carried out in areas such as EFL, ESL, higher education, post-secondary education and professional identity. Most of these studies focus on the English Language Learner or the In-service English language teacher and to a lesser degree on the ELPTs. These studies mainly refer to Target Communities, Imagined Communities and Communities of Practice.

In terms of Communities in Latin America, from 296 studies, I focused on only those related to English Language Teacher Education and English Language Learner. With this same criterion I double-checked by reading articles from the main academic journals related to Language learning and English teacher education in Colombia as shown in Figure 1. The studies connected to Target Communities, Communities of Practice and Imagined Communities in Latin America, including Colombia, seem to have adopted these terms from the research carried out in English-speaking countries. It is interesting to note that the Colombian scholars mention not only CoPs, IC or TC, but also other types of communities such as teaching communities, learning communities, communities of inquiry, educational communities, community-based pedagogy, and professional communities. However, firstly, most of the time the scholars do not define these communities clearly; and secondly, when they resort to these communities they cite authors from English-speaking countries. So, there is still a need to find local knowledge related to the concept of community. In terms of the participants of the research studies, when it comes to CoPs and other communities the studies focus on in-service teachers, however, when the studies focus on TC they address mainly preservice teachers. In terms of preservice teachers I also noticed that there is a recent tendency on the part of the researchers to bring to the fore the voices of in-service teachers (Robayo, 2015) as well as the pre-service teachers (Vanegas, 2015). I would like to make clear that the main focus of this review concerns the studies carried out in Latin America, and for this reason the study of communities in English-speaking countries is only mentioned as a backdrop.
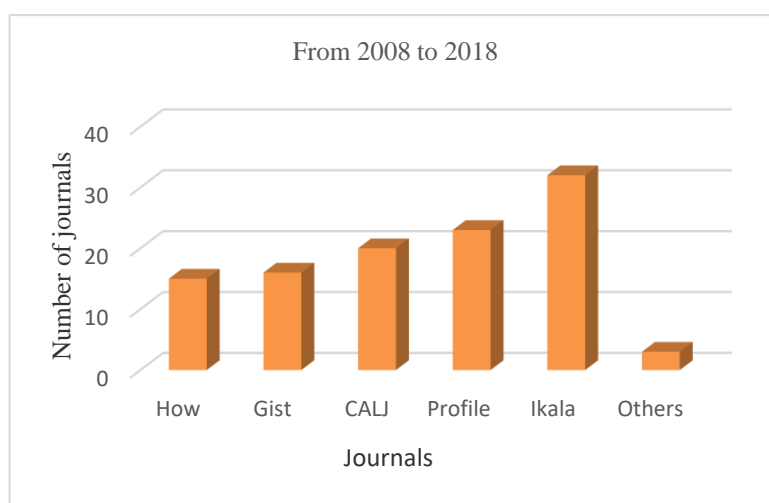
Figure 1. Academic Journals

3.2 Limitations

Because some articles do not include the key words that guided the search, it is possible that some articles have been left out of this review. The fact that the definitions of community (found in most of the articles that were part of this review) are taken from the production of authors from the global North, as well as the research methodologies, makes it necessary to consider a local work in this regard.

4. Results

As explained above, the main focus of attention in this analysis is the articles written by scholars of Latin America, including Colombia. The results are described taking into account the most mentioned communities found; namely, TC, CoPs, IC, and others. Some researchers of the English-speaking countries are problematizing the homogenization that communities produce. In Latin America, some academics have taken the concepts of community of the global North as a tool and strategy for the improvement of the learning of English as a foreign language and an element that should be part of the design of the ELTEPs. Other scholars, however, use the communities as an excuse for ELPTs to learn more about the people around them and from that context to design their classes. In spite of this, the senses of community of the ELPTs still remain ignored.

4.1 Communities and Research in English-speaking Countries

In the area of ELT, target communities and identities have been studied from the dichotomy Native Speaker (NS) vs. Non Native Speaker NNS to account for "Ideologies and practices which are used to legitimate, regulate and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources defined on the basis of language" (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1988, p. 13).

CoPs studies have focused on how institutions and external discourses shape the ELPTs' identities, and how these assigned identities might conflict with teachers' self-perceived identity (Varghese, 2017; Varghese et al., 2005; Varghese, Motha, Park, Reeves, & Trent, 2016).

Finally, the poststructuralist studies mostly derived from the seminal work of Bonny Norton (2000) associate identity with investment. Language learners invest in the foreign language with the hope to be able to fit in imagined communities (IC). However, they might also resist certain positions prescribed for them (Norton 2000-2013; Pavlenko, 1998, 2001a, 2001b; Pavlenko & Norton, 2005; Pavelenko & Blackledge, 2004; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000, among others).

By reviewing the main discussions in ELT from the English-speaking countries, I realize that there is a tendency to connect communities and identities and that some scholars have started to problematize resistance to the homogenization that these communities produce.

4.2 Communities and Research in Latin America

In this section, I would like to present a review of studies around communities in Latin America, in the area of ELT. From this review, it seems that the view of the communities in these studies is instrumental as most of the time communities, especially communities of practice, are seen as something good that has to be added to the ELTEPs in order to improve language learning and to foster

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the English teaching practices of the teachers to be.

4.2.1 Target Communities

In teacher education, the largest number of studies focuses on the development of English language skills in terms of vocabulary, reading, grammar and especially communication and writing skills, the latter in order to be competitive in the academic world. The studies related to the TC are to see that there is a group of scholars that shows a desire to meet the goals of government and international standards fully, while others build discourses and practices of resistance. Those who work based on the *must be* discourse perpetuate the dichotomy NS vs. NNs and its consequences in the identity formation of the ELPTs as it is the case of a study carried out in Colombia by Vanegas et al. (2015) who felt/believed that some discriminatory attitudes affected ELPTs' performance in aspects such as emotional factors, feeling of fright toward evaluation, communication apprehension, and devaluation of students' language variation. This study gives hints on the colonization of being on the side of the ELTEPs in which the ELPTs want to achieve the language standards required.

4.2.2 Communities of Practice

The studies on CoPs in Colombia aim at showing their benefits to improve the ELTEPs as CoPs are a means for collegial work (Barragan, 2015). In 2014, Carreño explored "the collaborative practices of a group of intermediate English level students and the way in which students' interactions contributed to the initial steps towards the establishment of a learning community" (p. 213). According to the researcher, the students not only improved their language skills, but also their social skills. Robayo (2015) sought to reveal the subjectivity of teachers in a Colombian public university from the modes of subjectification tracked in narratives in the life stories of two CoPs, natives and immigrants in education. Robayo found that CoPs are an important element to introduce innovations in the ELTEPs. In the same year, Fandiño, Ramos, Bermúdez and Arenas (2016) suggested some ways to transform ELTEPs, and one of the ways the authors suggested was to introduce CoPs as a way to enhance collaboration and social skills. Other studies see the potential of CoPs to develop collaborative, critical and pedagogical skills of the ELTPs. For instance, Farias and Olivinovic (2008) created a collaborative experience in two ELTEPs, one in Chile and one in Colombia, to explore the potential of virtual platforms in the creation of CoPs. The study showed how the ELPTs developed higher critical skills and understanding of texts. In general terms, it could be stated that the Colombian scholars assume that CoPs have a beneficial impact on ELTPs. It seems that some scholars have instrumentalized the term CoPs to improve critical, pedagogical, collaborative, language and social skills (Farias & Olinovic, 2009; Barragan 2015; Carreño, 2014), to introduce innovations and transformations in the ELTEPs (Robayo, 2015; Fandiño et al., 2014). In 2018, Bedoya, Betancourt and Montoya created a community of practice (CoP) with a group of language teachers interested in learning and building knowledge about pedagogical and instrumental aspects in integrating ICTs into their teaching practices. The study that took two semesters "showed that the core group and some CoP active members increased their pedagogical and instrumental knowledge about the integration of ICT into L2 learning and teaching

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processes" (p. 122).

The studies I revised do not include either an interest in the sort of communities the ELTPs seek to affiliate on their own or a critical view on how CoPs might foster colonial mechanisms or the kind of relationships that ELPTs sustain with their classmates, teachers and the ELTEP in general. These studies also ignore how the ELTPs make sense of the concept of community in their affiliations with particular groups.

4.2.3 Imagined Communities

In terms of ICs, Lengelin (2017) carried out a study to understand the identity formation of nine EFL teachers at public schools in Mexico. The researcher found that although little was required from these teachers to gain entrance into a National Programme for Basic Education, once they started the programme they tried to improve their English levels in order to fit in the Target Culture, language and imagined community in order to be able to cope with the programme demands. This study is a good example of how teacher education contributes to the colonization of local knowledge (Gonzalez, 2007), and to the internalization and externalization of language learning since "the local is taken as outdated and obsolete; local knowledge is superseded by foreign, and borrowed discourses are internalized by native policy makers and school stakeholders" (Usma, 2009, p. 32).

There is a doctoral dissertation carried out in Canada by a Colombian scholar (Valencia, 2017) with three different groups of ELTPs—one in Canada, another one in Chile and the other one in Colombia—with the purposes to learn about ICs and investment of these ELPTs. The researcher concluded that the ICs of these groups were similar even though they did not know each other or probably never would, and that these ICs were shaped within the project of neoliberalism.

López and Cortés (2016) conducted a study in Mexico with three multilingual students in order to describe their needs and desires in light of the foreign languages they were studying. The results showed that the multilingual learners appropriated that target language or IC the more they raised their levels of investment in the languages of study. The desire to learn foreign languages, among which the main one is English or to be multilingual, something that could also be achieved by learning local languages, shows "the current English dominance within the geopolitics of knowledge…that is enhancing the symbolic capital of English and contributing to the erosion of linguistic diversity" (Mendieta, Phillipson, & Skutnabb-Kangas, 2006).

In Colombia, Guerrero (2010) wrote an article in which she makes a critical discourse analysis of the handbook *Estándares Básicos de Lenguas Extranjeras: Inglés. El reto*, published by the MoE in 2006 as part of the National Programme of Bilingualism in Colombia. Guerrero shows that the authors of the handbook "perpetuate mainstream concepts about the symbolic power of English as the one and only necessary tool for academic and economic success" (p. 294). The author states that this document promotes the idea that all the inhabitants of the global village make up part of an IC in which they share an affiliation by speaking English.

4.2.4 Other Communities

The Colombian scholars mention not only CoPs, IC or TC, but also other types of communities such as communities of inquiry, professional learning communities, teaching communities, educational communities, community-based pedagogy and learning communities. However, firstly, the scholars do not define these communities clearly; and secondly, when they resort to these communities they cite authors from English-speaking countries.

González and Herrera (2015), two scholars from the University of Veracruz, México, refer to communities of inquiry (CoIs) as a techno-pedagogical model. In this model, online language learning is conceived as the combination of technological, human and pedagogical resources. Rodríguez (2014) describes what a professional learning community should take into account to be considered as such and she makes a list of recommendations to create one. For this author, this sort of community represents a potential educational benefit for collaborative work in teacher development and the production of local knowledge in the construction of ELTEPs curriculum. What these two authors propose seems to be in compliance with the MoE policies.

Fajardo (2014), on carrying out research with ELPTs, concluded that a teaching community plays a fundamental role in forming, sustaining, and transforming professional identities. Nevertheless, the researcher does not define what a teaching community entails.

Cortés, Cárdenas and Nieto (2013) sought to understand how the educational community defined a good English teacher. In this study an educational community is understood as the one made up of the school members or stakeholders such as teachers, students and families, a concept stated in the General Law of Education (1994 art. 6) in Colombia. The researchers discovered that the community thinks a good English teacher should have a good level of English, research skills and communicative skills as well as a good general knowledge about a variety of different topics.

Lastra, Durán and Acosta (2018) describe how pre-service teachers developed an awareness of the need to establish relationships between community resources (linguistic, social, and cultural) and their role as agents to enact critical pedagogy. This qualitative study was developed with three different groups of students in an English undergraduate programme in a public university. The researchers gathered data by means of community mapping reports, presentations and pedagogical projects designed and carried out in the schools where the participants implemented their teaching practicum. The outcomes of this study shed light on the way pre-service teachers began to make connections between the principles of community-based pedagogy and the language curriculum in the schools. Findings demonstrate the way "the preservice students encouraged their students to explore their communities from different perspectives and promoted students' role of inquirers of themselves and their contexts" (p. 209). Lastra, Durán and Acosta's (2018) article does not delve into the word community. The definition of community these researchers present is taken from a dictionary, thus minimizing its complexity.

Nieto (2018) engages in a reflection on how teacher educators and student teachers can turn communities into a text to be explored in order to introduce changes in curriculum design. By doing so,

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education can promote social justice and peace. The researcher advocates for a community-based pedagogy to make social justice possible. However, the article is installed in the *must be* of the future language teachers, leaving aside their own reflections and senses of community.

In Latin America, including Colombia, the scholars whose studies I described above continue working with the literature and canonical concepts mainly associated with TC, IC and CoPs, and although these Latin American scholars mention other sorts of communities such as learning communities, professional communities, and educational communities; these concepts represent "an amalgam of international discourses adopted, adapted" from the research carried out in English-speaking countries. The use of concepts associated with communities also represent, in the case of Colombia, "policies appealing to 'the international community'" (Usma, 2009, p. 132), therefore colonization of knowledge and power.

Most of the time Latin American scholars seem to adopt the concepts on communities they use with the hope that by doing so, the educational practices in terms of language teaching and English language teacher education will improve automatically. This might seem that on the one hand, the Latin American scholars, continue adopting not only non-canonical visions of language and language teacher education that favour the "English project " (Phillipson, 1992), but also homogenizing and legitimizing a sense of community that is imposed on the ELTPs. On the other hand, it might show that regularity/pattern, stability and interdependence, three concepts of order (Schatzki, 2002), might be present in research associated with the notion of communities in ELT.

According to Schatzki (2002), "regularity and pattern connote repetition of the same" (p. 7), stability "spotlights the integrity of large-scale social formations" (p. 9); and interdependence refers to "ties, reciprocity, and coordination…[of]…the actions of individuals and groups" (p. 9). However, the same author states that order "should countenance irregularity… tolerate instability…[and]…admit the full range of relations among social entities" (p. 17). The research of the scholars cited above has contributed to the stabilization and regularity of the use of the concept of community in ELT. The research cited above not only conforms mostly to the topics of IC, TC and CoPs, but also to the same research methodologies in which case studies prevail as well as the use of instruments such as in-depth interviews, semi-structured interviews and focus groups. Only Robayo (2015) made use of narratives in her study to give an account of the subjectivities of the participants. Using the same methodology could be contributing to the stabilization of the concepts of ICs, TCs and CoPs because it is as if there were only one way of knowing. Finally, the reasons behind the widespread use of the terms TC, IC and CoPs in ELT is mainly due to the fact that these concepts make up part of the "English project" (Phillipson, 1992) within neoliberalist policies whereby the teaching of English and everything associated with this language has created international policies (Copland, Garton, & Burns, 2013) that have to be adopted in all countries of the world including Colombia.

5. Discussion

In this article I have made a literature review that includes the concept of community from sociology and philosophy as well as from the problems of Latin America. This conceptualization also included the most popular communities in the area of ELT; namely, target communities, communities of practice and imagined communities.

Derived from this literature review one can argue that there exist basically three problems related to communities in ELT: Firstly, there is a unitary concept of community in the policies related to language teacher education in Colombia; this means that the educational law in Colombia has been co-opted by a unitary concept of community, that of CoPs, and in this way through the law the MoE imposes the discourses, practices and selves on the ELPTs. However, the ELPTs might resist these discourses, practices and selves by envisioning other communities, practices and ways of being for themselves.

Secondly, there is a naturalization of the concept of community within the ELTEP in which this project is going to be carried out. Community is associated with unitary and homogeneous forms of social life in which common traits, interests and purposes prevail. This unitary and essentialist image of community makes invisible the differences, tensions and conflicts of any collective or social entity. It also makes invisible the ELPTs' affiliations with particular groups and therefore their agency in their learning process.

Thirdly, there are patterns of regularity, stability and interdependence in the research about communities in ELT. The research of the scholars cited so far has contributed to the regularity, stabilization and interdependence (Schatzki, 2002) of the use of the concept of community in ELT. In the research cited, not only the concepts of IC, TC and CoPs reign, but also the use of the same instruments (in-depth interviews, semi-structured interviews and focus groups) as if there was only one way of knowing. The Latin American (including Colombian) scholars have adopted the terms and research methodologies of the ESC researchers, thus homogenizing and legitimizing a sense of community. However, some of these authors have started to focus their research on the voices and subjectivities of the in-service teachers (Robayo, 2015) and the pre-service teachers (Vanegas, 2015).

It is important to make clear that by contending that English Language Teacher Education is a site for higher education which institutionalizes coloniality and identifies the patterns or regularity, stability and interdependence in research in ELT, I am not devaluing the work of Latin American (and Colombian) scholars. Nor am I implying that the work coming from the Anglo-Saxon countries with respect to the communities and ELT should be ignored.

Quite simply, I am proposing that we should start with the knowledge of the sense of community that the ELPTs bring and what this knowledge can offer us in order to improve the way we design the ELTEPs, not from an instrumental point of view but on a more collaborative perspective where not only the teacher educators design the curricula but also the ELPTs. In this way, we would contribute to solving the fourth and final problem I found from the search described in this paper about the communities and ELT which is the invisibilisation of senses (other) around communities that ELPTs

make on their own. It is a problem that we could begin to solve by asking questions such as: What senses (other) do future language teachers make about community? What communities do the ELPTs envision for themselves? How do ELPTs make sense of the concept of community in their affiliations with particular groups of people? How do ELPTs make sense of the experience of being with their teachers, classmates, others and themselves? Who is included and who is excluded in the communities the ELPTs envision? What is the nature of the social ties that ELPTs establish with the ELTEP, their classmates and their teachers, among others?

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Notes

Note 1. North and South do not refer to geographical places but to epistemological positions in which the North designates the canonical ways of approaching knowledge, being and power which originate basically in Western cultures. The South refers to cultures that approach knowledge, being and power in other ways. For this reason, we can say that there are Souths in the North and Norths in the South.

Note 2. This literature review makes up part of a doctoral research project in the Doctorado Interinstitucional en Educación programme-DIE-Facultad de Ciencias y Educación.-Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas.