CRITICAL LITERACY IN AN EFL UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM: EFFECTS OF
IMPLEMENTING HILARY JANKS' FRAMEWORK

A thesis presented by

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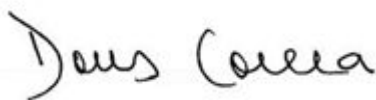

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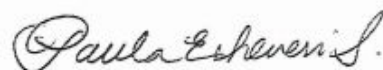_____

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DEDICATION

To Marisol, my beloved wife and my greatest support during this challenging process.

To my daughter, who I expect can see me as an example.

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ABSTRACT

CRITICAL LITERACY IN A UNIVERSITY EFL CLASSROOM: EXPLORING THE EFFECTS OF IMPLEMENTING HILARY JANKS' SYNTHESIS MODEL

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In today's world, new technologies are providing people with access to a multitude of multimodal texts that are never neutral and work to position the readers, thus being critically literate is essential for students who are constantly bombarded with them. In Colombia, few studies have explored the development of critical literacy in EFL university students. Despite the benefits these critical literacy practices have brought to university students in terms of helping them understand issues of power and approach texts from different perspectives, more efforts need to be done to help them not only develop critical awareness of social and cultural issues such as gender relations, but also gain control of highly valued genres in tertiary level such as expository essays.

Hence, this instrumental case study explored the effects of implementing Hilary Janks's four-dimensional critical literacy synthesis model with a group of EFL students in a private university. To do this, an instructional unit was designed, encompassing the

dimensions of power, access, diversity and design; and implemented to help students explore and reflect on the issue of gender stereotype, analyze TV commercials stereotyping women, and write expository essays in response to this. The data collected included samples of students' work, namely worksheets and expository essays, audio-recorded classes, and interviews with students. Findings showed that most students were able to reflect and discuss the issues of gender stereotyping and the role of women in society. They also gained better control of the widely valued genre of exposition as they were able to write expository essays in which they stated and supported their own stance towards traditionally common gender stereotypes. Likewise, students were also able to value people's diverse subjectivities and cultural differences in regard to such stereotypes. Finally, students were able to take advantage of their understanding of the power relations portrayed in gender stereotypes, and their control of the genre of exposition, to produce texts that challenge such stereotype.

Keywords: Critical literacy; interdependent model; gender stereotypes; domination; access; diversity; design

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Introduction

In present-day society, critical literacy is considered a 'new basic' that students need to develop in order to deal effectively with the numerous multimodal and multimedia texts they are exposed to everyday, in a way that allows them to examine and contest such texts (Luke, 2007). Besides, new communication technologies such as mobile devices, internet connectivity, and social networks have helped democratize the production of meaning, contributing to both the reproduction of powerful discourses and the dissemination of counter-discourses (Janks, 2012). As consumers and producers of texts, it is important for students to develop critical literacy since they should be able not only to familiarize with the meaning-making resources used in the texts they read and write, but also to understand their social effects and the role of language in construing power relations in terms of gender, ethnicity, class, religion, and sexuality, among others (Janks & Vasquez, 2011; Janks, 2010).

Faced with such a challenging context, language teachers need to find ways to help students learn the language and, at the same time, develop their abilities to use, critique, and design texts in a variety of media, and using several semiotic resources while addressing issues of cultural, social, and political power (Luke & Dooley, 2011). To start with, teachers should apprentice students into developing control of the language resources and genres of everyday and academic texts, so that they can gain access to the dominant discourses in which they might be embedded (Janks, 2006; Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). If students do not develop knowledge and ability to effectively use texts, they will likely fail to succeed in everyday life and, especially, in academic contexts (Dooley, Exley & Poulus, 2016). Moreover, teachers need to help students develop their ability to read against texts,

that is, being able to understand that texts are not neutral, find out how texts position them as readers, unveil the ideological representations that world texts might be promoting, and contest them (Luke, 2000). If students do not develop such ability, they will most probably fail to interpret the politics of texts and be easily manipulated by them (Wallace, 2001). It is also necessary that language teachers instruct students in the production of their own texts, fostering their awareness of the text purpose, intended audience, meaning-making resources, viewpoint, and potential social effects (Hyland, 2003). If students fail to do this, they will likely reproduce texts rather than design their own in response to others (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993; Janks, 2010).

Aware of the importance of fostering students' critical literacy, several scholars around the world have proposed different frameworks, models and strategies that might be helpful in achieving such purpose (Ciardiello, 2004; Freebody & Luke, 1990; Janks, 2010; Lewison, Flint, & Van Sluys, 2002; McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004; Rogers, Mosley, & Kramer, 2009). In Colombia, equally cognizant of this need, some EFL teachers have already started to explore the implementation of classroom strategies to help students develop critical literacy at different educational stages: primary level (Quevedo, 2008); secondary level (Contreras & Chapetón, 2016; Palacios and Chapetón, 2014; Rincon & Clavijo, 2016; Umbarila, 2010); and tertiary level (Agudelo, 2007; Gutiérrez, 2015; Rojas, 2012; Rondón, 2012). However, these studies have not tried to simultaneously address the four interdependent dimensions of critical literacy that Janks (2010) argues for, namely power, access, diversity, and design.

A review of studies published in the main Colombian journals in the field of EFL (Colombian Journal of Applied Linguistics, HOW, PROFILE, Íkala, Lenguaje, and Folios) in the last ten years confirms this. Studies done in primary and secondary schools have

2

mainly focused on power and diversity (Contreras & Chapetón, 2016; Palacios and Chapetón, 2014; Quevedo, 2008; Rincon & Clavijo, 2016; Umbarila, 2010). Quevedo (2008), for example, have fifth-graders write life stories to problematize their socio-cultural realities and raise their own voices. In doing this, she seems to include the dimensions of power and diversity as students reflected and transformed their realities through narratives, drawing from their personal life experiences. Similarly, Contreras and Chapetón (2016) foster seventh-graders cooperative learning to tackle disrespectful behaviors in the classroom, helping them explore (reading the world), understand (learning about the world), and propose actions to transform their reality (changing our world). Rincón and Clavijo (2016), in turn, help 10th graders inquire into the social and cultural issues of their communities, and encourage them to express their viewpoints about community problems through the creations of blogs. Although they slightly address Janks's dimension of design by fostering the use of different modes of communication, such as videos, audios, images, and texts, students were not explicitly taught how to make meanings with these multimodal resources. Likewise, Palacios and Chapetón (2014) encourage eleventh graders to reflect on the social content of some English songs, analyzing social realities and constructing meaningful experiences as they learn English. Finally, Umbarila (2010) engage ninth-graders in examining historical, social, political and cultural issues to raise their awareness towards social justice in Colombia, develop their sense of Otherness, and empower their voices.

At the tertiary level, studies which claim to have drawn on critical literacy perspectives have also focused mainly on power and diversity (Agudelo, 2007; Gutiérrez, 2015; Rojas, 2012; Rondón, 2012). For instance, Agudelo (2007) promotes critical cultural awareness in a group of 14 pre-service teachers to help them explore and analyze the

3

relationship between language and culture, and its role in the field of foreign language teaching, as well as exploring the value and diversity of students' own culture. As such, this study focused on raising awareness of the cultural and linguistic diversity involved in the EFL classroom. Gutiérrez (2015), in turn, explores the beliefs, attitudes, and reflections of three pre-service teachers towards the exploration of critical literacy theories and the design and implementation of critical literacy lessons in public schools during their practicum year. Mostly, the issues brought to discussion in this study were related to students' attempts to raise awareness of power relations in society through the implementation of classroom activities with EFL learners. Similarly, Rojas (2012) examines the interactions of female students in a private university, using a feminist post-structuralist discourse analysis to explore the influence of gender identities and the relationships of power in the English language learning process. In doing this, the author addressed the dimensions of power and diversity as she examined how inequitable relations of power in the classroom may influence on students' learning identities, and their multiple and shifting gender identities. Finally, also from a feminist post-structuralist perspective, Rondón (2012) analyzes the short narratives of six LGBT students from different universities in Bogotá, to identify the moments in which issues of gender and power emerged in the EFL classroom.

Despite the possible benefits that these attempts might have brought to students at different educational levels, in terms of helping them explore critical literacy theories, raise critical cultural awareness, examine texts from different perspectives, and understand issues of power, they have overlooked the dimensions of access and design, thus failing to simultaneously address the four interdependent dimensions of critical literacy (power, access, diversity and design) suggested by Janks (2010). In other words, they have not helped students gain control of powerful genres highly valued in school and university

contexts (access), and also enable them to use multiple meaning-making resources to construct texts that can challenge existing discourses and contribute to social transformation (design). Therefore, if developing critical literacy in its four dimensions is desired, more efforts need to be done to explore pedagogical implementations that help EFL students achieve this new basic comprehensively.

Furthermore, as suggested by the review of Colombian studies described above, schools and universities may not be pursuing this goal in their EFL classrooms. Such is also the case for my workplace, a private university in Colombia, where I work as an EFL teacher and in which I conducted this study. This tertiary education institution offers English courses that focus on developing students' communicative competence, following a communicative approach and organizing the course syllabus in line with an imported textbook. The textbook dictates the linguistic objectives, grammar knowledge, vocabulary, and thematic content to be covered in every level, as well as suggesting classroom activities and procedures. Analyses of this type of prescribed English textbooks, extensively used in the EFL classroom worldwide as well as in Colombia, have shown that they promote ideological positions that teachers and students may uncritically take for granted; for example, depicting language as neutral (Amalsaleh, Javid, & Rahimi, 2010; Pennycook, 1994), minimizing the complexity of social, historical, political and cultural issues (Huang, 2011; Weninger & Kiss, 2013; Xiong & Qian, 2012), and reproducing gender stereotypes (Giaschi, 2000; Kim, 2012; Nagatomo, 2010; Sahragard & Davatgarzadeh, 2010). This commonly overlooked feature of EFL textbooks makes the development of students' critical literacy even more pertinent for the EFL classroom.

English courses in my workplace, as may be the case for other Colombian universities, also aim to help students get prepared for standardized tests such as APTIS or

IELTS, which they must take to demonstrate their English proficiency as a requirement for graduation. The writing section of these tests, commonly the most challenging for EFL students, often involves the production of argumentative texts, including expository essays in which students must show their ability to state their point of view about a given topic and support it with arguments (Coffin & Hewings, 2004; He & Shi, 2008; Riazi & Knox, 2013). Helping university students develop their ability to write this type of text has been identified as a need as it has been linked to their low scores in the aforementioned standardized tests. Indeed, developing their ability to write expository essays is not only important for students to achieve the expected scores in such tests, but also to succeed in other aspects of their academic life where expository essays are highly valued (Schleppegrell, 2000). Nevertheless, although EFL teachers in the institution where I work have been urged to strengthen students' writing skills, they have not been instructed on how to achieve this purpose.

Therefore, in view of students' need to develop language abilities that enable them to use, critique and construct everyday and academic texts, as well as gaining awareness of the ideological assumptions embedded in such texts, I designed a critical literacy unit and implemented it with a group of EFL students at a private university in Colombia. The unit had the overall purpose of helping students write expository essays about common stereotypes about women's role in society, and mainly followed Janks's (2010) synthesis model for critical literacy. Besides, due to the insufficient studies in Colombia, exploring the effects of implementing such an instructional unit may have the potential to contribute to our understanding of how to promote critical literacy in the EFL classroom from a perspective that encompasses Janks's four dimensions: power, access, diversity, and design.

Accordingly, the purpose of this qualitative instrumental case study was to explore the effects of implementing an instructional unit designed under the lens of Janks' synthesis model for critical literacy to help a group of university EFL students to write expository essays to respond to common stereotypes about women's role in society. The research question that guided the study is the following: what are the effects of implementing Janks' synthesis model for critical literacy to help a group of EFL university students write expository essays about gender stereotypes about women? In the following sections, I first provide an overview of the theoretical underpinnings of this study, including an overview of critical literacy and further elaboration of Janks' synthesis model. Next, I describe the setting in which the study was conducted as well as the instructional unit I designed and implemented. Then, I present the research methodology, including data collection instruments and data analysis. Finally, I present the findings of the study, and a discussion of these followed by some conclusions and implications.

Theoretical Framework

The study presented here draws on Janks's (2010) synthesis model of critical literacy in which she advocates for the interdependence of the four orientations in critical literacy education: power, access, diversity and design. From this perspective, critical literacy is seen as involving the imagining of different forms of construction and reconstruction of texts in order to transmit different messages with more social justice, more equity and effects on real-life (Vasquez, 2017). This implies having "an attitude toward texts and discourses that questions the social, political and economic conditions under which those texts were constructed" (Beck, 2005, p. 392). Thus, being critically literate goes beyond a mere set of methods, skills or techniques, rather it allows people to take a stand and be able to support, reject, adapt or reshape texts (Janks, 2010; Luke & Dooley, 2011; Luke, 2011).

According to Luke and Woods (2009), critical literacy has been developed from two broad approaches to critical literacy: critical pedagogy and text analytic models. Critical pedagogy draws on the principles of Freire's work on education in which education operates as a liberating and transformative tool and the oppressed individuals play a role in their liberation. This approach also tackles the classical view of ideology where a ruling class dominates what counts as school knowledge, students' interaction in schools is loaded with representations of the dominant ideology, and being literate means absorbing, using and spreading dominant and possibly biased representations of the world. In critical pedagogy, learners become teachers and creators of the curriculum by having the main problems in their communities at the core of the process and considering their views and representations of the world. Some of the main theoretical lines of development are

feminist post-structuralism, critical race theory, postmodern cultural theory, and post-colonialism.

Texts analytic approaches, in turn, focus on a combination of ideology critique and the teaching of how texts work ideologically (Hammond & Macken-Horarik, 1999; Luke, 2009). According to Fairclough (2001), these approaches are based on critical language awareness: a pedagogical application of critical discourse analysis that aims at providing students with linguistic tools to understand how texts might position them ideologically. He also states that to develop critical language awareness, students are taught to analyze the lexicogrammatical resources, the ideological content and the discourses in different texts.

Despite the differences between critical pedagogical approaches and text analytic approaches, Luke and Woods (2009) state that they are not mutually exclusive. In fact, Janks (2010) argues that models pursuing the integration of different orientations to critical literacy. Indeed, Janks's (2010) synthesis model of critical literacy represents an attempt to integrate critical literacy approaches. In her model, she argues for the interdependency of four different dimensions of critical literacy, in which she synthesizes what all the approaches to critical literacy claim to pursue: power, access, diversity, and design. Janks also notes the problematic imbalance of any of these dimensions without the others (Janks, 2010). A further elaboration on these four dimensions is provided below.

Power/Domination

Power refers to the critical literacy orientation that seeks to promote the exploration of the ways in which texts are used to maintain and reproduce relations of power in terms of language, gender, race, class, and ethnicity, and how they may work for the interests of some privileged social groups over others (Janks, 2009; Wallace, 2010). Accordingly,

Janks (2009) states that critical literacy teachers help students develop the literacy skills they need to examine how power is displayed in texts, and to read against these texts. She explains that language often "works to position readers in the interests of power" (Janks, 2010, p. 176), and suggests questioning the reasons why the writer or speaker made choices and who is empowered and disempowered by the language in use (Janks, 1995). This implies that students need to develop better awareness of how the texts they read work to position them, and also analyze how this positioning might privilege some readers over others (Janks, 2009), interpreting an author's message including his/her assumptions and intentions and also questioning why certain aspects of the texts are emphasized or omitted in order to benefit those in power.

To help achieve the ability to unveil how language positions readers in relationship to power Janks and Dixon (2014) suggest carrying out activities that help students explore the social impact of texts, as well as the world-views, beliefs, values, actions, and languages depicted in texts, which may position students ideologically. Positioning should also consider how our ethnicity, gender, age, economic status, among other social features have an effect on the way we see the world. (Janks, 1997). Janks and Dixon (2014) also suggest exploring this social positioning through activities such as debates and discussions where the different positions can be visualized, and even those differences among members of one group can be recognized. They propose including questions such as the following: How is the text positioned or positioning? Whose interests are served by this positioning? Whose interests are negated? What are the consequences of this positioning?

Other authors enhance the importance of taking into account students' life experiences and knowledge of the world to engage them in such inquiry of texts. To promote critical literacy, for example, Kuo (2009) engages students in the reading and

analysis of social-issue picture books with female characters, the story of Ruby Bridges and the picture book of Anne Frank, guiding them from their initial personal responses to more critical stances towards social issues, including that of social justice. The author asserts that, although students may initially accept the messages conveyed in texts, they eventually develop a critical stance through questions and discussions. Sultan, Rofiuddin, Nurhadi, and Priyatni (2017) suggest that helping students develop their ability to interpret, analyze, infer, and evaluate texts from the perspective of power relations can help students to become more critical and even improve their reading test scores.

Access

Access refers to the need of providing students with a greater access to dominant languages, discourses, literacies, knowledge, genres, visual representations, and a wider range of cultural practices (Janks, 2010). To explore issues of access, teachers should ask themselves the following questions: what do students need access to? Are they given access to these needs? If so, how? Otherwise, why not? Who provides and receives access to which knowledge, texts, discourses, learning strategies, learning resources, etc.? What obstacles do teachers and students find when either offering or gaining access to these needs? (Janks, 2010, p.127). Likewise, Delpit (2006) suggests that teaching explicitly the linguistic forms, communicative strategies and ways of talking, writing and interacting that are highly valued in institutions such as schools and workplaces, makes access easier to those who are not participants in such "culture of power". To achieve this, genre scholars, especially those associated with the Sydney school, help marginalized students gain access to these dominant forms (Janks, 2009; Luke, 2012). These theorists define genres as social processes encompassing three characteristics: (a) they are social since genres imply the

interaction among people; (b) they are goal-oriented, that is, genres aim to achieve something; and (c) they are staged, i.e., genres unfold through several steps (Martin & Rose, 2012).

Furthermore, genre pedagogists have identified genres that are highly valued at school (Martin & Rose, 2012). They suggest that genres can be classified within three families: stories (e.g., recounts, anecdotes, narratives, news stories), factual texts (explanations, procedures, reports), and evaluating texts (expositions, discussions, reviews, and interpretations) (Martin & Rose, 2012). Of these genres, expositions, or expository essays, are one of the most dominant and dearly appraised in academic contexts (Schleppegrell, 2004). In expository essays, whose overall purpose is to argue for a point of view, Rose (2012) explains that writers are expected to state, argue for, and reiterate a position. In other words, expository essays unfold in three stages: thesis, arguments, and reiteration (Martin, 2009; Rose, 2009; Schleppegrell, 2004). In turn, the first stage unfolds in two phases, namely, position (thesis statement) and preview of arguments. In the second stage, each argument is developed through the phases of point and elaboration. The third stage usually restates the thesis, and it summarizes and evaluates the points made in the previous stage. The effective writing of expository essays also implies students' ability to use the expected language features of the genre. Some of these features are the use of generalized abstract nouns that name arguments, a variety of verbs types (actions, linking, saying, mental), timeless present tense, conjunctive resources to create cohesion, declarative mood, passive forms, and modals (Derewianka, 2004; Schleppegrell, 2004).

To help students succeed in writing effective academic genres, including expository essays, genre theorists have developed a pedagogy known as the teaching and learning cycle (Butt et al., 2000; Derewianka, 2004; Hyland, 2003; Martin, 2009). In doing this,

genre pedagogists promote access to mainstream genres which would help readjust power

by redistributing discursive resources (Martin, 1999). Overall, the cycle includes three main

stages which Martin (1999) describes as "deconstruction, (guiding students to recognize the

cultural context, staging and key linguistic features in model texts), Joint construction

(guiding the whole class to construct another text in the same genre), and Individual

construction (in which students write a third text in the same genre)" (p.222).

Diversity

According to Janks (2010), diversity has to do with the different ways in which

human beings interpret and represent the world, that is, different ways of reading and

writing it. Such differences in discourses, in turn, reflect the humans' diverse ways of

being, thinking, doing, and valuing, including their social identities such as their gendered

identity (Janks, 2010). Social identities are shaped by the discourses of the communities we

inhabit, which implies behaving in accordance with what community members consider is

correct; thus, belonging to different discourse communities, then, results in the

development of fluid and hybrid identities (Janks, 2010). Therefore, as this diversity is

usually subjected to relations of power, critical literacy teachers who follow this

orientation, such as the ones drawing on New Literacy Studies (NLS), not only enhance

students' ways of reading and writing the world, but also help them reflect on how these

different social identities might be privileged or marginalized. These teachers consider that

examining how social identities are formed and organized into different relations of power

is a central resource for changing students' consciousness, and a productive means for them

to successfully immerse in new discourses from which they can learn new ways of being

and acting in the world (Janks, 2010).

To achieve this purpose, Janks and Dixon (2014) and Janks (2010) suggest classroom activities that promote the understanding of how our own and others' social identities have been shaped differently, and how language and discourse are often used to position "the other" negatively, leading to injustice, oppression and even genocide. Also, they state that teachers and students should reflect on how some people are included while others are excluded by languages and dialects, and how our tendency to classify people and rank them brings inequality because of the construction of some as better than the others.

Design

Design refers to the capability to produce texts critically for different purposes, audiences, and contexts, using and combining a wider range of available semiotic resources, to dispute and transform existing discourses (Janks, 2010). It is then about the production rather than the reception of texts, emphasizing the importance of the human ability to make new meanings that have the potential to challenge and transform existing discourses. This ability is crucial for students' development of critical literacy since it promotes agency, enhances their understanding of how texts work to achieve goals, enables them to actively combine and recombine available symbolic forms, help them explore ways of positioning themselves and their readers, and empower them to transform the texts they have already deconstructed (Janks, 2010). Hence, design is not merely about reconstructing texts, it is about using transformative social actions to remake the social world (Janks & Dixon, 2014)

To help students do this, critical literacy teachers need to help students to consider power, identity, and access. Ana Ferreira and Denise Newfield, in (Janks & Dixon, 2014) propose this activity. First, students need to select a famous local or international figure.

Secondly, students check different media such as the internet, magazines, and newspapers, and they cut out or print the representations of the character that they consider appealing and that position the reader in a particular way. Thirdly, the students design a collage using the images and choose a title. Finally, the students explain how the design reflects their attitude towards the figure and also how this design also aims to position those who consume it.

When developing the dimensions of power, access, diversity, and design, Janks (2010) also argues for their interdependency and notes the problematic imbalance of any of these dimensions without the others. Indeed, although the ideas behind these four dimensions are not new, and have been informed by different areas of education, what is innovative about Janks's model is the emphasis on the interdependence of such dimensions (Janks, 2013). This synthesis model for critical literacy considers the consequences of one of the dimensions without the others. In doing this, social justice and equity can be achieved by "complex moves from deconstruction to reconstruction to deconstruction, from access to deconstruction to redesign, from diversity to deconstruction to new forms of access" (Janks, 2013, p. 12). Ideally, teachers should move between each of the orientations in order to achieve a well-balanced critical literacy experience for learners. Indeed, addressing these orientations simultaneously might be difficult in reality, but as long as equal weight is given to each of the orientation in the curriculum, teachers can work with just one orientation at a time (Janks, 2010, p. 27). The following table illustrates how each of these dimensions is interdependent.

Table 1: The interdependence of the dimensions (Janks, 2010, p. 26)

Power without access	This maintains the exclusionary force of dominant discourses.
Power without diversity	Power without difference and diversity loses the ruptures that produce contestation and change.
Power without design	The deconstruction of dominance, without reconstruction or design, removes human agency.
Access without power	Access without a theory of domination leads to the naturalization of powerful discourses without an understanding of how these forms came to be powerful.
Access without diversity	This fails to recognize that difference fundamentally affects pathways to access and involves issues of both history, identity, and value.
Access without design	This maintains and reifies dominant forms without considering how they can be transformed.
Diversity without power	This leads to a celebration of diversity without any recognition that difference is structured in dominance and that not all discourses/genres/languages/literacies are equally powerful.
Diversity without access	Diversity without access to powerful forms of language ghettoizes students.
Diversity without design	Diversity provides the means, the ideas, the alternative perspectives for reconstruction and transformation. Without design, the potential that diversity offers is not realized.
Design without power	Design, without an understanding of how dominant discourses/practices perpetuate themselves, runs the risk of an unconscious reproduction of these forms.
Design without access	This runs the risk of whatever is designed remaining on the margins.
Design without diversity	This privileges dominant forms and fails to use the design resources provided by difference.

Implementations of Janks's Critical Literacy Synthesis Model in School Contexts

Some studies have shown attempts to implement Janks' synthesis model for critical literacy in different school contexts. However, although these studies have been successful in integrating Janks's dimensions of power, access, diversity and design, they have not been done with university students, but with elementary (Amini Ngabonziza, 2015; Mantei & Karvin, 2016), middle school (Lau, 2013), and high school students (Alford & Jetnikoff, 2016). Moreover, of these studies, only Alford and Jetnikoff (2016) and Lau (2013) were done with English language learners. For example, Alford and Jetnikoff (2016) explore the classroom practices of four English as an Additional Language teachers in two state high schools in Australia, who had no experience or preparation for critical literacy. Lau (2013), in turn, uses Janks' (2010) model, along with Cummins' (2001) academic expertise framework and poststructuralist/feminist critical literacy theories, to teach ESL students, mostly Asian immigrants, in a Canadian middle school.

Furthermore, these studies dealt with issues such as the following: discrimination, specifically bullying (Lau, 2013); social injustice, specifically spatial dominated culture (Amini Ngabonziza, 2015); social values, such as the desire to belong, and a person's responsibility for others (Mantei & Karvin, 2016), and political issues such as oppression (Alford & Jetnikoff, 2016). However, none of these studies have brought issues of gender stereotyping to the EFL classroom to be explored and discussed by students. Most importantly, these studies were not focused on preparing students to write expository essays, but on designing a space for their schools (Amini Ngabonziza, 2015), creating short digital multimodal texts (Mantei & Karvin, 2016), recounting an incident and designing posters (Lau, 2013), and persuasive speeches and investigative reports (Alford & Jetnikoff, 2016).

In sum, although the aforementioned studies have shown how the implementation of Janks's synthesis model of critical literacy might be brought to classrooms, none of them have focused on helping EFL university students write expository genres about issues of gender stereotyping. In the Colombian context, there have been a few attempts to help EFL university students develop critical literacy from different perspectives (Agudelo, 2007; Gutiérrez, 2015; Rojas, 2012; Rondón, 2012). However, none of them have tried to implement Janks's synthesis model in such a context as the study presented here. The following section provides a brief description of the setting of this study, including the English syllabus, the methodology of the university language center, the specific course in which the intervention took place, and the study's participant students.

Setting

This research study was conducted at a private higher education institution located in rural Antioquia, which offers 25 undergraduate programs and 17 graduate programs to over 5000 students. The current foreign language policy of the university was launched in 2017, and according to this document, the university adheres to the program of the ministry of education Colombia Bilingüe which is also necessary for qualified registry and high-quality accreditation processes. The document also explains that the changes were necessary because the context requires a higher linguistic competence for students. For example, to meet the standards of Saber Pro, the national higher-education exam but also to meet the needs and requirements of the market. As a result, for graduation, undergraduate students are required to certify their proficiency in a foreign language by obtaining B1 as a minimum score in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

The Syllabus

The English syllabus is organized around the content of three volumes of the textbook English File and its accompanying materials which aim at developing three different levels of proficiency: elementary, pre-intermediate and intermediate. The elementary proficiency levels have the objective of helping students reach A2 in the CEFR and comprise the first five courses. For the first three courses, teachers have to implement two units of the first book, e.g., in the first level units one and two. For courses four and five, three units of the textbook are covered. The pre-intermediate level has the objective of helping students reach B1 in the CEFR. It covers courses six, seven and eight; four units of the book are implemented in each of these courses. Finally, the intermediate level covers four units for level nine and three units for levels ten and eleven. There is no book for

levels 12 and 13 because these two courses are used for preparation for standardized language tests such as APTIS, IELTS, and BULATS. Students are expected to reach B2 in the CEFR. Table 2 illustrates the course levels, their alignment with the CEFR, the volume of the book and the units.

Table 2: units of the book used in the courses

Level	CEFR alignment	Book and proficiency level	Units of the book
1	A1	English File Elementary	1, 2
2			3, 4
3			5, 6
4	A2		7, 8, 9
5			10, 11, 12
6	B1	English File Pre-intermediate	1, 2, 3, 4
7			5, 6, 7, 8
8			9, 10, 11, 12
9		English File Intermediate	1, 2, 3, 4
10	B2		5, 6, 7
11			8, 9, 10
12			No book
13			No book

The Language Center methodology

Regarding the teaching methodology, the Language Center claims that their methodological approach emerges from the specific needs of students. They also claim that they do not believe in a "one size fits all" methodology; instead, they suggest eight guiding principles. However, these principles do not explicitly address the development of critical literacy, nor the documents that describe the characteristics of the language center and its courses. Teachers are expected to help students explore some types of texts that are inscribed in several genres, particularly those presented in the textbook, and the ones that are usually part of the international exams the students take (APTIS, IELTS, etc.). For example, several units of the textbook include activities where students need to write letters, essays or descriptions. Besides, students often write reports on the books they read

or on some experiences they have. All teachers of the language center have to attend

professional development sessions where they are trained in the application of the language

principles. Table 3 summarizes these principles and presents some of the strategies within

each category.

Table 3: Language center principles

Principle	Converses with	Specific strategies
Language learning is an emotional, socio-affective experience.	Community language learning and suggestopedia.	-Weekly check-in & teacher-led diary. -Traffic lights for understanding and feelings. -Spanish can be used for discussion about feelings or emotions. -Use of appropriate music in class to help students relax. -Non-threatening environment: Back monitoring or crouching.
Students are individuals, each with their own motivation, needs and specific previous knowledge.	Community Language Learning.	-Needs analysis at the beginning of courses exploring hopes & fears. -Lead-in activities to 'activate' previous knowledge Group-support as first call for doubts.
Teachers should provide opportunities for students to work together as much as possible.	Collaborative Language Learning.	- Seating horseshoe. - The desk out of the way. - Talking to partners. - Multiple group dynamics.
Language learning should be embedded in an authentic context. When necessary there should be explicit focus on form.	Direct Method	- Never grammar for grammar. - Never vocabulary for vocabulary. - Precise meaning, form and pronunciation to facilitate communication.

Students should be encouraged to develop their cognitive and metacognitive abilities to empower them in their learning process.	Cognitive Approaches	- Focus on specific Learning strategies. - Student-initiated 'next steps' in assessment moments
Language learning is an active process of discovery and risk-taking.	Natural and Community Language Learning.	- Preference for guided discovery in language focus. - Non-threatening environment in which students feel safe.
Language learning is a cultural enterprise; teachers should provide opportunities to explore L2 culture without disregarding the importance of L1 cultures.	Content Based Instruction.	- Use of appropriate L1 and L2 material. - Going beyond the textbook. - Colombian cultures.
Assessment should be fair, free and controlled practice should be taken into account, and it has to be both formative and summative.	Assessment for Learning.	- Share objectives and success indicators with students. - Empower students to decide success indicators based on models. - Provide students with actionable next steps in feedback. - Different assessment moments.
Teachers should continue to research and develop their professional practice.	Continuous Professional Development	-Professional development courses certification.

Level Eight English Course

The course where this study was carried out was level eight. It is the second of three courses aiming at helping students reach B1 in the CEFR. All students of the university aiming to graduate need to take at least nine levels. Therefore, level eight is an obligation for them. When students start level eight, they have already attended about 280 hours of direct instruction.

22

Units nine, ten, eleven and twelve of English File dictate the content of this course. Each of these units contains three lessons that address specific grammar topics developed with a different thematic. Unit nine is developed in the context of experiences with dangerous animals, phobias and the biographies of famous singers. It contains three lessons, which cover the second conditional, the present perfect, the uses of "for" and "since" and a comparison of the present perfect and the past simple. Unit ten is developed in the context of inventions made by women, the school subjects and an article where the difficulties of making choices when buying at a supermarket are explored. It covers the passive, the structures with "used to" and the modal verb might. Unit eleven is developed in the context of sports and the experiences of bad losers and the similarities between two twin brothers. It covers expressions of movement, the word order of phrasal verbs, so and neither. Finally, unit twelve is developed in the context of rare news from different countries and an article about the benefits of gossiping, it covers the past perfect, reported speech and questions without auxiliaries.

Participants

This research was carried out with a group of 14 EFL students who were taking the course described above. In total, there were five women and nine men whose ages ranged from 18 to 29. They were born and lived in the area. They belonged to a middle-low socioeconomic level and were studying English for several reasons; the majority of the students reported to have taken the course because of their love for the language or as a part of the requirements set by the university and its programs. For a few others, the reasons for taking the course were work requirements, plans for postgraduate studies and travelling abroad.

Most of them were current students of business administration, social communication, environmental engineering and agricultural sciences, which are some of the undergraduate programs offered by the university. However, two of them had already graduated and one had just finished high school and was planning to enroll in the university the following semester. In addition to studying, roughly half of the participants also worked. In addition to the courses taken at the language center, some of them reported having taken additional courses and having studied the language for over two years. Nevertheless, they had heterogeneous language levels. Over half of them were fluent enough for the level, that is, they were proficient enough to participate actively in all of the activities proposed and they assimilated all the concepts and topics covered during the course. Three of them were beyond the level; they were able to speak more fluently and depicted knowledge such as the use of verbal tenses or expressions that had not been covered in class. Contrarily, four of them were somewhat below the level in one or more of the language skills.

Research Methodology

This qualitative instrumental case study aimed to explore the effects of implementing a critical literacy model to help a group of EFL university students write expository essays about women stereotypes. It is inscribed in a qualitative paradigm since it aims at "studying human actors in natural settings, in the context of their ordinary everyday world" (Richards, 2003, p. 10), and complies with the characteristics of an instrumental case study. Creswell (2013) describes case studies as a method that "explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system or multiple bounded systems over time, through detailed, in depth data collection involving multiple sources of information" (p. 97). This study is instrumental because of its potential to be generalized. Mertens (2010) states that "instrumental case studies are undertaken to gain an understanding of a phenomenon with the goal of enhancing ability to generalize to other cases" (p.324). Accordingly, this study intends to provide insights about the effects of implementing a critical literacy model and provide gains in the understanding of how critical literacy might be developed in similar educational settings.

Data Collection

The data for this study relied on three sources of information, namely audio-recordings of class sessions, samples of students' work, and interviews with students. Data were collected over a three-week period from May 10 to June 7, 2018. In the next lines, I will describe these data collection instruments, and how they contributed to answer the research question.

Audio recordings of classes. I audio recorded the four sessions in which the unit was developed. The purpose of these recordings was to register how students responded

and engaged in the activities of the unit, particularly the opinions and discussions around gender stereotyping. Richards (2003) states that recordings are used "as a means of developing a better understanding of the classroom world and the participants' place in it" (p. 41). I transcribed the audio recordings of the classes, and I identified the moments when students explored issues of power through the use of the language.

Samples of students' work. These were collected to learn about students' development of critical literacy according to the four dimensions of Janks' synthesis model. These samples included the worksheets and expository essays that students produced during the implementation of the unit. There were two worksheets: the first one aimed to encourage students to explore and discuss about male and female inventors and inventions; and the second one aimed to trigger students' previous knowledge and experience about the process of writing essays. Worksheet 1 was organized into two parts: A) In pairs, students had to fill out a chart with information about the name, gender, and nationality of the inventors of some devices that they use in their regular life, plus the uses and creation year of such inventions (see Appendix A). In part B, students were asked to work independently to answer questions around the information they found in part A, such as how do you explain the difference in the number of inventions made by men and women? Did you expect this? Why? (see Appendix B). In worksheet 2, students were asked about their experience writing expository essays, the process they followed for writing and essay and the types of essays they knew (see Appendix C).

Besides, students were asked to write expository essays in which they had to present their opinion about a stereotype about women. To do this, students previously explored the role of women in different contexts and in relation to other men and women, and they were also instructed on writing expository essays. In these essays, students had to research the

topic, exploring different sources, and comply with the expected stages of an expository essay; that is, state their position, provide arguments, and make a conclusion. To see to what extent students had gained access to the genre of expositions, their essays were analyzed with a rubric (see Appendix J). The rubric included elements that are typically part of expository essays, such as the statement and contextualization of a thesis, the arguments, the cohesion between the thesis and the arguments, and language resources. For the analysis, each essay was carefully read and checked to identify such elements, using different colors to highlight some of them, for example, yellow for grammar mistakes, blue for vocabulary issues, fuchsia for cohesive devices, green for punctuation, and brown to identify the thesis statement.

Interviews. I conducted individual semi-structured interviews with four students: two men (Logan and Oliver) and two women (Isabella and Mia) with different levels of English proficiency. Semi structured interviews are useful when there is "an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (Seidman, 2006, p.9). In these interviews, I asked them about their opinions on the implementation of the unit and the activities that they developed in class, in order to better understand their gains and challenges in developing critical literacy (see Appendix D). Each interview lasted about 15 minutes and was performed in Spanish taking into account that, according to Mackey and Gass (2005), when using participant's mother tongue in interviews, the quality and quantity of the data is not affected by the current language proficiency of the participant.

27

Ethical Considerations

All students who participated in the study signed a consent form at the beginning of the implementation accepting their understanding of the terms of the research project and acknowledging the possibility of withdrawing at any time (see Appendix E). To protect the identity of the participants, I used pseudonyms throughout the sections of this study and only shared the data collected with my thesis director.

Data Analysis

To analyze data, I used pre-established categories taken from Janks' (2010) four-dimension critical literacy synthesis model. Consequently, the analysis of data was done deductively. The categories were power, access, diversity and design. This process followed Burns' (1999) five steps for data analysis: gathering all the data, coding data, comparing the data, the construction of interpretations, and reporting the findings.

In order to add trustworthiness and avoid representations from just one side (Richards, 2003, p. 251), I created a table with the four categories of the model and reduced the data by adding the evidence coming from the different sources that fit into each of the categories. Then, I compared all the data in each of these categories and identified the patterns and connections that emerged. This analysis helped me understand the effects of implementing Janks's (2010) synthesis model for critical literacy.

Unit Design and Implementation

To help my students write expository essays in connection to common stereotypes about women's role in society, I designed and implemented an instructional unit following Janks's (2010) synthesis model for critical literacy. To do this, I adapted Unit 10A of the

English File Elementary textbook, which is part of the level eight English course where this study took place, by taking into consideration the book's thematic content and language objectives, and including new activities that addressed the dimensions of power, access, diversity and design as described in Janks' (2010) synthesis model.

As such, I organized the unit into four lessons that included a set of activities to help my students gain familiarity with the genre of expository essays (access), promote reflections and discussions around gender stereotyping issues (power), explore students' diverse assumptions and experiences about such topics (diversity), and encourage the production of expository essays about women stereotyping (design). Before starting the implementation of the lessons, I reminded students that the unit was part of a research study, and then introduced the unit, describing its objectives and content. A description of each lesson in the unit is provided below.

Lesson one: This lesson aimed at exploring some of the inventions that are used every day, their use, and their inventors by (a) building vocabulary on the topic, (b) reflecting, discussing and writing about problems posed, (c) participating in class discussions, (d) using language to analyze social issues. I first began with the first of four activities, called triggering students' previous knowledge of everyday-use inventions and their inventors, as well as exploring their own assumptions about the contributions of women to the development of the inventions we use in our daily lives. I started this activity by showing students the first slide of a PowerPoint presentation with the title "Everyday inventions and their inventors", and asking them the following four questions to engage them in a conversation around the topic: What inventions do you use every day? What for? Who invented them? When? After that, I showed the students the pictures of some

inventions on the slides one by one, and asked them seven questions: What are they called in English? Do you use them? If not, who usually uses them? How often? What for? Who invented them? When? This activity aimed at helping students to explore their previous knowledge, learn new words, and familiarize with the thematic content of the unit: the role of women in different spheres of society. Additionally, the questions were also intended to encourage students to discuss their different experiences and assumptions about the contributions of women to the development of popular everyday-use inventions. In doing so, I wanted to address Janks's dimension of diversity.

The second activity had the purpose of exploring students' assumptions about men and women's roles in society. I then started showing students a slide with the pictures of all the inventions explored in the previous activity, and I asked them to choose five items they thought were invented by women and to provide their rationale for their selection. Then, the students listened to an audio file, taken from the English course book, with a radio interview in which inventions made by women, including the five inventions in the slides, were discussed. This allowed the students to contrast their assumptions about men and women with the facts provided in the radio interview, and realized how we are sometimes unconsciously biased, which is important to understand how power works (Janks, 2010). In doing this, I intended to address Janks's dimension of power.

For the third activity, discussion on male and female inventors, I had students work in pairs to find out about other everyday inventions. They had to include their uses, the name of the inventors, their nationality or country of origin, and the date. Most importantly, they had to point out how many of the inventions were invented by men and women. To do this, students completed part A of worksheet 1 about inventions and inventors (see

Appendix A). After this, the students analyzed their findings about inventions made by men and women, reflecting on the questions in part B of worksheet 1 (see Appendix B). Finally, students had a whole class discussion around questions such as how many of the inventions were invented by men or women, if they expected or knew that this invention was invented by a man or a woman and why. This activity aimed to foster critical discussions about the way women have contributed to the creation and development of the inventions we use in every-day life, and to identify issues of power such as the imbalance in terms of rights, and the lack of the opportunities for women in academic and scientific contexts. This activity allowed me to address Janks's dimension of power.

The fourth activity consisted in exploring students' previous knowledge about the genre of expository essays. Here I asked students questions such as what rules, guidelines, or steps they had learned in school to write texts successfully, whether following them was necessary or not, how useful such instruction was in helping them write, how often they used them. After this, students completed worksheet 2 to further explore their experience in writing expository essays, answering questions such as the following: What is an essay? Are there different types of essays? What differences are there between an essay and other types of texts? Have you ever written an essay? When? What for? How do you write an essay? (see Appendix C). These questions were useful because they provided a baseline about the students' familiarity with the genre of expository essays at the beginning of the implementation. In other words, they were a first step in the process of addressing Janks's dimension of access.

Lesson two: The second lesson of the unit had two objectives: first, to introduce students to the structure of expository essays; and secondly, to explore the language resources mostly

used to build arguments. To do this, I brought a sample expository essay about the benefits of video games for teenagers' health to be deconstructed in class. Although this model essay was not about gender stereotypes, it served as a suitable model for the generic structure of expository essays, as well as the language. As a whole group activity, we read aloud the model essay and discussed how it was structured, identifying its different stages and how arguments were organized. Besides, we also analyzed word choices, including connectors, linkers and transition words used by the author in the model essay (see Appendix G). This activity addressed the dimension of access and aimed at helping students to gain familiarity with the characteristics of expository essays.

Lesson three: This lesson aimed at modeling the process of writing an expository essay, engaging students in the writing process, and providing them with opportunities to make decisions on the structure and language choices of an expository essay. The first activity of this lesson explored students' positions on gender stereotypes about women. I showed students an advertisement launched by the company Xerox in 1968, and I asked them questions to check for their understanding of the ad based on the images and language in the video. I also asked them about the characters in the advertisement, what the woman in the video said about herself, her occupation, her boss, and the machine. Then I showed the video again with subtitles and aids for understanding keywords. After that, I checked that all the students had complete understanding of the words and expressions in the commercial and asked students about the message or messages they thought could be implied from the video. I also used some of the features in the linguistic analysis rubric suggested by Janks (2005), such as lexicalization, voice, turn-taking, mood, and modality, to deconstruct the video with the students. This activity allowed me to address Janks's orientation of power since we examined how language was used in TV advertisements in

relation to power, that is, it aimed to help students understand how the different semiotic resources worked to position women as less powerful than men.

The second activity in this lesson involved the writing of an expository essay as a whole group. First, one of the students made a random selection of a common gender stereotype from a list of prompts describing fourteen different stereotypes about women (see Appendix H). After reading and understanding the prompt chosen by the student, namely "women as not as strong as men", the group discussed it considering their own life experiences and the experiences of others. The students were also encouraged to take a stand, that is, to agree or disagree with the statement, and to think of possible arguments to support their position. After this, the suggestions of the students were used to write the jointly constructed expository essay. This was done by projecting a blank document on a wall in the classroom and then compiling and organizing the contributions of the students (see Appendix I for the jointly constructed essay). In doing this activity. I intended to address Janks's dimensions of access and power simultaneously by not only having students reflect on and discuss common gender stereotypes such as "women are not as strong as men", but also engaging them in the joint construction of an expository essay with their active participation in such construction.

Lesson four: The main objective in this lesson was to engage students in the independent construction of expository essays by gathering, summarizing, and synthesizing information from various sources, as well as using grammatical, stylistic, and mechanical formats and conventions appropriate for the genre. The first activity in this lesson was the analysis of TV commercials. Here, students were asked to select a commercial in English where the role of women could be analyzed and debated. The students then chose and

analyzed a commercial, which they presented to the classroom along with their ideas and opinions about the role of women in these videos. After the analysis of the commercials, students wrote an expository essay. For the writing of their own expository essay, I first provided a list of stereotypes about women and students had to choose one to be used as the prompt for their essays. Students were also told to follow the structure analyzed in the model essay about the benefits of video games for teenagers' health and the jointly constructed essay "women as not as strong as men". Once they finished their essays, students brought them to the class to share and discuss them with their classmates. Finally, I checked their essays to provide feedback (see Appendix J for an example of how essays were checked), and they submitted the final version of their expository essays in a shared document. With this independent writing activity, I wanted to address Janks's dimensions of design, providing students with the opportunity to create their own texts, use the different resources we explored during the lessons, and state their own positions about women stereotyping.

For a summary of the objectives and all the activities carried out throughout the implementation of this study see Appendix F: Instructional Unit. The next section will present the categories that guided the study, and it will describe the findings based on significant evidence. After that, the most significant findings will be discussed.

Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore the effects of implementing an instructional unit designed to address the dimensions of Janks' critical literacy synthesis to help students write expository essays to respond to common stereotypes about women's role in society. To do this, I designed a unit that incorporated several tasks to trigger student's reflections and opinions about the role of women in society. The data collected in this study suggest that, in terms of the dimension of power, by analyzing gender bias in TV commercials and writing expository essays in response to common women stereotypes, students were able to reflect and discuss critically on the issue of gender stereotyping. As for the dimension of access, they were also able to write expository essays that comply with the most relevant features of a successful expository text in terms of purpose, structure, and language. Besides, regarding the dimension of diversity, students showed awareness of the differences in people's beliefs as well as their different social, cultural and economic backgrounds; they valued such diversity. In the next lines, I present a description of such findings framed within the three of the four dimensions of Janks' critical literacy synthesis model: power, access, diversity and design.

Identifying Gender Ideologies in Texts (Power)

The dimension of Power assumes that language and other symbolic forms reproduce social inequalities and that the deconstruction of power within a text is facilitated by critical language awareness (Larson & Marsh, 2015). Some of the activities and questions proposed in this implementation, such as a deconstruction of commercials that students performed sought to encourage the student's analysis of these relationships. Overall, through these

activities, the students gained awareness of how power works to benefit or to marginalize some people, they were particularly interested in the differences associated with men and women in tasks typically performed at home. For example, Emma describes how men were traditionally privileged in her family.

> My paternal grandparents taught my father and his brothers that men prevailed over women, since I was a child when we went to family meetings, only the women were the ones who prepared the food then served the food and it was done in a strict order, first to my grandfather, then to the other men, later to the children and finally to the women. At the end of the dinner it was the women who were responsible for collecting the dirty dishes and washing them. Being a girl, I always asked my parents why this situation, so I was felt unhappy and not comfortable, but they could not explain me, I also saw that my aunts were always submissive to what their husbands said, they had never worked and they always had depended economically on them. (Emma's essay, June 2018).

Emma described the experiences she lived with her parents and relatives when she lived with them. In her family men had more privileges than women.

> Currently with my husband, I live a complex situation because he wants I do the kitchen tasks and housework, but not because he has the same thought of my father's family but because I see in the other interest. My husband works just like me, when he comes home he only thinks about investing his time in sports, resting and if he has some free time he cooks and does housework. I totally disagree with my family and my husband. (Emma's essay, June 2018).

As a married woman she has found that although her husband is different to her family, he also perpetuates some stereotypes about the behavior and responsibilities of women. These stereotypes were also evident in the classroom. When students were asked to choose the inventions made by women, the majority immediately assumed that inventions such as the zipper or the hair dryer were invented by them.

> Teacher: look at the slides we just checked. Which five inventions do you think were invented by women? You need to tell me which of them were invented by women.
> Emma: disposable nappies for Marriott Donovan.

Teacher: You already know whom. Ok, that woman invented the nappies. Please also tell me why you think they were invented by women.

Mia: The zipper. Because women make or fix the clothes.

Teacher: ok

Logan: the hair drier because they use.

Liam: the dishwasher because she cleans the house.

Oliver: nappies because the women have the babies and clean the babies.

Teacher: now tell me something you believe a woman did not invent.

Noah: the bullet proof vest because the soldiers and police are men.

(Transcription of audio Recordings of Classes, June 2018).

During the interviews, students showed that they gained awareness of the way the advertisement industry portrays and perpetuates stereotypes. For instance, in the following excerpt, Mia describes the way she feels as a consequence of analyzing the role of women in the commercials. She felt offended after unveiling that women were positioned as "commercial objects".

> Esa me pareció..., en algún momento incluso me sentí como indignada porque siempre tratan a la mujer como un objeto comercial y publicitario, ¡entonces como que en algún momento me sentí como ay no! que rabia que nos utilicen para eso sabiendo que somos personas tan útiles para tantas otras cosas. (Mia's interview, June 2018).

> [That seemed to me…, at some point I even felt like I was outraged because they always treat women as a commercial and advertising object, so at some point I felt like no way! It makes me furious that we are being used for that when it is known that we are so useful for so many other things.]

Similarly, Logan describes how the commercials they analyzed for the class, such as a commercial of the brand Xerox where a photocopying machine is advertised in the context of an office and uses common beliefs to position women or other groups of people.

> Aprendí que los comerciales utilizan a las mujeres o las personas de acuerdo con las creencias a lo que se tiene, a los estereotipos que se han creado en la sociedad. (Logan's interview, June 2018)

[I learned that commercials use women or people according to the beliefs they have; to the stereotypes that have been created in society.]

Notwithstanding these gains, for three of the students raising awareness of the ways power operates was more challenging than for the others. For example, James and William seem to have oversimplified the complexity of power relationships and provided arguments that might help to perpetuate inequality. In James' opinion all women are organized and want to do housework, whereas men are not capable of doing such tasks.

> I think that this is happening because women want to do housework and cook, they generally have the capacity to be very organize, they know how to have a place nice for people. Men don't have the same capabilities. (James' essay, June 2018).

Similarly, although William thinks both men and women have the same rights, he explained the difference in terms of physical force.

> Finally, I think that women have the same rights as men, recognizing that men are stronger for some tasks even more when it comes to using force. (William's essay, June 2018*).*

Findings also suggest that for some students, women were more capable or deserved more rights than men. For example, Olivia provided some arguments to explain how women outstand men.

> Firstly, women have greater capacity to resist great pressures in their work, to support other people, their bosses and hard work, perhaps for these reasons is that they can last longer in their jobs. (2) Secondly, Women can also endure pain as strong as childbirth, willpower also allow them to be able to care for their children in the disease, get ahead when you have difficulties of a sentimental, work and health. (Olivia's essay, June 2018)

In a similar way, James argues that women are more skillful in some areas and should have more rights.

> In my opinion, women have and should have more rights than the men, women should have a more important role in our Colombian society on issues such as

leadership, legislation and policies that work for women, in areas such as peace, defense and security. (James' essay, June 2018).

In sum, exploring the dimension of power was an essential part of the implementation. Most students considered, discussed and challenged different forms of power.

Gaining Control of the Genre of Expository Essays (Access)

Heavily influenced by genre theorists, the access dimension includes, among others, access to a dominant language and their dominant varieties, and to the dominant genres and dominant modes of visual representation. Janks (2004) argues that work is polarized in times of a "post industrial knowledge economy" where service work has definitively lost status and therefore students need to be in control of the elite literacies required to perform symbolic-analytic work as it is more valued and better paid. Students need to gain access to powerful genres such as the expository through explicit instruction because it is often part of both the texts they read and the texts they write. Delpit (2006) argues that "if you are not already a participant in the culture of power, being told explicitly the rules of that culture makes acquiring power easier" (p.24).

In most cases, students showed control of the genre of expository essays by understanding and accurately using the structure they were presented during instruction. For instance, 11 out of 14 students included a thesis and found arguments to support it. For example, students such as Manson and Mia produced some of the essays that contained most of the characteristics instructed. The following excerpt shows Manson's essay.

> The political tradition always has had as the only protagonist the man leaving aside the participation of the woman, it is believed that they do not have the capacity to lead and govern a region or a country. In my opinion this belief should change for the following reasons:

Firstly, women have the same physical and intellectual conditions that men, have the same opportunities to go to a university and obtain professional qualifications, nowadays they have important positions in the most recognized companies.

Secondly, they have achieved excellent results, for example in Colombia they have shown potential skills, the last presidents have given the opportunity to be in charge of ministries and have won popular elections to govern departments, municipalities and municipal councils, congress. In the past presidential elections in Colombia, four candidates had four women as their vice-presidential formula.

Thirdly, worldwide women have won presidential elections in first world countries, with solid economies, including Angela Merkel, president of Germany, country that is part of G8, the eight richest countries in the world, Dilma Rousseff president of brazil, the economy biggest in South America.

To conclude, women have the capacity to management and realize politics in an exemplary manner, it is only necessary to open the mind to change. (Manson's essay, June 2018)

Although Manson's essay is short, in the first paragraph the student presented some context for the introduction and a thesis that is clearly identifiable. In the next three paragraphs, he presented and developed arguments that corresponded to his thesis. He used the appropriate connectors and articulated the paragraphs successfully. The last paragraph develops his conclusions.

Students with previous writing experience and better English language proficiency were able to write more complex essays in terms of the sentence types they used and the lexical choices, however, they did not necessarily show more control of the genre and therefore more access to it. For example, although Isabella was one of the most active participants during the joint construction and she has a very good command of the language, the structure of her essay had some inconsistencies. The following excerpt shows the first paragraph of Isabella's essay.

Over the years, women have been considered housewives and responsible for raising their children, so I believe that this is "the task" of both because there is no better person to raise and educate their children than your own parents. However, when in

a home a person must work to support his family, it is usually the man who works and I think this happens because the maternal spirit of the woman and the need to care for their children does not allow them to leave their children in the care of another person. (Isabella's Essay, June 2018)

This excerpt of the essay shows a thesis presented in the second line of the paragraph. Isabella seems to support the idea that children should be raised by both parents. In the third line, the new sentence starts with a contrasting word (however) but the idea presented does not dispute the previous in any way, that is, she suggests that women prefer to stay at home and take care of their children because of their maternal spirit and that men are the ones who usually work. The next paragraph of Isabela's essay is presented below.

> Nowadays, it is very common to meet women who chose to stay at home taking care of their children and who at the same time have decided to have their own business; enterprising women who can do both things because their working time can be more flexible and they can play the roles of mother, housewife, and businesswoman without any problem. (Isabella's Essay, June 2018).

Her first argument is presented in the second paragraph where the idea of women being part of the workforce and actively contributing to the economy of the family is described. However, the argument does not seem to support the idea that children should be raised by both parents. The same disconnection with her thesis can be observed in the next three paragraphs.

> These persistent, passionate, risky, innovative and sensitive women who always want the best for their families and grow professionally too, have increased considerably in the country and a lot of are famous for their initiatives which have become very successful, even worldwide, for example, we can see Crepes & Wafles, Bendita Aurora and D'hylos, among other.

> Finally, The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) it is considered one of the most important reports on global entrepreneurship and in 2017 they reported that Colombia registered the greatest growth in Latin America and the Caribbean of women who participate in economic activities. I think that this report shows Colombian women can play other roles in the society than "only" be moms.

To conclude, I think that women who have integrated their professional and family life are changing, little by little, the perception of housewives as submissive and dependent on a man to brave women who can overcome the limitations imposed by society. (Isabella's Essay, June 2018)

The paragraphs above correspond to the rest of Isabella's essay. There are two more arguments and a conclusion. The second and third arguments do not seem to support her thesis. Instead of developing the idea of parenting in a couple, she develops ideas around women entrepreneurship. The last paragraph presents a conclusion that is not aligned with the thesis but keeps some relation with her previous arguments.

Although the majority of the students were able to write essays with the structure suggested, only a couple of students were able to combine a more complex use of the language with the characteristics of the genre. The next essay shows one of those essays.

Women have to be delicate, sweet and maternal

From generation to generation, society has a model of how women should behave, however, with the change of time, the advances in culture and new ideologies, this model hasn't presented many differences. It is still normal to think that a woman should be this way, in my opinion, I do not agree with this stereotype of woman that has been recurrent.

There are many reasons why I think it's very traditional, I might add regressive. First of all, not all women have the same personality, behavior, wishes, aspirations. Although all women are not the same, and are different from the usual model of woman, it doesn't make them less of what they are or less feminine.

Secondly, the education received in the household also has an influence in the complete product that is a person, this goes for all humans, man and woman, also the circumstances, social context and culture vary. This day in age, women can carry out other roles than the typical one, of a nurturing, sweet mother to be, which requires to develop new skills that are more useful for the society, and not a specific group, like the family group in this case.

Lastly, due to the possibilities that women have, to develop herself in the role that she decides, it's necessary for them to have the character strong enough to get respect by the rest of the people who are in her charge.

To conclude, it's important to have knowledge that women have changed over time, they have transformed, society has asked more of them, and for these reasons the role of womenkind have had to adapt and evolve for the different circumstances and social requirements. For this reason, not always do woman have to have in their behavioral pattern this stereotype that has wanted to be imposed and necessary in the female structure. (Mia's essay, June 2018).

This excerpt also shows an introductory paragraph where the topic and the opinion of the writer are presented. It is clear that the essay is about the behavior of women and the lack of change society has had in this regard even though there have been cultural and ideological improvements. Her thesis is presented at the end of the first paragraph and states that Mia does not agree with the stereotype that position women as delicate, sweet, and maternal. The first argument backs up the opinion of the writer and explains that women are naturally different and have different aims.

The other two arguments are presented in the subsequent paragraphs. In the third paragraph, Mia suggests that nowadays women have taken up roles that go beyond their families and impact other groups in society. In the fourth paragraph, Mia presents her last argument. She argues that because women have different roles, they need to adopt a strong character. The next paragraph presents the last argument: women have evolved as a response to society's needs and because they have new roles, they do not need to behave in agreement with the stereotype that women are sweet and maternal.

Even though some lines in Mia's essay are confusing, overall, the structure is followed and her use of more complex words and sentence structures, her lexical choices, and her use of punctuation also contribute to the quality of the essay.

Conversely, three of the students demonstrated less coherence and produced essays with fewer of the elements that characterize this type of essay, which implied less access to the genre. Some of the students declared that they had not written any essays at the

university but only in high school or that they didn't have to write many essays at

university because of their academic path. Oliver's essay exemplifies this below.

<div align="center">The best women are stay at home moms</div>

We are in a world in which there has always been chovenism towards women, society has had a wrong thinking, a wrong vision, which for ages past placated women

In the first instance the world has been evolving, previously it was believed that the woman only had to devote herself to housework, to have and raise children and fulfill their marital functions.

the women got tired of being mistreated, of not being valued for that reason they decided to undertake a long and extensive struggle to be liberated from this enormous bond.

I think women are a representation of strength and courage, the woman was a slave who had to fight against adversity to break free, it was not easy to undertake this fight but nevertheless they left the fear and they did it, the woman is so valuable that gives up the last breath for the protection of their children, started a path in the world of work in order not to depend economically on another person, to improve the quality of life of the home, knowing that most work hard in the day and in the night with its few strengths comes to fulfill the functions of the home, early morning to leave the house deeds done, and then start their work routine, I remember that one day in class a teacher asked who would work harder at man or woman, was a subject that generated controversy, there were many different thoughts, but in my personal opinion, I have always thought that women are the strongest and most responsible He has a home.

Education has been the main factor for the world to evolve, and we find a society that has better thoughts, which is more comprehensive that defends women, which seeks that women can excel,

Today society has included in All their fields to women, as they have the same abilities to develop as men.

Oliver's essay does not have all the elements of an expository essay for several

reasons. First, the thesis is not clear and in the first three paragraphs, Oliver seems to provide

some contextualization but he does not mention anything in relation to the stereotype, in other

words, he does not develop the idea of women being better when they are stay-at-home moms and he does not provide his position.

The first line in the fourth paragraph introduces an opinion in a very long paragraph with seemingly unconnected ideas. He mentions that (a) women were slaves but they have freed themselves, (b) women are valuable because they protect their children (c) women started to work to become independent from men (d) in addition to working, women also do home deeds (e) a memory from a discussion in class (f) a second opinion: women work harder than men.

The last two paragraphs of the essay are also unrelated to the rest of the text. The ideas here are that education can help in the inclusion of women and that society has included women in all fields because they are as capable as men.

Correspondingly, in worksheet two where participants were asked to answer questions about their previous experience with essays, two students reported their lack of experience with this genre. Liam, for example, said that the only essay he had ever written was for his Spanish class when he was at school. His lack of understanding and experience with the genre is further evidenced when he admitted he did not know any of the stages in the process of writing an essay or the rules to be considered. in the next excerpt, the answers Liam provided are presented.

> **What is an essay?**
> An essay is a text where you say what you think.
> **Are there different types of essays?**
> Argumentative, scientist.
> **What differences are there between an essay and other types of texts?**
> An essay is the more critical.
> **Have you ever written an essay? When? What for**
> I wrote an essay when I was in the school for Spanish class.
> **How do you write an essay? Explain the process and the rules to be considered.**
> I don't know. (Liam's Worksheet 2, June 2018).

In his turn, Lucas stated that he had written essays about some of the books he had read in school and university. His understanding of essays was not accurate since he considers essays are always short and about general "themes". He admitted he didn't know about the existence of different types of essays or about the process and rules for writing one. He argued that his lack of understanding of the genre had to do with his lack of experience because he studies environmental engineering and he is not often required to write essays. Lucas's answers about his experience writing essays are presented below.

> **What is an essay?**
> The essay is a written short about the theme in general.
> **Are there different types of essays?**
> I don't know.
> **What differences are there between an essay and other types of texts?**
> The differences between an essay and other types is the form and content because the essay is very easy and short.
> **Have you ever written an essay? When? What for**
> I written about of the book I read in the university and school.
> **How do you write an essay? Explain the process and the rules to be considered.**
> I don't know because I study environmental engineering and I don't make many essays. (Lucas's worksheet 2, June 2018).

Data indicated that although most students had written essays before, none of them had ever written an essay in English. Instruction in the undergraduate programs of the university is typically given in Spanish, but while some students have to read documents in English for some subjects, they are never required to write in English. This suggests that the lack of experience writing in English affected the development of some of the activities in the unit, and thus their access to the genre was affected. While reading in English seems to be encouraged, writing in English is only part of EFL classes. In spite of this lack of experience, most students reported they have enjoyed the writing process. For example, in the interview with Isabella, she said that the activities during the implementation of the unit did not really help her to understand how to write an essay because she had already written

many essays. According to Isabella, writing essays in English made the difference. She

particularly valued the joined construction of an essay performed during instruction, as she

considers it was very useful.

> Me parece que nos ayudaron a comprender cómo escribir un ensayo, o no como escribirlo porque eso es algo que uno ha hecho muchas veces, pero el hecho de hacerlo en inglés me pareció muy práctico por ejemplo hacer un ensayo entre todos. (Isabella's interview, June 2018).

> [It seems to me that they helped us to understand how to write an essay, or not how to write it because that is something that one has done many times, but the fact of doing it in English seemed very practical for me, for example, to do an essay among everyone.]

Likewise, Mia stated that she enjoyed learning to write essays. She explained how

using her own personal experience in her arguments helped her make her point of view more

understandable.

> Me pareció super bacano porque uno si aprende a hacer un ensayo pero de una forma muy diferente, no de una forma tan argumentativa pero de manera tan personal entonces me pareció muy chévere porque a veces es muy complicado dar a entender un punto de vista sobre cualquier cosa de una forma organizada. (Mia's interview, June 2018).

> [I thought it was very nice because I learned to write an essay but in a very different way, not in an argumentative way but more in a personal way, I thought it was very cool because sometimes it is very complicated to imply a point of view about anything in an organized way.]

The two previous interview excerpts highlight the relevance of writing an essay in

English and the usefulness of their own experience when presenting arguments.

As described in the following answer to a question in the interview, the

implementation of the unit had an effect on the awareness of students on the issues that

limited their access to the genre such as their vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and

coherence.

Buenos, la actividad me pareció fácil, pero si tuve una dificultad en la parte de redacción de la actividad. Ya por el tiempo, porque no tengo bastante vocabulario en la parte de inglés entonces para redactar si se me dificultó un poco. (Oliver's interview, June 2018).

[Well, the activity seemed easy, but I had a difficulty in the writing part of the activity. Because of the time, because I do not have enough vocabulary in English then writing was a bit difficult for me.]

The previous excerpt describes how the lack of vocabulary in English affected Oliver's writing. Even though he understood aspects of the design and structure of the texts, his lack of vocabulary affected his ability to produce them during the implementation of the unit. His essay illustrates this difficulty too.

We are in a world in which there has always been chovenism towards women, society has had a wrong thinking, a wrong vision, which for ages past placated women. (Oliver's Essay, June 2018).

This excerpt shows the first paragraph in Oliver's essay. As he admitted, his lack of vocabulary affected his ability to express his ideas properly. For example, he uses the word "chovenism" when he was trying to write chauvinism. Moreover, the whole expression "chovenism towards women" is imprecise. Oliver was actually trying to say that male chauvinism has always affected women. The concept of male chauvinism had emerged in some of the discussions we had during the implementation of the unit.

Although the lack of vocabulary was one of the factors limiting Oliver's ability to express his arguments in an essay, it was not the only one. His writing also contains some other elements to be considered as they also affected the clarity of the essay, namely grammatical mistakes, punctuation and coherence, and often a combination of them. In the second line of the essay, Oliver wrote, "which for ages past placated women" which is not

coherent due to (perhaps) an omission or confusion with the word "past" that he used instead of "have". Besides, the meaning of "placated" might not fit in this context.

To sum up, most students gained access to the genre of expository essays in English. However, the individual differences and student's previous experiences influenced the level of access to the genre.

Valuing People's Diverse Subjectivities and Cultural Differences (Diversity)

According to Janks (2010), teachers should value their students' diverse ways of thinking, saying, doing, reading and writing the world. She also states that the construction of these differences in dominance is one of the multiple ways in which power is exercised (Janks, 2005). The data suggest that through the implementation of the unit proposed in this study, some of the students were able to express themselves using inclusive, tolerant and fair language when dealing with issues of social and cultural differences, particularly those related to gender. This could be observed in their essays and especially in their interactions in class. For instance, Liam recognized the opinions that other people may have about women's roles and then presented his own position.

> Some people think that women should cook and do housework, in my opinion, I do not agree with this, because women have the capacity to do other types of thing such as studying, working and helping their families. (Liam's essay, June 2018).

In this excerpt, Liam first recognizes that there are some people who may think differently about the role of women in society, traditionally associated with household chores. Then, he shows his disagreement, avoids essentializing women, and acknowledges that they are capable of performing many other tasks. Similarly, Emma recognized how the

49

role of women is changing and gaining importance in different dimensions of society

nowadays. When reflecting on the role of women in society she stated that:

> Currently, women have a major role in society, everyday gender equality take force everyday there are more women participating in different important aspects of society. (Emma's worksheet 1B, June 2018).

This excerpt shows that Emma considers women are now gaining more

participation in all aspects of society. She thinks women have a relevant role in society and

that gender equality is turning into the rule. In his turn, James expressed a more favorable

position towards women's more traditional role in society, asserting that such role "is very

important because they give a lot of balance in the life" (James's worksheet 1B, June

2018). Here, James seems to enhance the importance of women's role, including their most

traditionally assigned tasks, as providing balance to our life.

Moreover, students also recognized differences in human beings in other aspects of

life. For example, Olivia, showed her understanding and awareness of human diversity

beyond the female-male dichotomy as can be seen in the following excerpt.

> Finally, it's important to emphasize that all people are different women and men, the human is diverse. They are strong men and weak men in physically, there are more resistant women than others. And all this makes us unique and unrepeatable. (Olivia, essay, June 2018).

Olivia explains how men and women are diverse and how those differences are part

of their identities as individuals beyond their gender. Other individual differences students

were able to consider had to do with humans' diverse social, ethnic and economic

conditions. For example, when students were asked who would more likely use some of the

inventions presented during the first activity, their answers showed how the use of some

devices might be associated with people from different backgrounds. The following

excerpts exemplify this.

> Teacher: Do you use the dishwasher?
> James: No teacher, I don't have.
> Teacher: who uses a dishwasher?
> Logan: the restaurants
> Teacher: ok, who else?
> Mia: hotels
> Teacher: very good. Restaurants and hotels use it. What about people in their houses?
> Logan: rich people
> Benjamin: rich people in the city or town.
> Isabella: also, the women that work in the house of the rich and are poor.
> Noah: but we have in my house and I am not rich.
> (Transcription audio recordings of classes, June 2018).

This excerpt shows some students trying to identify different users of a dishwasher.

In doing so, they seem to perceive dishwashers as luxurious items owned and used by

companies or rich people. Another student says that these devices might be owned by a rich

family, but it could be operated by a housemaid from a poor background. Only one of the

students expressed having one, and not considering himself rich.

Conversely, when students were asked about the possible users of a washing machine,

they initially assumed that everyone had one. Then, they realized there were people who

might not have a washing machine due to differences in access to public services or money.

> Teacher: what is the image in the slide?
> Students: the washing machine.
> Teacher: very good. Lucas, what do we use it for?
> Lucas: for washing the clothes, for cleaning.
> Teacher: what kind of people use it?
> Mia: everybody
> Teacher: who has a washing machine in the house?
> Group: everybody.
> Teacher: I will change the question. Who does not use a washing machine?
> Mia: children. Maybe small children.
> Teacher: compared to the dishwasher the washing machine is more popular and we
> can find one in more houses. who else would not use a washing machine?
> Mia: people in illegal places
> Isabella: people with a lot of children.

Olivia: people that live in the forest. Like the Indians
Benjamin: and also, some people wash the clothes in the river because they don't have energy or they don't have money.
Manson: I, because I live alone, and I don't have a wash machine.
(Transcription audio recordings of classes, June 2018).

The previous excerpt shows a class discussion in which students were able to go beyond their own realities and consider how other people might have different experiences depending on their characteristics. It also shows that students initially assumed everyone had the same privileges they did. Therefore, it was only after insisting on the question that they started to consider other possibilities.

In sum, students were able to design texts that respond critically to common gender stereotypes which people usually take for granted. As they gained control of the genre of expository essays, they were also able to use this highly valued genre to challenge such stereotypes, drawing from their own life experiences, as well as the perspectives of others, to design texts that represent their views. In the following section, I discuss these findings and draw some conclusions.

Enhancing Students' Agency to Challenge Common Gender Stereotypes (Design)

Janks (2010) states that developing students' critical literacy goes beyond helping them deconstruct dominant discourses, and it moves into empowering them to challenge and change such discourses. Hence, students need to develop their ability to use a wide range of meaning-making resources, including multiple modes such as linguistic, audiovisual, gestural or spatial (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001; The New London Group, 1996), to produce critical texts. Data in this study suggest that students were not only able to develop a deeper awareness of the unequal power relations portrayed in common gender stereotypes, but also write expository essays in response to them showing a critical stance.

52

In an interview, for example, Oliver showed his awareness of how women stereotypes are part of the messages in TV commercials, which viewers usually overlook.

> Uno a veces la parte de comerciales los pasa por alto, los ignora y realmente no les presta mucha atención, pero los comerciales siempre tratan de mandar un mensaje, pero cada persona tiene un modo de entender el mensaje. Y creo que la mujer ha tenido una lucha bastante interesante y bastante fuerte en base a adquirir el respeto y el valor por la mujer; y a veces de una manera indirecta, la misma mujer se está representado en este tipo de comerciales o no está aportando positivamente a esa lucha tan dura que ha tenido la mujer. (Oliver's interview, June 2018).

> [Sometimes I disregard the commercials, I ignore them, and I don't really pay much attention to them, but the commercials always try to send a message, but each person has a way of understanding the message. And I think the woman has had a quite interesting and quite strong struggle based on acquiring respect and value for women, and sometimes in an indirect way woman themselves are representing themselves in this type of commercial or are not contributing positively to that hard struggle that they have had.]

As seen in this excerpt, Oliver advocates for the importance of paying attention to messages below the surface in the TV commercials, and reveals his critical position towards women themselves who might be indirectly helping perpetuate stereotypes that do not contribute to what he describes as "the difficult struggle of women for gaining respect". accordingly, in his essay, Oliver responded to the traditional belief that "the best women are stay-at-home moms", stating that society has been wrong in regard to this issue, and enhancing women's fight to set free from this kind of prejudice.

> In the first instance the world has been evolving, previously it was believed that the woman only had to devote herself to housework, to have and raise children and fulfill their marital functions. (Oliver's Essay, June 2018).

> Later in his essay, he describes a classroom situation in which a teacher posed the controversial question of who would work harder, men or women, to which he answered that "in my personal opinion, I have always thought that women are the strongest and most responsible" (Oliver's Essay, June 2018).

Likewise, after analyzing the TV commercials, Logan recognized that women stereotypes are created and exploited by the society. When asked for his opinion about this activity, he said that

> Aprendí que los comerciales utilizan a las mujeres o las personas de acuerdo con las creencias a lo que se tiene, a los estereotipos que se han creado en la sociedad. (Logan's interview, June 2018).

> [I learned that commercials use women or people according to beliefs to what they have, the stereotypes that have been created in society.]

This excerpt shows how Logan identifies the use of stereotypes in TV commercials, the same stereotypes that are formed in society. In his essay, he put forward three arguments to support his position that women are as capable as men, if not better, in all kinds of economic activities. First, he argued that women have had less access to education than men.

> Firstly, if you compare the times in the past the women were less possibilities than men, because they could not study and only engaged to housework but now the women leave their homes and can study to develop their life project more easily. (Logan's Essay, June 2018).

In his second argument, he asserted that economic prosperity is not restricted to men only, but women can also gain it through their capabilities.

> Secondly, women have too many capacities that if they use it well they can achieve all their goals, just as they were experienced in the emancipation of women in the French revolution, with this it is demonstrated that they can achieve what they propose and the same thing happens with money, if they want it they can get all the money they want as much as men. (Logan's Essay, June 2018).

In his last argument, Logan argued that women have an outstanding capacity for doing business, providing real-life examples of successful women.

> Finally, I think that women have a better entrepreneurial capacity than men because they leave their comfort zone and always look for better things, is the example of:

Oprah Winfrey, Madame CJ Walker, Cher Wang who used all their abilities to promote their companies and at the moment they are multimillionaires. (Logan's Essay, June 2018).

In sum, students were able to design texts that respond critically to common gender stereotypes which people usually take for granted. As they gained control of the genre of expository essays, they were able to use this highly valued genre to challenge such stereotypes, drawing from their own life experiences, as well as the perspectives of others, to design texts that represent their views.

Discussion and Conclusions

Drawing on critical literacy theories, mainly on Janks (2010), this qualitative case study aimed to explore the effects of implementing an instructional unit designed under the lens of Janks's synthesis model of critical literacy to help a group of university EFL students write expository essays about common women stereotypes. Overall, findings suggest that the implementation of such instructional unit allowed the incorporation of the four orientations to critical literacy, i.e., power, access, diversity and design, into EFL lessons intended to help university students gain control of the academic genre of expository essays. In other words, it helped students unveil issues of power related to female stereotypes as portrayed in TV commercials (power), gain access to the genre of expository essays as they write about generally believed women stereotypes (access), become aware of the importance of considering different voices and perspectives by putting themselves in someone else's position (diversity), and use a variety of English meaning-making resources in their expository essays to take a stance and challenge such stereotypes (design).

In terms of the dimension of power, it was an important gain for students to become aware of how gender stereotypes associated with men and women's roles in society are perpetuated in everyday discourses, such as TV commercials, since such awareness enables them to challenge and resist existing inequality between women and men in their own communities, thus contributing to social transformation (Hayik, 2015). This was possible by bringing into class students' personal experiences and knowledge of their social contexts as a resource to engage in critical reflections about relevant social issues, in which they can unveil unequal power relations between men and women as portrayed in a variety of texts

(Hayik, 2015; Kuo, 2009). This was also possible by posing questions from different perspectives and making connections between texts and students' background knowledge and life experiences, as students are actively engaged in discussing the problems such texts may deal with, including the reflection on power and domination issues (Sultan et al., 2017).

Raising awareness of social issues in the English language classroom, such as gender discrimination, is essential for developing critical literacy (Wallace, 2010). Huang (2011) argues that critical literacy should help students explore how texts work to construe gender positioning in society, inquiring into the reasons and potential consequences of such representations. The dissemination of assumptions such as the positioning of women as inferior to men might promote the stagnation and perpetuation of their role in society, which may also influence students. Hence, helping students challenge the socially constructed characteristics of femaleness, according to which women are expected to live and behave, is a crucial role of critical literacy educators.

As for gaining access to powerful genres, it was significant for students to familiarize with the purpose and overall structure of expository essays since this allowed them to state and support their opinions about common women stereotypes while complying with the characteristics of such a powerful genre in academic contexts. Alford and Jetnikoff (2016) enhance the importance of helping students gain control of the generic structure and language features of academic genres such as analytical essays and investigative reports, as well as understanding the power embedded in the linguistic and other semiotic choices such texts make to construe representations of the world. Likewise, Hammond and Macken-Horarik (1999) help students interpret and produce texts about the

57

stages of egg development in females, following the characteristics of the genre of explanations as they engage students in critical reflections and discussions about the topic.

This was also a significant gain for students since it provided them with greater access to a written genre highly valued in academic contexts, and whose linguistic features might be challenging for second language learners (Schleppegrell, 2000). Essays are probably the most common genre undergraduate students from a wide range of disciplines need to master if they want to successfully engage in disciplinary practices, demonstrating their ability to state and defend a position (Hyland, 2009). Hence, focusing on the genre of expository essays helped the students who participated in this study gain familiarity with the purpose, structure and language resources of expository essays.

Regarding the dimension of diversity, it was important for students to compare women stereotypes as represented in TV commercials with their own beliefs and explore this social issue from multiple perspectives. In doing this, they had the opportunity to approach gender stereotyping from different perspectives, considering diverse voices and placing themselves in someone else's position. Searching the topic of gender differences and exploring it from different perspectives not only helps students gain awareness of how some social identities, such as gender, are privileged while others are marginalized, but also empowers them to produce their own texts in response (Janks, 2010). This was also an important gain for students since the consideration of different voices, including their own voices, is an essential part of critical literacy (McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004; Beck, 2005). Hence, teachers should value their students' diverse ways of thinking, saying, doing, reading, and writing the world, as well as help them examine how social identities are formed and organized into different relations of power (Janks, 2010).

In terms of the dimension of design, using the available meaning-making resources to write a highly valued academic genre, such as expository essays, to challenge and change existing discourses on women stereotyping was a significant gain for students. When encouraged to analyze texts that may carry potential problematic issues, such as gender stereotyping, and then create their own texts to dispute dominant discourses, students are granted with opportunities to contest social practices that disempower some social groups in favor of others, and fight for fairness and equality (Hayik, 2015; Lalik & Oliver, 2007). This was an important gain for students since they were able to produce texts critically, using English language resources that helped them position themselves and their readers as they disputed and transformed existing discourses such as gender stereotyping (Janks, 2010).

Nevertheless, this study had some limitations which had to do mainly with the fact that I was new to critical literacy theories and practices, and the particularities of the setting in which it was carried out. First, although critical literacy raised my interest since I started my masters' program, it proved to be difficult to understand its theoretical complexity and not an easy task to bring it into effect in my EFL classroom. Had I had a better understanding of it and more experience implementing it, I would probably have designed and implemented classroom activities that were more comprehensive and effective in helping my students develop their critical literacy further; for example, exploring gender representations beyond the dual vision of man and woman, thus including other forms of sexuality such as LGBT, as well as exploring the production of multimodal texts to move beyond written genres.

The setting of this study was another limitation. The university language center did not give me certainty about which specific English courses I would teach, that is, the course

levels, number of students and schedule. Had I had this information sufficiently in advance, I would have had more time to plan classroom activities and double-checked them before implementing them. Besides, I was compelled to develop the contents of the units of the English textbook that were expected to be covered in the course. This limited the time I had to help students develop critical literacy further. Indeed, during the interviews and along the development of the activities designed for this implementation, several students reported that time was an issue, and that they wished they had had more time to do the activities.

This qualitative study on the effects of implementing Janks's four-dimension model to promote critical literacy in a group of EFL university students has raised some implications for teaching and research. In terms of teaching, teachers interested in helping students develop critical literacy in their classrooms should engage students in examining ideologies embedded in everyday and academic texts. They also need to help students gain control of the textual genres, particularly those that are relevant in their social and academic lives. Besides, teachers aiming to promote critical literacy in their classrooms should provide opportunities for students to explore different perspectives of an issue. they should promote the understanding of the different ways of being in the world and to see difference as an opportunity to gain knowledge. Finally, they should also engage students in the design. To do this, they should teach students to identify how texts are designed to influence us and to respond to texts that include their redesign, that is, texts that depict their voices, points of view and positions.

Regarding research, although this study has shown the potential benefits of implementing Janks's critical literacy model in the EFL classroom, further research studies are needed to explore the development of critical literacy of students with other proficiency levels. Future studies should also delve into the exploration of other social issues that are

60

not necessarily presented in textbooks; for example, the demobilization of armed groups, life in rural areas and dangerous neighborhoods or maternity and paternity of young students. Similarly, future studies should explore the implementation of Janks's synthesis model in similar EFL courses with more time allotment for researchers can have more time for addressing the orientations of the synthesis model. Additionally, future studies should also inquire about the preferences of students when responding to other texts using multimodal texts. Finally, future research should consider the different representations of sexuality and include other groups.

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APPENDIX A

WORKSHEET 1A- INVENTORS AND INVENTIONS

Worksheet

Work with a partner and use the internet to look for information to complete the table.

Invention	Inventor	Male	Female	Country	Year	Uses
Non- reflective glass						
Square- bottom paper bags						
Monopoly						

How many of the inventions were invented by men / women? Did you expect this? Why/ why not?

APPENDIX B

WORKSHEET 1B: REFLECTING ON MALE AND FEMALE INVENTORS

Reflective Task - Male and Female Inventors

Student's full name: _____ date: _____

Instructions: answer the following questions about your findings on male and female inventors.

1. Did you expect this? Why/ why not?
2. How do you explain the difference in the number of inventions made by men and women?
3. How have women influenced our country's political, social and economic life?
4. Who are some women that you admire? Why?
5. How would Colombia be different if women didn't have the right to vote, to be in congress (parliament), to study, to work, to have property?
6. What is the role of women in nursing and medicine, in education, in politics, in business, in the military, in sport, in arts?
7. How are women different if they are rich/poor, if they live in the city/rural areas, if they are beautiful/ugly, educated/non educated, white/from a different race,...
8. What are the challenges for women today?

APPENDIX C

WORKSHEET 2: PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH EXPOSITORY ESSAYS

Worksheet 2

June 5, 2018
Name:

What is an essay?

Are there different types of essays?

What differences are there between an essay and other types of texts?

Have you ever written an essay? When? What for?

How do you write an essay? Explain the process and the rules to be considered.

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Primera Parte
l

Cómo te pareció la actividad?
Cómo te pareció que hubieran mas inventos de los hombres?
Alguna vez habías hecho algo como esto? te pareció difícil?
Qué aprendiste de esta actividad?
Te pareció útil?

Segunda Parte

Cómo te pareció la actividad?
Habías hecho alguna actividad parecida?
que dificultades tuviste?
qué aprendiste?
crees que es útil?

Tercera Parte .

Cómo te pareció la actividad numero 3?
Te pareció difícil?
Porque seleccionaste el estereotipo?
De donde sacaste los argumentos?
Qué aprendiste?
Te parecio útil?
quieres agregar algune comentario sobre estas actividades?

APPENDIX E

CONSENT FORM

Consentimiento Informado

Yo, _____, identificado con cédula número _____, atendiendo a la normatividad vigente sobre consentimientos informados, acepto voluntariamente participar en el proyecto de investigación " desarrollo de la literacidad crítica".... entiendo que:

1. El propósito de este proyecto es investigar hasta que punto los modelos para el desarrollo de la literacidad critica pueden ayudar a los estudiantes a escribir textos en forma efectiva y crítica.

2. Juan David Murillo Egurrola, profesor e investigador, me podrán entrevistar un maximo de tres veces acerca de mi percepción de las actividades realizadas y la metología empleada en el salon de clases. Las actividades se llevaran a cabo en el lugar y hora de mi conveniencia y no tendran una duración de mas de una hora.

3. La entrevista será grabada en audio con el propósito de facilitar el análisis de los datos. La información suministrada en dicha entrevista será leída sólo por el investigador y su asesor y será archivada bajo seudónimos con el fin de proteger la identidad de los entrevistados.

4. La participación en este proyecto no tendrá repercusiones o consecuencias en mis actividades laborales al igual que no generará ningún gasto ni remuneración alguna.

5. Mi participación es totalmente voluntaria y podré retirarme del proyecto cuando lo desee sin ninguna consecuencia para mi calificación en el curso.

6. El investigador podrá recolectar y archivar los talleres que yo realice durante el desarrollo de este curso. Solo el investigador y su asesor podran leer dichos talleres.

7. Si tengo alguna pregunta, puedo contactar al investigadores al siguiente correos electrónicos Juan David Murillo juand.murillo@udea.edu.co o al teléfono 3015452337

8. Recibiré una copia de este formato para mi registro el mismo día de conocer su contenido .

Firma del estudiante: _____ Fecha: _____

Firma del investigador: _____ Fecha: _____

INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT

Instructional Unit
(Unit plan proposed for Level 8, it covers Unit 10 A of the English File pre intermediate textbook)

Objectives: students will be able to…	
Lesson 1 first stage	Word/sentence structure (access) Grammar and syntax (access) Spelling, punctuation and handwriting/keyboard skills (access) Conventions of language vocabulary and specialized language/terminology (access) Text type/genre (access) Academic discourse (access) Text design and layout (access)
Lesson 2 second stage	Background/prior knowledge (diversity) Personal/life experience (power & diversity) Cultural and linguistic experience (diversity) General/world knowledge (diversity) Specific field/topic knowledge (access & diversity) Ways knowledge and texts are constructed (diversity)
Lesson 3 third stage	Understanding the shaping influence of social/cultural factors and contexts (diversity) Recognition of different school and life purposes and audiences for texts and language (access & diversity) Changes in text and language use from one social context to another (access & diversity)

Lesson 4 **fourth stage**	Recognition of the ways texts positions authors and readers (power) Attention to what is included, what is excluded from the text and why. (power) Writer's linguistic choices/critical language awareness. (power) Relationship between this text and other similar texts/intertextuality (power and diversity) Alternative readings/writings and responses to text. (diversity)
Lesson 1	

Specific Objectives:
- Explore everyday inventions, their use and their inventors
- Build vocabulary on the topic
- Reflect, discuss, and write about problems posed.
- Participate in class discussions
- Use language to explore and analyze social issues

Intro: Introduce students into the objectives and language content of the unit

Activity 1 - Triggering students' previous knowledge on everyday use inventions and their inventors

- Show the 1st slide in the PowerPoint presentation *Everyday Inventions and their Inventors*, and ask the group: what inventions do you use everyday? What for? Who invented them? When?
- Show students the pictures of the inventions on the slides one by one, and ask them the questions: what are they called in English? Do you use it? (If not, who usually uses it?) How often? What for? Who invented them? When?

Activity 2 - Listening to an interview on a radio show about inventions.

- Show students the last slide with all the pictures in the presentation and ask them which five they think were invented by women, and why?
- Have students do the listening activities on p. 76 in the textbook and check their guess.

Activity 3- Discussing on male/females' inventions

- Have students work in pair to research other everyday inventions, uses, inventors, country and year, and point out how many of the inventions were invented by men/women. To do this, students will complete the worksheet about inventions and inventors (see appendix A).
- Students individually write a reflection on their findings of inventions made by men and women. To do this, they will answer the questions in the reflective task (see appendix B)
- Whole class discussion around the questions in the worksheet (*How many of the inventions were invented by men/women? Did you expect/know that this invention was invented by a man/woman? Why?*

Activity 4- Exploring previous knowledge about the genre (expository essays)

- What are some of the rules to write well (correctly) that you learn in school? Ask students to write a list of these rules and also to reflect on *who made these rules? Why do they exist? Who benefits from them? Are they necessary? Do you use them?*

Discuss

What is an essay?

Are there different types of essays?

What differences are there between an essay and other types of texts?

Have you ever written an essay? When? What for?

How do you write an essay?

Lesson 2

Specific Objectives:
- Introduce students to the structure of expository essays
- Engage in the use writing as a tool for learning.
- Engage in writing as a process.

Activity 1- Provide a copy of the model essay to each student and read it with the class then explain

      a) The structure of the essay b) the choice of words c) connectors, linkers, transition words.

Ask them to underline or highlight the features of the texts as you show them.

Lesson 3

Specific Objectives:
- Introduce students to the structure of expository essays
- Engage in the use writing as a tool for learning.
- Engage in writing as a process.

Activity 1- exploring students` positions on women stereotypes

Show students the advertisement (Xerox, 1968) and ask them about their understanding based on the images and language in the video. *Who are the characters in the advertisement? What does the woman say about herself? About her boss? About the machine? Her occupation?*

Show the video with subtitles and aids for understanding keywords. Then ask students *what message or messages they think can be implied from the video. The following questions might be considered.*

Questions about power:

The composer
• What does the composer want us to think or do?
• Why is the text composed in the way it is?
• What kind of person, composed the text, and what were their interests and values?
• What view of the world and what values does the composer of the text assume that the reader/viewer holds? How do we know?
• Is the author in control of all the voices in this text/discourse?
The reader / viewer
• What view of the world is the text presenting?
• What does it assume about your beliefs, values, and experiences?
• What knowledge do you need to bring to this text/discourse in order to Understand it?
• Which ideas in the text seem most natural to you?
• Why do you think these ideas seem so convincingly realistic?
• Are you as a reader willing to go along with those assumptions?
• Are there aspects of the text you wish or feel compelled to resist or refuse?
• Who is likely to agree or disagree with the message/s of the text?
The message
• How are people and events constructed?
• What is constructed as legitimate?
• What is taken for granted?
• Who / what is included? Excluded?
• What is the dominant reading of the text?
• What is the text's unspoken, underlying message?
• Are the official ideas of the text contradicted by unspoken assumptions?
The context
• What is the purpose of the text?

• Where was the text written? Where is it being read?

• When was the text produced? What has gone before?
• What do the participants know?
• What other texts do they know?
• How does the text rely on inter-textuality to create its meaning?
The discourse (Hall, 1997)
• What statements about the topic / practice are used to provide knowledge
  about it? Are these statements consistent across other forms of discourses?
• What attributes are given to the subjects of the discourse?
• How does the knowledge about the topic acquire its authority and its status as 'truth'?
• What rules prescribe ways of thinking, talking or behaving regarding the topic or practice?
• How are subjects' behaviors regulated according to the established knowledge produced within a particular practice.
• How do other contexts give the topic / practice a different meaning?

Questions about access:

• What do students need to assert their sense of identities?
• Are they given access to these needs? If so, how? Otherwise, why not?
• Who provides and receives access to which knowledge, texts, discourses, learning strategies, learning resources, etc.?
• What obstacles do teachers and students encounter to either offer or gain access to these needs?
• What dilemmas do teachers or students encounter with regard to providing or limiting access? (Janks, 2004; 2010, p. 127).

Questions about diversity:

• How are students' cultural identities acknowledged and promoted?
• What languages, knowledge, genres, literacies or cultural practices are privileged / marginalized in the classroom?
• How do teachers value students' strengths and abilities?
• How do teachers acknowledge students' varied interpretations?
• Is difference seen as productive or divisive?

Questions about design/redesign:

• What semiotic modes were used to design the text? (e.g. gaze, frame, angle, layout, perspective, vector, color, font, line, sound, gesture, music, speech, words, spatial design, texture etc.)
• How does each mode contribute to the intended message/s?
• Is there a consistency between the mode/s used and the message/s created?
• How does the choice of semiotic mode position the creator and the audience?
• What are the possibilities and constraints of using a particular mode to create meaning?

• How would the text be different if it were told in another time, place or culture, or with a different point of view?
 • Does the text empower or disempower others?
 • How else could the text have been designed to promote equity?

Activity 2. The students write an essay together. The essay will be negotiated with the students to introduce their suggestions. Students will be encouraged to ask questions and to clarify their doubts-

	Lesson 4
	- Critique your own and others' work in written and oral formats and reflect on the aspects that contributed to your writing process - Gather, summarize, synthesize, and explain information from various sources. - Use grammatical, stylistic, and mechanical formats and conventions appropriate for a variety of audiences.
	Activity 1. Write an essay on one of the following topics: - Men and women should have access to the same educational opportunities - Males and females should be accepted onto courses according to their abilities - It is wrong to discriminate against students because of their gender - Gender should be irrelevant in education - Student's achievements should depend on hard work and individual merit - male and female students in higher education - Men and women should have access to the same professional opportunities - Both man and women should be able to pursue a career - They should earn equal salaries - They should be employed according to their abilities, qualifications and experience - Traditionally women have been restricted to certain roles - They were often employed as secretaries or receptionists - Nowadays, a range of occupations is available to both sexes - Career success depends on individual merit **Activity 2.** Read the essay that one of your partners produced and analyze it. Then share your opinion.

MODEL ESSAY

An **opinion** essay

Are video games a good way to keep fit?

Nowadays, many teenagers have got video consoles at home and they often like playing active video games. These are good for you for a number of reasons.

First of all, I think that active video games are a good way to keep fit. There are lots of different types of exercise you can do such as basketball, water-skiing and dance and, what's more, you can play them in the comfort of your own home. In my opinion, these games are fun and interactive because you can play them with friends and, if you play online, you don't need to be in the same place as your friend to play.

In addition, you can play them whenever you want. Some people think that it's better to do exercise outside in the fresh air. Although this is true, it's actually difficult to play outside when it's raining or very hot so video games are a good alternative.

To sum up, I believe that video games are a fun and social way to keep fit. I think they are a good option when you can't play outside and they might encourage people to do more exercise.

APPENDIX H

LIST OF PROMPTS

- ☐ Women are supposed to have "clean jobs" such as secretaries, teachers, and librarians

- ☐ Women are nurses, not doctors

- ☐ Women are not as strong as men

- ☐ Women are supposed to make less money than men

- ☐ The best women are stay at home moms

- ☐ Women don't need to go to college

- ☐ Women don't play sports

- ☐ Women are not politicians

- ☐ Women are quieter than men and not meant to speak out

- ☐ Women are supposed to be submissive and do as they are told

- ☐ Women are supposed to cook and do housework

- ☐ Women are responsible for raising children

- ☐ Women do not have technical skills and are not good at "hands on" projects such as car repairs

- ☐ Women are meant to be the damsel in distress; never the hero

APPENDIX I

JOINTLY CONSTRUCTED ESSAY

Women are not as strong as men.

In the history of humanity, women have usually represented delicacy and weakness. Although there have been many social changes, there are some people who still believe that men are stronger than women. In our opinion, that is not true for the following reasons.

First, strength does not only mean physical force, it also means to be able to resist. A recent study from PNAS says that during extreme conditions, for example epidemics, women survive longer than men.

Secondly, women live for more time than men. In Colombia men are expected to live about 75 years and the women more than 81. In addition, the health of men deteriorates faster. While serious medical conditions usually appear in women when they are 71, these appear in men when they are just 67.

Thirdly, there are biological differences between men and women. Men have bigger muscles that make them physically stronger. Besides, in average, men are taller than women. However, women are powerful intellectually and emotionally.

In conclusion, men and women are strong but they have different characteristics.

Rubric for the analysis of expository essays.

Criteria Student: Emma	Emerging	Approaching	Satisfactory	Comments
There is a clearly stated thesis statement.				
There is an effective introduction with enough contextualization.				
There is a clear connection between the thesis statement and arguments				
There are three coherent arguments				
Arguments are well developed				
There is a good articulation between paragraphs				
Lexical choice				
There is a conclusion				
There is good punctuation				
Well-formed sentences				
The structure of expository essays is followed				
Words are spelled correctly				
Correct grammar tenses are used.				

EXAMPLE OF ANALYSIS OF A STUDENT'S ESSAY

6. Women are supposed to make less money than men.

It is common hear in the street people say the women make less money than men other people say the men have better jobs than women but is this really true? in my opinion maybe in the past, but nowadays this does not true for the following reason

(1) Firstly any women can get a job than men such as we can find a women work as lawyers, doctor, teachers, politician, counters, actresses engineers manager and any profesión that you want but is true that in some cases you find less women to working in some profesións.

(2) Secondly the salaries are same for women and men even in some profesión the women make more money than men for example in modeling, on the performance, and in other profesión although the women does not make more money the women are prefer for some profesión

(3) Thirdly the women can get any job although in some profesión is common find more men jod inn this the women olsa can do it but she does like those Jobs e.g in some engineers in build in doctors and other but is not for some kind of discriminations is only for the women does not like and if some woman can work in this can does it and she make the same salary as a man

(4) To conclude I think that the women does not make less money than men I believe the women can the same things than men even in somethings the women are better than men and them have to feel proud for this.

Grammar mistakes

Vocabulary

Coherence

Punctuation

Position

Arguments 1 (1)

Argument 2 (2)

Argument 3 (3)

Conclusion (4)

Rubric