THE DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN THE MEXICAN INDIGENOUS CONTEXT

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Intercultural bilingual education was adopted by the Mexican school system to offer a type of education that was linguistically and culturally suitable for the indigenous groups of Mexico. Although the model was originally aimed at ethnic minorities, recently intercultural education is being extended to society in general as a strategy to change multicultural relations and to establish a more democratic society. However, the model has been criticized because of its lack of theoretical definition, legal grounding and practical problems in its implementation. Since the goals of intercultural education go beyond pedagogic issues, it is important to study how the Discourse of intercultural education is being interpreted, accepted, rejected and transformed by different social actors related to the educational field.

This study explores the continuities and ruptures in the Discourse of intercultural education through the analysis of written policy documents and the discourse (i.e., language in use) of indigenous teachers, policy brokers, academics and indigenous leaders. Such continuities and ruptures reflect the underlying ideologies of these social actors regarding the goals of intercultural education, and the roles of indigenous teachers, society and organizations in this change process.

Under the framework of critical discourse analysis (van Dijk, 1985; 2003), official policy documents were compared to linguistic data yielded by ethnographic observations in indigenous schools and interviews with key actors in the indigenous educational field. An analysis of the discursive strategies and linguistic devices used by the interviewees and written documents shows that there are continuities, contradictions and overlaps in the positioning of the subjects regarding the tenets of intercultural bilingual education. The study exposes the role of these linguistic practices in the reproduction of dominant Discourses that perpetuate the status quo of

indigenous education that the intercultural model was supposed to challenge in the first place; however, such reproduction is far from linear since indigenous teachers exert oppositional agency against institutional practices (linguistic and others) and take advantage of the discursive and legal space opened up by the intercultural model to develop their own educational projects, which constitute a cultural appropriation of the intercultural model.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CGEIB   Coordinación   General   de   Educación
                         Intercultural Bilingüe (General Coordination
                         of Intercultural Bilingual Education)

CONADEPI   Comisión Nacional para el Desarrollo de los
                         Pueblos Indígenas (National Commission for
                         the Development of the Indigenous Peoples)

DGEI   Dirección General de Educación Indígena
                         (General Direction of Indigenous Education)

INALI   Instituto Nacional de Lenguas Indígenas
                         (National Institute of Indigenous Languages)

PRI   Partido Revolucionario Institucional
                                  (Institutional Revolutionary Party)

SEP   Secretaría de Educación Pública (Secretariat
                         of Public Education)

PREFACE

Any academic endeavor is the result of many voices and minds working together, and this is not an exception. Many people collaborated in the development of this project and I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of them.

First, I want to thank Scott Kiesling for his expertise and invaluable advice. He always gave me knowing guidance and sound critiques, but also let me explore and trust my own instincts. Scott always had an attentive ear and a sympathetic attitude when the stars were crossed against me. I could not have had a better guide in this journey.

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This project was possible because of the help, support and comradeship of the indigenous teachers of the San Isidro and Uringuitiro schools. I want to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to you. I will always be indebted to you.

And last, but not least, thanks to my family for their unwavering support and faith in me. Finally, all my love goes to Juan Carlos and Cora Grijalva, my very own little family.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Education aimed at indigenous populations in Mexico has had two main tendencies (Hamel, 1995). The first was focused on the linguistic and cultural assimilation of indigenous ethnic groups. This assimilationist model was abandoned in the late 1970s in favor of one which promoted the maintenance of the students' native languages, and the development of a cultural identity that allowed the individual to interact in both the native and the Mexican-mestizo[1] society with the same competence. This cultural dimension of bilingual education, known as biculturality, has been criticized because of the social inequalities that are implied by the model. Indeed, the burden of becoming culturally and communicatively competent in two different linguistic codes and of being capable of functioning appropriately in culturally different contexts was placed on the dominated groups (Hernández, 2001). Thus, even though the right of minorities to conserve their languages and cultures was acknowledged, their incorporation into the mainstream culture continued to be the unrealized ideal.

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[1] The term mestizo refers to people of both indigenous and Spanish descent. Contrary to other countries (e.g., Peru) where the racial divide includes *blancos* (i.e., whites), mestizos and *indios*, the ideology of mestizaje conflates these differences into one: that is, the mestizo subject. However, it does not imply that such differences do not exist in practice. As Bonfil Batalla (1981) has pointed out, social and economic differences are painfully evident as one moves along racial lines: the whiter the richer.

In recent years, there has been a shift in the conceptualization of the cultural dimension of bilingual instruction. Bilingual bicultural education has changed towards Intercultural bilingual education. However, the meaning and implications of this term remain unclear and the policies to implement the model in the Mexican educational system are still developing. Intercultural-bilingual[2] education has been described as one based on the collective rights of indigenous nations to preserve their languages and cultures (Godenzzi, 1997; Zimmermann, 1997; Cunningham, 2001). Intercultural education also entails participation on equal terms with mestizo societies (Ramírez, 2001; Muñoz Cruz, 2002); it promotes tolerance (Kleymeyer, 1993); respect (Klessing-Rempel, 1996; Sifuentes, 1996); cultural understanding (Ramírez, 2001; López, 1997); and the valuing of indigenous scientific knowledge and cosmogonic views (Ramón, 1993; Hernández, 2001; Quishpe-Lema, 2001). Such characteristics of intercultural education − although difficult to implement − address three different levels of intervention: cultural, pedagogic, and political. This last level of interculturality is founded on a conception of a nation-State that is in conflict with the notion of linguistic and ethnic homogeny. The concept of interculturality proposes alternative models of nation-State based on a democratic model (Godenzzi, 1997) that implies a new distribution of power and the participation of social actors who historically have been marginalized (Walsh, 2002).

Research on intercultural-bilingual education in Mexico has grown in the last decade (Bertely and González Apodaca, 2003) because of its potential to change not only indigenous education, but the education aimed at the whole Mexican population. However, despite enthusiasm for the model in academic circles, and the official acknowledgement of the need to

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[2] The choice of the first term in the binomial (i.e., intercultural-bilingual, bilingual-intercultural) reflects a political position towards this type of education, which stresses either linguistic or cultural aspects.

implement intercultural education in the Mexican school system, there are strong criticisms regarding the model's feasibility. Part of the criticisms stem from the fact that throughout history, major educational reforms within indigenous education have been carried out only at the formal level, and one model after another has been put into practice without allowing time to fully develop and produce results (Gigante, 1994).

The history of bilingual indigenous education in Mexico is long. Indeed, Mexico is a pioneer in the field in Latin America, but despite such history, bilingual indigenous education may be considered a failed linguistic, cultural and educational policy. The indigenous peoples of the country are still being culturally and linguistically assimilated, which has caused the indigenous languages to be at risk of disappearing.[3]

As I indicated above, the latest shift in the educational Discourse in Mexico is bilingual intercultural education. The world context (i.e., globalization), the democratization process that the country is undergoing, as well as the indigenous demands for a linguistically and culturally suitable education have been the rationale for the implementation of bilingual intercultural education by the Mexican educational authorities. The need of an educational model that could prepare children to face the demands of the globalized world, as well as to be able to coexist in a diverse society is also part of the reasons for the model's adoption. But despite the discourse of inclusion and tolerance, intercultural education is not exempt from the problems that affected its predecessors. Instead, it may be yet one more sophisticated method of cultural and linguistic assimilation.

It may seem an oxymoron to argue that a tolerant and including model may be homogenizing, but the history of indigenous education has shown that it has been co-opted by

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[3] According to the National Comission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples, 23 indigenous languages in Mexico are endangered (CONADEPI, 2008)

the State to implement its own goals and objectives and to legitimate its role. Such goals have invariably gravitated towards the linguistic and cultural homogenization of the country. In this process, education has played an important role. As Bourdieu (1986) has pointed out, education is a field of struggle. Whether it is a way to provide individuals with the skills needed to function in society, or as a provider of cultural capital and symbolic or economic power, education has the power to create, perpetuate or change social inequalities. Thus, it is necessary to explore intercultural education in its discontinuities and contradictions.

There are studies on sociological and pedagogic aspects of indigenous education, but what is missing is a sociolinguistic study of the ways in which language is used to reproduce and perpetuate the status quo of indigenous education in Mexico. Furthermore, it is important to explore the ways in which language (both oral and written) and other educational practices work to transmit ideologies about the purposes, actions and roles of indigenous education in Mexican society. Thus, a sociolinguistic approach may yield a more complete picture.

If intercultural education is to be an alternative educational project, then it is necessary to explore how it has been defined, its goals, purposes and its potential for challenging the status quo or reproducing it. Particularly, it is important to analyze how the actors related to the field of intercultural education in the indigenous context – policy brokers, academics, indigenous teachers and representatives from indigenous NGOs − use their linguistic and discursive resources to position themselves with respect to the intercultural project. I assume that cultural, political, and social Discourses and ideologies related to indigenous education – and the indigenous peoples themselves – appear in the discourse of these four key groups of actors, so it is necessary to analyze how language is used to conform or challenge official policies and ideas about indigenous education.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this project, I explore how the intercultura[4]l education is constructed in the discourse of policy brokers, academics, indigenous teachers and representatives from indigenous NGOs. I am using the concepts of discourse to refer to "language in use" (Johnstone, 2000), and Discourse (with capital D) to refer to ways of using language, thinking, believing, understanding, acting and structuring the social world (Gee, 1990). Particularly, I am interested in analyzing the notions and ideologies of interculturality that underlie the official policies and curricula of bilingual intercultural education. Such ideas are supposed to structure both the knowledge and the experiences that students would have to be exposed to in order to acquire intercultural competence. In addition, it is necessary to explore how in-service indigenous teachers transform these "official" ideas and implement them in their classroom (as reflected in their discourse and classroom interaction).

The research questions that I will focus on tap into the cultural, political and pedagogic issues that intercultural education implies. They are the following:

1) How is intercultural education defined in policy documents and textbooks?
2) What are the objectives of such education? How are they accomplished?
3) What is the directionality of intercultural education?
4) How do the actors involved in intercultural education transform, appropriate or reject the model and the Discourse of intercultural education inherent in the policies? That is, how do the different discourses on interculturality held by different people involved in intercultural education differ or connect to those established in official

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[4] The term "intercultural" is not used in this study in its traditional sense of "crosscultural". I provide an extensive explanation of the meaning of intercultural –and intercultural education—in chapter four.

policy documents?

By exploring the knowledge base that intercultural education is intended to have, as well as the identities and roles of students and teachers as defined by the intercultural model, it may help understand how key actors in the educational field ultimately perceive, organize and construct their practices at the institutional and community levels. Thus, I explore how a community of practice (policy brokers, academics, indigenous teachers and NGOs) in institutional settings (schools and educational agencies) uses language to create ethnic, professional or other stances that emerge during interaction (on the microlevel), and whether they either conform to or challenge the official policies (macrolevel) of bilingual-intercultural education.

I will address the research questions from a discourse analysis perspective. I will analyze the participants' discourse under the theoretical framework of interactional sociolinguistics (Gumperz, 1982), which is interested in studying social interaction by looking at social norms, conventions, principles, context and the functions of language (Cutting, 2002). Interactional sociolinguistics also combines an ethnographic approach with techniques of conversation analysis to explore how meaning is constructed during interaction. Thus, I explore whether linguistic forms are used to accomplish discursive strategies, which in turn could be used to transmit ideologies about bilingual-intercultural education during interaction. Since bilingual education does not exist in a social, cultural, political or economic vacuum, the analysis of linguistic forms and discursive strategies has to be understood within this broader context. Furthermore, it is also necessary to show how language is related to social structures and practices. Language, as has been claimed by critical discourse analysts (e.g., van Dijk, 1985 and 1997; Fowler, 1985; Hodge and Kress, 1993), has the potential to both create and maintain social

and economic inequalities and power structures. In this study, I will also approach the analysis from a critical perspective. That is, I will try to explore how linguistic practices create and recreate larger systems of social inequities (Hornberger, 2000; Heller, 2001), thus helping to perpetuate the disadvantaged position of indigenous communities within Mexican society.

Since one of the objectives of the project is to understand the roles of ideologies in intercultural education and ultimately in the reproduction of school inequalities, I will adopt van Dijk's framework (2003) to analyze the function of ideology and its connections with discourse and social practices from a critical perspective.

The study focuses on exploring a special context and time in intercultural- bilingual education in Mexico. The data collection took place during the academic year 2004-2005, a time where intercultural education was taking shape as an official policy despite its earlier adoption in the 1990s. The site chosen to document the indigenous teachers' discourse and classroom interaction represents one of the few places where an indigenous educational project has been developed and implemented by teachers of the community. Indeed, such project is unique because of its achievements in the design of a bilingual curriculum, the role of the teachers and the support of the community. For these reasons, the P'urhépecha educational project analyzed here provides a useful contrast to official policy documents and the discourse of other actors in the intercultural educational field.

1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The indigenous population of Mexico represents about a tenth of the Mexican population (Comisión Nacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas, 2008). Despite the high population, indigenous people are the most economically, politically and educationally oppressed. Because of the low-economic living conditions of the indigenous peoples, there has been social strife throughout history, but it became more serious in the decade of the 1990s with the Zapatista uprising. Within the demands of the Zapatista movement there was a strong emphasis for linguistically and culturally suitable education as well as linguistic and cultural rights for the ethnic minorities. Thus, it is important to find out if intercultural education is in fact a viable alternative for the indigenous peoples.

I believe that a critical discourse analysis perspective may us help understand the role of linguistic practices in the reproduction of social inequalities within the context of intercultural education. Discourse analysis in education has focused on a wide range of issues such as the dynamics of interaction (Wells, 1993; Cazden, 2001), teacher talk (Hall, 1998; Edelsky, Smith and Wolfe, 2002), educational outcomes (Morine-Dorshimer and Tenenberg, 1981; Eder, 1982) and factors such as gender (Bjerrum-Nielsen and Davies, 1997; Tannen 1996) among others. But it is certainly important to explore how intercultural education is discussed, implemented and transformed by actors involved in the field, and above all, teachers and students during classroom interaction. As I will show in Chapter Four, there is a controversy regarding the effectiveness of multicultural education in changing the status quo. Intercultural education is part of a group of educational models that are based on tolerance and respect to differences (be it linguistic, ethnic, cultural, gender, etc.,); so it is necessary to understand whether intercultural

education has (if any) "cracks" or discontinuities that paradoxically push towards homogeneity. Ultimately, the results of the study will help explain the role of language and other educational practices that contribute to break the progressive agenda of intercultural education. The results will also help in the exploration of how actors exert their agency to react to and transform official policies.

1.4 OVERVIEW

Chapter Two explains the particular sociolinguistic situation of the indigenous population in Mexico and the main trends in its education. It also explores the main theoretical concepts (Discourse, ideology, power and hegemony) that will guide the analysis of the results. Particular attention is paid to two important concepts in indigenous education: *mestizaje* and *indigenismo*, since they guided both ideologically and politically the educational interventions aimed at the indigenous population.

Chapter Three looks in depth at the history of indigenous education in Mexico from pre-Columbian times to intercultural education in our modern era. I am using a critical perspective to understand the historical factors in which Discourses are situated since it is only from their historical context that they can be understood. The historical review covers a span of more than 500 years in order to explore how the field has evolved to be the contradictory body that it is today. I concentrate on establishing connections between the types of educational interventions aimed at the indigenous populations and broader national projects of citizenship and diversity. I also analyze the type of intercultural relations established by each educational model and the roles ascribed to teachers.

Chapter Four addresses multicultural education, its main approaches, theoretical concepts, challenges and results. Since there is strong debate surrounding the existence of intercultural education as a separate entity from multicultural education, it is important to analyze the characteristics of each educational model and their links and discontinuities. In addition, since many of the ideas expressed by the interviewees (particularly the indigenous teachers) resemble more multicultural models than intercultural education, it is important to understand possible connections and implications. This chapter also explains the theoretical construct of interculturality and related terms (i.e., pluralism, cultural rights, intercultural citizenship, and intercultural competence). It also addresses intercultural education and its cultural, political and pedagogical dimensions. The chapter ends with an analysis of the state of intercultural education in Mexico.

Chapter Five lays out the theoretical framework and research questions for the study, and describes the settings and participants.

Chapter six focuses on research question number one discussed above. It explores the definition and purposes of intercultural education based on the analysis of policy documents, educational texts and the oral interviews of policy brokers, academics, indigenous teachers and representatives from indigenous NGOs.

Chapter Seven discusses the purposes of intercultural education. I concentrate on the different linguistic strategies used by the participants to position themselves with respect to the intercultural model. I also analyze the lexical, semantic and syntactic structures used in the texts to establish definitions, agents, domains of actions and ideologies, which facilitate comparing them with the actual discourse of the participants.

Chapter Eight explores the directionality of intercultural education as defined by policy documents and the participants of this project. I attempt to unveil the roles and obligations of the Mexican mestizo and indigenous peoples in the construction of interculturality and the potential power imbalances that such relationships imply.

Chapter Nine answers research question number three outlined above. It focuses on exploring how the indigenous teachers of the study have approached and ultimately appropriated the Discourse of intercultural education and interculturality to develop their own educational projects. It also analyzes classroom interaction to find out how intercultural goals or content appear during the interaction between students and teachers.

CHAPTER 2: BASIC CONCEPTS: INDIGENISMO, DISCOURSE, IDEOLOGY AND HEGEMONY.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

According to the CONADEP (National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples, 2007) the indigenous population of México is about 12.7 million people.[5] This number makes Mexico the country with the 8th largest indigenous population in the world. But in spite of its size, the indigenous population has suffered from a chronic economic and social crisis. About 80.4% of the indigenous population lives in settlements considered to be impoverished or highly impoverished, 58% make less than $10 a day and 45% work in rural areas. These areas have become centers for migration to urban places in Mexico and the US. Regarding education, the numbers are just as somber: about 66% of indigenous children do not attend school (more than double the national average). These factors make the indigenous populations the poorest among the poor in a country whose poverty level ranks among the highest in the world (see Romo, Ramírez, Macías & Estrella, 2006).

The indigenous population of Mexico is also linguistically diverse. In its latest catalogue, the National Institute of Indigenous Languages (2008) found 11 language families, 67 linguistic groups and 364 language variants (dialects) with varying levels of vitality. The sociolinguistic

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[5] The numbers regarding the indigenous population tend to vary from source to source according to the criteria used to classify the census respondents. (Bonfil Batalla, 1981, p. 20)

situation of Mexico can be defined as one of conflictive diglossia (see Hamel and Muñoz, 1988; Barnach-Albó, 1997), in which the dominated languages are losing ground to the Spanish language. The linguistic shift is due to a sociolinguistic situation in which dominated languages are disappearing not only because of the lack of preservation and expansion programs – as I will show, schooling is not enough to preserve languages – but above all, because of the linguistic hegemony of Spanish and the economic and social pressures exerted on indigenous speakers to shift to the majority language.

Economic poverty vis à vis linguistic diversity, makes the indigenous population one of the demographic sectors of major interest for the Mexican government. The "Indian problem" or the "Indian question" is one issue that the Mexican state has tried to ignore, suppress or transform from the independence period to the present time. One of the mechanisms used to address the "Indian problem" has been education. Education, as Staples (1998) argues, was seen in the 19th century as a magic formula that could solve the ignorance and poverty that was purposely fostered by the Spaniards to keep their colonial subjects dominated, particularly the indigenous communities. In the 20th century, education was seen again as the solution to unify the country after the revolution of 1910 and to create a national project in which the indigenous peoples were finally incorporated (Vaughn, 1982).

The educational programs aimed at indigenous populations were based on language policies whose objectives went beyond the linguistic homogeneity of the country, although indeed it was one of the main objectives. Language policies are used to manage social unrest and political conflict (Tollefson, 2002, p.5) and represent cultural policies that are related to governance and broader moral and political issues (Pennycook, 2002, p. 93). Given the violent history in the relationship between mestizos and indigenous peoples, linguistic policies

implemented through educational programs were expected to create a unified nation and to incorporate the workforce of the indigenous groups that were not part of the capitalist system after the end of the colonial period and early part of the 20th century.

Indigenous education, which has been carried out mainly through bilingual education, does not constitute a coherent and systematic body. As Carbó (1982, p. 15) argues, there are only two goals that are consistent in the history of the 20th century indigenous educational policies: assimilation and Castilianization. Beyond that, such policies are bodies with multiple angles that reflect different conceptions about the national project and interethnic relationships at different points in time and in different national and international historical contexts.

The paradigms that give foundation to indigenous education also reflect changing cultural models. Hamel (2000) identifies three main groups: Monoculturalism, multiculturalism and pluriculturalism. The first case, monoculturalism, can be considered the model under which Latin American nations were founded on in the 19th century. Under this conception, linguistic and cultural diversity is considered a problem for the unification of the nation. Therefore, educational policies are aimed at the assimilation and acculturation of minorities. Multiculturalism, on the other hand, is an acknowledgement of the existence of diverse cultural and linguistic minorities. Although diversity is still considered as something to be solved, the culture of minorities is not ignored. As Hamel (2000, p. 5) points out, under multicultural paradigms, the subordinated cultures are reduced to their folkloric elements because it is assumed an implicit hierarchy between cultures, and only the highly developed western cultures provide the elements for advanced intellectual endeavors, such as reading, writing and math. In terms of cultural policies, multiculturalism rejects the idea of assimilation and aims at the integration of minorities. Finally, pluriculturalism goes beyond the mere acknowledgement of

the existence of linguistic and cultural diversity. Under this model, diversity is considered an asset, and the preservation and expansion of the minority cultures is a right that has to be protected by the State. This pluricultural orientation is the basis for interculturalism. I will discuss in depth the origins and characteristics of multiculturalism and interculturalism in chapter Four.

Cultural models reflect the type of society that is to be achieved through education (i.e., inclusive, separatist). These cultural models determine the kind of bilingual education programs that are adopted by the school system. Baker (1997) classifies bilingual programs in two major groups: 1) weak: those that are aimed at monolingualism or limited bilingualism; 2) strong: those whose main objective is to preserve and expand the mother tongue and foster bilingualism and biliteracy. Indigenous education in Mexico – as I will show below – has moved until quite recently between bilingual curricula that went from total immersion to transitional programs. But although the methodology was different, the objective was the same: linguistic and cultural shift.

Bicultural models correspond to conceptions of a multicultural society and the acknowledgement that the students' native language is necessary in the acquisition and development of literacy in the second language. The latest programs, bilingual-intercultural and intercultural-bilingual, are related to ideas of pluralism. Although this is the current trend in the world educational systems – not only in Mexico but in Latin America – plural societies are still a utopia.

Although it is possible to identify these cultural models in educational and linguistic policies, as Hamel (2000) points out they are not linear (i.e., one does not follow the other) and cannot be found in "pure" form. Such models were adopted at different times, creating contradictions in some cases with the official Discourse of the Mexican state about the type of

nation and society that was under construction. This is a common phenomenon in indigenous education in Mexico: new policies are adopted under national or international social and economic pressures, but the infrastructure that would make it possible to carry out such policies are not revised accordingly, which delays the implementation (or impedes altogether) the exercise of new changes. Gigante (1994) uses the metaphor of "a change in gear" to refer to the discontinuities between cultural models and the adoption of new policies. That is, when new policies are introduced, the old ones are still being implemented, so the system is running a "gear behind".

Shifts in cultural models and educational policies (carried out under the form of bilingual education) reflect changes in the conceptualization of the nation, or the *imagined community* (Anderson, 1991) to be achieved. National projects in Mexico and Latin America in general, were not built from the bottom-up, but rather from the top-down. That is, they were imposed by the ethnic and economic elites that have ruled the country at different historical moments. Such projects generally favored the economic and social status of the dominant groups through mechanisms that restricted social mobility based on racial, linguistic and cultural differences. Within these national projects, schools have played an important role in the reproduction of the status quo (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990 [1977]), but as Rockwell (1996) argues, educational actions do not work in only one direction since the targeted populations tend to contest and transform them to their benefit.

The last shift occurred in the 1980s, when the Mexican State started adopting neoliberal policies that resulted in the acknowledgment of the multicultural character of the Nation, a constitutional amendment and the official adoption of intercultural education. Although interculturality forms part of the official discourse on education, it has been widely criticized

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because of traces of what is called *indigenismo* both in its discourse and practices, which greatly undermines the social, educational and political purposes of interculturality (see Nery, 2004).

     Indigenismo was both an official ideology and policy that regulated the relationships between the Mexican State and indigenous populations during the 20th century. Because of the importance of the *indigenista* ideology in the history of indigenous education in Mexico, I will briefly explain the basic tenets of *indigenismo* and its ideological partner: *mestizaje*.

2.2 INDIGENISMO AND MESTIZAJE

After the Mexican revolution, the consolidation of the ethnic identity of the country and the creation of a nationalistic sentiment among its indigenous inhabitants was achieved through the State policy of *indigenismo*, which has as ideological background the concept of mestizaje. *Indigenismo* is not a policy particular to Mexico; however, the State efforts to institutionalize it are unique in the history of Latin America, especially because of the emphasis that Mexican *indigenismo* placed on indigenous education.

     Favre (1998) defines *indigenismo* as "…the systematic action undertaken by the State through a specialized administrative apparatus, whose objective is to induce a controlled and planned change in the center of the indigenous population" (p. 108). From this point of view, *indigenismo* is a type of social engineering that implies the knowledge of the social, cultural, economic and political environment to carry out a change in the indigenous communities. However, this change has as its ultimate objective the cultural and linguistic assimilation of the indigenous communities into the mainstream society in order to favor their incorporation to the capitalist system imposed by the bourgeoisie hegemonic block. Indeed, one of the main

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characteristics of *indigenismo's* policies, is that they were not created with indigenous participation; instead, white, urban, male intellectuals created the philosophy of *indigenismo* as a way to affirm national identity, to advance capitalist development in the country, and to reject the influence of the US and Europe's "pragmatic" influence.

Indigenismo denies economic structure as the cause of social and economic inequalities. Instead, cultural explanations – taken from social anthropology – described the backwardness and poverty of the indigenous population. *Indigenismo*, gives the solution to the indigenous problems through a discourse that embodies the ideals of the Mexican revolution – social and economic justice – while at the same time, the State keeps control of the production and economic means of the legal system.

In this context, the representation of the indigenous cultures in the social imaginary is ambiguous. On one hand, they are presented in the *indigenista* discourse as the forefathers[6] of the nation. On the other hand, they are also considered the major obstacle for the country's progress. In the nation-building process that followed the Mexican revolution, the Indian groups provided a mythical communal past that unified the existing diversity, while the indigenous customs provided the material to create folkloric traditions, and the ethnic element for the creation of the mestizo identity.[7] These elements helped to foster a feeling of nationalism in the social and political fragmented environment that followed the Mexican revolution. Just as Anderson (1991) has argued, nationalism creates nations where they do not exist.

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[6] Not all the indigenous cultures are seen as worthy enough to be the founders of the Mexican nation. Indeed, this privilege is reserved to those groups that developed an advanced civilization (e.g., Aztecs, Mayans, Toltecs). Nomadic or semi-nomadic groups, which traditionally resisted the influence of the State, are not considered worthy to enjoy the benefits of citizenship and *indigenista* actions (see Dawson, 1998).
[7] See Smith (1990) for an extensive explanation of indigenous elements and nationalism.

Thus, the symbolic appropriation of the indigenous heritage in the national project left very little freedom for the indigenous communities to participate on their own terms. Either they performed a pre-determined indigenous identity and acquiesced to be "good Indians", with the "natural" qualities (i.e., physical strength, fertility, good nature, honesty, industriousness) that would make them good citizens, or resisted and became a burden for the country, which would allow the State to forcefully assimilate them in the name of progress and national unity (Dawson, 1998).

Indigenista policies are, in reality, ways in which the State extended their structural and ideological control on the indigenous communities. In order to achieve this goal, the State created institutions to carry out these policies; among them, the most important are schools. The schools performed "pedagogical" tasks in the broadest sense. First, they translated the national project to the local level, instilled the national ideology in the students, and above all, functioned as acculturation centers that worked towards the linguistic and cultural homogenization of the country. As Gramsci (1971) has argued, one of the hinges of political hegemony is language; thus, for the Mexican State it was necessary to spread Spanish even to the most isolated communities. In this process, traditional indigenous leaders (whose loyalty lied with the community) were substituted with indigenous teachers. Trained in *indigenista* institutions where they were acculturated, indigenous teachers functioned as intercultural bridges between the indigenous and mestizo society. As civilization agents, teachers needed to be both loyal to the national project and linguistically loyal – not to their native languages, but to Spanish.

Indigenismo, both as a State policy and as a practice, is supported by an academic and scientific discourse provided by social anthropology (Medina, 1996). Indeed, anthropological

research[8] not only gave *indigenismo* the tools to plan its acculturating action, but also legitimated the political apparatus and its actions towards subjects who needed to be redeemed. Before anthropology could prove that Indians were capable of being educated and transformed into citizens, Indians did not appear in the national project of the white elites. They were supposed to disappear by natural selection as the historic-biological relics of a long gone past. *Indigenismo* changed the perception about the Indigenous and the possibility to transform them into the ideal citizens of the revolution: the mestizo.

Contrary to European positions that searched in the purity of blood the origins of the nation, *mestizaje* hailed the blend of indigenous and Spanish blood as the origin of the "new man," one who would summarize the best traits of the two "races" into a new one: the cosmic race (Vasconcelos, 2003 [1925]). Furthermore, since mestizos were the strongest, the most numerous[9] and patriotic, both politics and social policies should be dictated by mestizos (Molina Enriquez, 1909).

According to Ruiz (2001) the ideology of *mestizaje* has its foundations in the indigenous feminine root – which represents tradition – and the Spanish male heritage, which would provide the drive for modernity and progress. In this context, Indian males are erased from the picture. In *mestizaje* (both as a biological process and cultural product) women had to give birth to a new Mexico under the State's control. As guardians of the traditional culture and repositories of virtues such as unconditional love, tenderness and above all fertility and predisposition to

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[8] Applied anthropology in Mexico has been widely criticized because of its ambiguous role with the indigenous communities. As Hernández (2001) study shows, it has helped indigenous communities to get governmental assistance to improve their quality of life. It has also helped in raising awareness about the multicultural character of the country. On the other hand, anthropology has also worked with the government to create policies (social, cultural, economic) that have resulted in the acculturation of indigenous peoples and their assimilation into the national life.

[9] The indigenous population was in fact the largest; however, Molina Enríquez argues that it had declined as the proportion of mestizos steadily increased.

maternity, Mexican women would be in charge of populating the country with mestizo children, who would synthesize both traditions (i.e., patriotism, loyalty, obedience, industriousness) and modernity.

In this sense, *mestizaje* is an ideological matrix that symbolically unifies and erases contradictions in the social structure, and at the same time, introduces the concept of race in State nationalism (Machuca, 1998). Furthermore, *mestizaje* is a foundational process, in which racial conflicts and resentment from the conquest are translated into a realm of harmony and acknowledgement. By transforming Mexicans into mestizos, Indians become the Other against which to compare. Thus, being a mestizo is not being an Indian; that is, backward, genetically inferior, and poor. The ideology of *mestizaje* interpellates subjects at the ethnic level, helping to diffuse class conflicts.

The ideology of *mestizaje* has been one of the bases in the construction of the hegemonic project of the ruling party. In a strict sense one could talk about *mestizaje* as an ideological matrix whose partner is *indigenismo*, which is a policy of control and change aimed at the indigenous populations. It is only in the late 1930s that the latter was institutionalized, which historically coincides with the consolidation of the PNR (later known as PRI) [10]as the State's political party (which would rule the country for over 70 years). In general terms, two major periods can be identified in *indigenista* policies (Sámano, 2004). Although there is a foundational period that stretches back to the late 1910s, the rise of *indigenismo* officially starts

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[10] PRI= Revolutionary Institutional Party

in 1935.[11] It is consolidated in 1948 with the foundation of the National Indigenista Institute (INI) and its demise begins with the indigenous movements of the 1970s.

Indigenismo has been severely criticized because it failed to achieve its main goal: the incorporation of the indigenous peoples. *Indigenismo* created dominant and subordinated sectors, and since the indigenous communities had no say in the design of the policies aimed at them, the indigenous communities lost their autonomy. At the symbolic level, Indians were represented by mestizo or white people, converting them into objects (not subjects) deprived of agency. In addition, the cultural and linguistic policies created under *indigenismo* were openly ethnocidal: several indigenous languages disappeared under the influence of schools, the transformation of the community's social organization and means of production.

By the late 1980s, *indigenista* policies gave way to direct participation of indigenous peoples, especially in the area of education. The main institution in charge of *indigenista* policies – the National Indigenista Institute – was officially transformed into the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous peoples, which has similar goals regarding the welfare and development of the ethnic groups of Mexico, but focuses them under a perspective of direct participation and in an environment (at least at the discursive level) of pluralism. Despite these changes, the influence of *indigenista* thought continues to be felt in subtle yet significant ways, particularly in the educational and linguistic policies (Loncón, 2005, personal communication).

In summary, *mestizaje* provided the ideological background for the policies of *indigenismo*. Both were aimed at the linguistic, cultural and ethnic homogenization of the country, and even though *indigenismo* was focused on the indigenous populations, *mestizaje* was

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[11] Sámano (2004) chooses this date because it corresponds to the Autonomous Department of Indigenous Affairs. I will discuss more about the function of this institution in relation to language policies and indigenous education in the following chapter.

a "foundational" ideology in the sense that it provided a common ground where all Mexicans could be unified, despite social, economic, gender and ethnic differences. This would be the new foundation of the post-revolutionary Mexico and the ideas that guided educational policies aimed at the indigenous population.

In the following sections, I will undertake the analysis of indigenous education under three concepts which are closely related to the notion of interculturality: Discourse, Ideology and Hegemony. These concepts are part of the theoretical framework that I will employ in this project.

2.3 DISCOURSE

As Johnstone (2000; 2002) points out, discourse means different things to different people. The study of discourse has evolved from such diverse areas as linguistics, anthropology, philosophy and psychology. Each discipline understands discourse in different ways and has different methodologies for undertaking the problem; however, in the field of linguistics, the primary locus of analysis is linguistic data. But while there is agreement as to what the object of study should be (i.e., language), there is less consensus regarding the way to investigate it.

The notion of discourse is still subject to debate. Crystal (1985, p. 96) considers discourse as units of language larger than a sentence (utterances) that can be recognized as speech events. Under this definition, discourse analysis could be understood as the study of language beyond the limits of the sentence. Instead, the analysis should emphasize the organization of speech events, their production and what they mean in a larger context. Brown and Yule (1983) go beyond the notion of speech events and define discourse as language in use. Thus, discourse

analysis is the investigation of the functions of language (i.e., what it is used for). Schiffrin (1994) proposes a definition that sees discourse on two levels. For the author, discourse should be understood as a unit of language above the sentence level (utterances), and as language in use. Along the same lines, Johnstone (2002) argues that perhaps the definition of discourse that most linguists agree on is "language in use." This "functionalist" approach has received some critiques because of its difficulties to link the micro (i.e., local interaction) with more global societal and ideological issues, which has lead some researchers to distinguish between discourse (i.e., language in use) and Discourse (i.e., social and ideological formations). This wider definition of Discourse still emphasizes the notion of "language in use" but in relation to social, political and cultural formations. In this sense, Discourse is language reflecting social order but also language shaping social order, and shaping individuals' interaction with society" (Jaworski and Coupland, 1999, p. 3). For the purposes of this study, I will adopt Paul Gee's (1990) idea of discourse to indicate stretches of language that "hold together," and Discourse (with capital "D"). This definition will allow me to address both the micro and the macro level:

> …a socially accepted association among ways of using language, of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or "social network," or to signal (that one is playing) a social meaningful "role." (p. 143)

Despite the diversity in the definitions of discourse, there are certain characteristics that are accepted as fundamental in the field of social discourse analysis. The first one is the assumption that discourse has both a constitutive and a constructive effect on the social world. That is, the social and cultural world/context is shaped by discourse just as discourse is shaped by the world. Discourse is not limited to language use. In fact, Discourses can be considered abstract value systems which can be accessed only through texts and practices. Texts can be

considered as linguistic objects (Widdowson, 1995) which reflect discourse practices relevant to their production and reception (Jaworski and Coupland, 1999). Discourse enacts and reproduces power through ideologies, which can be seen as socio-culturally shared systems of beliefs that connect discourse and society (van Dijk, 1997). Discourses are also very complex systems in which several subjectivities and other discourses are intertwined; that is, they are heteroglossic, but also multi-semiotic, because other semiotic systems besides language (e.g., image, sound) are involved (see Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996).

The inclusion of social, political, cultural (and even economic) dimensions in the concept of discourse has been influenced by the work of Michel Foucault, who defined discourse as "practices which systematically form the objects of which they speak" (1972, p. 9). The link between language and practices is created by the relationship between power and knowledge. In turn, these power/knowledge relations are achieved by the discursive construction of truths which are produced at the institutional level. These institutions create the parameters against which people are categorized (i.e., normal vs. abnormal) and treated. The truths created through discourse become "natural," and help governments to control their populations. Indeed, most of the control exerted by the State is not achieved through coercion, but by the discourse and practices of experts who are authorized to classify and treat people (e.g., prisons, asylums, schools). Foucault's work has been very influential in the educational arena because it has shown how discourses construct social identities, which in turn, are related to issues of governance, surveillance and moral regulation (Luke, 1995, p. 9).

Education can be considered a field of struggle – whether it is seen as a way to provide individuals with the skills needed to function in society, or as a provider of cultural capital and symbolic or economic power (Bourdieu, 1986). Education has the power to create, perpetuate or

change social inequalities. Certainly, we cannot understand educational and linguistic policies (indigenous education being part of it) as something isolated from the social and economic context in which they exist. As Tollefson (2002, p. 5) points out, it is necessary to analyze how language comes to symbolize, create and recreate social, economic and political struggles. That is, we should adopt a critical approach to the study of discourse and education.

Heller (2001) argues that the "critique" dimension of discourse analysis is related to the identification and explanation of social relations that construct inequality (be it social, political or economic). A branch of discourse analysis that is concerned with the relationship between language, power and society is critical discourse analysis (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Van Dijk, 1999; Blommaert and Bulcaen, 2000). I will adopt this approach as the framework for this study.

Although this approach attempts to incorporate social and theoretical insights from other disciplines (Blommaert *et al,* 2000), critical discourse analysis (henceforth CDA) is grounded in the analysis of linguistic forms. The goal is to see how language structure (re)creates social and power differences. Therefore, by looking at discursive practices we can shed light on the processes of social structuring. Adopting a critical perspective will ultimately allow us to link talk about intercultural education to broader concerns of racial/ethnic differences and social inequalities that are at the core of the notion of interculturality, which in turn, are related to the educational and linguistic policies established by the Mexican State.

Although the methodology in CDA is not uniform (van Dijk, 1997), the conception of discourse that is adopted by this approach tends to be broader than that used by the strictly linguistic approaches (such as conversation analysis, pragmatics or interactional sociolinguistics). Although it is recognized that discourse is constituted by the use of language,

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the concept goes beyond this to incorporate ways of structuring, understanding and acting in the social world (Heller, 2001).

The epistemological roots of the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach can be traced back to the late 1960s, when traditional theories on meaning creation (such as structuralism) started to be questioned by social scientists and literary critics who advocated for a shift from empirical paradigms towards more interpretative models of linguistic and social inquiry (Macdonell, 1986). However, the formal beginnings of Critical Discourse Analysis can be found in the late 80s, when the European academy – especially the English – reacted against neoliberal policies that were bringing about severe economic, social and political changes (Blommaert and Bulcaen, 2000; Slembrouck, 2001). This reaction included a research agenda that was related to left-wing theoretical paradigms and authors (e.g., Althusser, 1968; Gramsci, 1971), and the development of emancipatory projects that were aimed at combating social inequality. In other words, there was a shift towards a critical paradigm.

According to Titscher, Meyer, Wodak and Vetter (2000, p. 144), CDA is critical in two ways. First, it is critical in the sense that a critical science has to be self-reflective; that is, it has to take into account the interests on which it is based. Second, it is critical because it acknowledges the relationship between linguistic practices and social structures. Because of these two factors, CDA has been involved in the identification and explanation of the social, political and economic conditions under which inequality is (re)produced (Heller, 2001). Furthermore, a critical orientation also implies some kind of action aimed at the solution of such inequalities. Researchers working under the perspective of CDA openly accept their political orientation and commitment to social change.

The definitions of CDA – although variable – reflect these characteristics. For instance, van Dijk (2003b, p. 352) conceptualized CDA as:

> …a type of discourse analytic research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. With such dissident research, critical discourse analysts take explicit position, and thus want to understand, expose and ultimately resist social inequality.

Thus, the goals of CDA are focused on showing how language as a social practice is related to social structures. Ideologies play an important role in this social structuring, and discourse is one of the mechanisms through which ideology is produced and circulated. As Johnstone (2002, p. 45) points out, ways of talking (re)produce ways of thinking, and ways of thinking can be controlled through language (for instance, through choices in words, syntax, style, etc.). Since ideologies are not neutral, and they work to sustain the interests of the dominant classes by making unequal social systems appear natural, one of the main goals of CDA is to "denaturalize" these ideologies, and show how they relate to the social order. (Pennycook, 1994). Thus, CDA attempts to uncover "…the opacity of these [linguistic and social] practices to those involved in them – the invisibility of their ideological assumptions, and of the power relations which underlie these practices" (Fairclough, 1996 p. 54).

The theoretical basis of CDA can be founded on neo-Marxist theories, which emphasize the concepts of power, ideology and their relationship to inequality. These concepts have been adopted from thinkers such as Antonio Gramsci (1971), who argued that in order to seize and hold power in society, in addition to controlling the economy, it was also necessary to control culture. In the same trend, Vološinov (1973) argued that language use is inherently ideological. Ideologies, according to Althusser (1968), are not mere ideas, but are actually tied to practices embedded in social institutions, such as schools or churches.

The last concept, power, has been adopted from Foucault's (1980) work. CDA goes beyond linear and localized concepts of power and considers power as a force, which like an "electric current" (to use Johnstone's 2002, metaphor), permeates society and is enacted in every relationship and interaction among individuals. Power can be seen like a web that holds society together, through enforcing a certain worldview and at the same time naturalizing it. In addition, contrary to more linear conceptions, power is seen as something fluid. Therefore, a person can be exercising power and subject to existing power structures at the same time. Thus, power is not held by a single person or group but in all the actions of people in society.

Although generally speaking CDA has been influenced by neo-Marxist theories, the degree to which the concepts explained above appear in works carried out under this perspective varies according to the type of approach to the discourse analysis in question. Perhaps the models more influenced by Marxism are Fairclough's socio-cultural change model (1989) and Wodak's (1996) discourse-historical model. However, other approaches incorporate concepts and methods from other areas. For instance, although Van Dijk's (1997) socio-cognitive model maintains a critical perspective, it relies heavily on cognitive theories to argue that the connection between discourse, text and society is actually mediated by a cognitive interphase. Therefore, CDA cannot be considered a monolithic entity, but rather a group of overlapping methodologies interested in the relationship between language and social, political and economic inequality (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997). Although there is not a unified theory or method in CDA, Fairclough and Wodak proposed a list of 8 basic principles:

1) CDA addresses social problems, not language itself. However, although the main interest is set on social problems, CDA should be primarily linguistic and the

soundness of its analysis "should be measured with the yardstick of linguistics"
(Blomaert and Bulcaen, 2000).

2) Power relations are discursive. That is, CDA is interested in analyzing how power operates and is constructed through language.

3) Discourse constitutes society and culture. CDA sees discourse not as a reflection of social relations, but actually constituting and reproducing them.

4) Discourse does ideological work. That is, ideologies are produced and circulated through discourse.

5) Discourse is historical and shifts over time. Therefore, we need to study discourse in its context.

6) The connection between text and society is mediated by cognitive processes.

7) CDA is interpretative and explanatory.

8) CDA is a scientific discipline committed to social change, and whose results should have practical applications.

Thus, in spite of the lack of a unified theory and common terminology, there are some principles that guide CDA. Regarding its methodology, every model has its own particular characteristics. However, Titscher et al. (2000) identify some points in common. First, the analysis is based on heterogeneous data that are mostly linguistic, although some semiotically oriented approaches also incorporate visual data. Ethnographic work is usually employed to collect data. Second, the analysis of the data is mostly linguistic. That is, there is an emphasis on exploring how linguistic devices relate to ways of speaking that in turn affect ways of thinking. Also, since CDA considers discourse to be historical, the idea of context incorporated in critical analysis goes beyond localized concepts, such as those used by more pragmatically driven

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approaches to discourse.[12] Also, methods used in CDA are interdisciplinary because they draw on concepts and theories from other sciences, such as sociology and anthropology. The inclusion of diverse disciplines strengthens the analysis and interpretation of the data. In addition, it allows for the interpretation of the phenomenon from different points of view. CDA also attempts to validate its findings by emphasizing clarity in its interpretations and explanations. That is, it must be explicit how certain conclusions were reached along every step of the analysis by providing extensive examples and tying them back to the theoretical framework. However, conclusions should not be considered immutable, but subject to change under new contexts and with new information. Finally, the results of any study should have practical implications.

In spite of the lack of a unified theory or method, CDA is overall a strong approach to study the intersection of language and social structures. This becomes particularly important in the case of indigenous education, which has been a field of struggle for these two elements.

2.4 IDEOLOGY

The second concept that constitutes the theoretical framework of this project is the notion of ideology. As I have explained in the previous sections, "indigenismo" and "mestizaje" have functioned as official ideologies and policies of the Mexican State, which in turn have guided educational and linguistic policies. But most importantly, these official ideologies have permeated civil society and the intercultural relations between mestizo and indigenous peoples. Because of the interest of CDA about the intersection between power and discourse, ideology is a frequently used concept in this field. Despite the importance of ideology in CDA, few concepts

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[12] For instance, in **C**onversation **A**nalysis context is reduced to the interaction and no historical dimensions are incorporated.

have been so used and abused in social sciences. The lack of consensus between different theoretical and methodological approaches on the meaning of ideology, in addition to its political implications, have caused the term to be abandoned or questioned by several intellectuals in favor of less value-laden concepts (e.g., Discourse, Foucault, 1972). In addition, within the context of late Capitalism (Jameson, 2001) the concept of ideology (at least in the traditional sense) has lost value even for the political lefts; however, the resurgence of "ideological" movements (e.g., nationalisms) has brought ideology back as a debate, as well as theoretical, methodological, practical questions that ideology raises in social, cultural, political and linguistic theory. In linguistics, specifically within discourse analysis, ideology has been profusely used in some branches, whereas it has been ignored by others. For example, in the ethnography of speaking, interactional sociolinguistics or descriptive linguistics, the concept of ideology has been left aside. Problems in communication (for example, in interactional sociolinguistics) have been attributed to cultural differences or different patterns in communication (e.g., Gumperz, 1982). The role of power in interaction or ideological issues has not been acknowledged. Furthermore, as Woolard (1998) points out, ideology has been considered an interesting concept from the sociocultural point of view, but a distraction from real linguistic phenomena.

On the other hand, approaches which consider language as social semiotic behavior take the concept of ideology as the center of their analysis. For example, Halliday's systemic linguistics model (1978) considers that no text is free of ideology, and that the use of language in itself encodes values and positions. Ideology impacts different levels of text and context, which is manifested in the lexical and syntactic choices of interactants. In the same way, the model of Kress and Hodge (1979) examines how ideology appears in the lexical and syntactic choices of the speakers. For instance, Kress and Hodge analyzed how the lexical and grammatical choices

used by newspapers create agency (through the uses of passivization or topicalization) in the report of ethnic and social conflicts. In this way, the lexical, syntactic, and semantic elements of language, and the organization, style, and register of text act like ideological devices that manifest themselves in discourse. The organization of interaction between speakers (e.g., turn taking, overlaps, interruptions) also shows asymmetries in power that "are naturalized" through the action of ideology in every day life. The relationship between ideology and speech has been widely studied in CDA because ideology is constituted through speech (Fairclough, 2003), and discourse is a site for ideological struggle. In this sense, discourse is like an "iceberg" in which ideological components are manifested.

The relationship between ideology and discourse is still subject to discussion. The result of this discussion depends on the methodological and theoretical approach that is taken. Although definitions vary (see Williams, 1977; McLelland, 1995; Woolard, 1998; Blommaert, 2005), some common ideas can be identified within the classification of the concept: 1) ideology as ideational phenomena, and 2) ideology as phenomena related to the material, social and historical conditions of the time.

Within the ideational/cognitive perspective, ideology is seen as ideas, concepts, representations, or discourses that belong to a particular group or social formation. Ideologies function like a mental scheme against which experience is interpreted.[13] In linguistics, perhaps two of the most important models within the ideational/cognitive branch are Silverstein's (1998) and van Dijk's (1995; 2003). For Silverstein, ideologies are schemes on which indexicalization (i.e., social meaning) takes place. van Dijk's socio/cognitive model is more detailed and has been

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[13] This is one of the classic discussions regarding ideology: Is it something separate from reality and therefore, it functions like a scheme against which reality can be judged or is it part of the very same reality, and therefore, ideology actually constructs reality.

profusely used in the literature regarding discourse analysis and ideology (e.g., Lu, 1999), and it

is the framework that I will use in this study. van Dijk's model attempts to connect discourse,

society and social cognition in a framework of CDA. van Dijk defines ideologies as:

> The basic frameworks for organizing the social cognitions shared by social groups, organizations and institutions. ...They essentially function as the "interface" between the cognitive representations and processes underlying discourse and action on the one hand, and the societal position and interests of social groups on the other hand. (1995, p. 18)

Ideologies organize social cognition, that is, the set of mental representations and

processes that are shared by a group of members. Social cognition includes the sociocultural

knowledge (i.e., common ground) that is shared by a culture or social formation as well as

evaluative beliefs (i.e., social attitudes). Ideologies represent the characteristics of the group,

such as its identity, position, values and goals. Ideologies organize and monitor group attitudes,

and at a cognitive level also control the acquisition, development and use of sociocultural

knowledge. Thus, Ideologies can be considered as the "basic system of beliefs" that functions as

a framework and defines the coherence of the belief system of a social group. However, contrary

to the sociocultural knowledge that is shared by all the members of a culture, ideologies tend to

be group specific (e.g., Marxists, racists, feminists). That is, they are not accepted by everyone

and tend to cause dissent and controversy. Ideologies are acquired by the members of a group

through a process of socialization (although in some occasions direct instruction about an

ideology may occur).

Because of their character of social cognitions, van Dijk argues that ideologies can

control the individual minds of the members or a group through influencing the personal

cognitions (or mental models) and practices of its members. Such control has the objective of the

social reproduction of the group. At a micro-level, since the members of a group share the same

systems of beliefs, interaction and cooperation is facilitated. At the macro-level, ideologies

function to preserve the boundaries of the group in opposition to a possible contender. Thus, ideologies work to preserve the power and dominance of a group over another. van Dijk claims that ideologies are organized around "Us against Them" which in turn constitutes the basis of the dominant groups' practices (e.g., discriminatory laws, access to resources, capital) towards the reproduction of the group and its dominance. The legitimation of the dominant group is supported by dominant discourses.

van Dijk's model is one of the most elaborated, since it attempts to link the micro (individual level) and the macro (societal level). The model also explains the function of ideologies, and how they are organized and represented in an individual's mental models and, in a more general level, in social cognition. Furthermore, van Dijk establishes a direct link between ideology and discourse, since ideologies control how people talk, act and interpret reality. However, one of the frequent criticisms to his model is that Van Dijk does not explain how these very abstract cognitive patterns end up being shared by groups of people[14] (Blommaert, 2005), but Van Dijk's model – despite its over-reliance on ideational aspects – does offer a detailed framework of how to analyze discourse as ideology.

The second approach to ideology considers it not as mere ideas or schemes but as material phenomena enacted in practices. The Marxist tradition – most relevant for critical discourse analysis – can be found within this second classification. The notion of ideology in Marx's writings is rather contradictory and inconsistent; however, it is possible to distinguish some clear components in his ideas: that ideology had to be grounded in the material world, and that ideology was related to social inequalities (McLelland, 1995). Although Marx set the basis

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[14] Blommaert (2005) considers Van Dijk's model as purely ideational/cognitive; however, Van Dijk (2003) allows a role for practice and material conditions in ideology. Despite this fact, his model stresses the nature of ideology as shared beliefs systems.

for the historic-materialistic study of ideology, it was Engels who further developed the notion of ideology as false consciousness. That is, the working class had misguided beliefs that were contrary to their own interests as a social class within a capitalist system. Such beliefs – or dominant ideologies – were inculcated by the ruling classes in order to perpetuate their privileged status quo and legitimate the political, social and economic order. Thus, workers were made to believe that they shared interests with the ruling classes, when in reality their own interests as a class were incompatible, and ideologies concealed the real socioeconomic conditions and interests of the workers. Hence, the notion of ideology as systematic distortion of reality, or a "camera obscura" that inverted the real social and economic relations. In order to change this system, the workers needed to develop a new class consciousness that would allow them to acquire a new ideology – socialist – that would allow workers to overthrow the interests of the bourgeoisie.

Marxism poses an interesting problem: the possibility of non-ideological, non- distorted thought (that of the working class), a notion that has been highly criticized in current contemporary Marxist and non-Marxist traditions. In addition, classical Marxism has also been accused of overemphasizing the material basis of ideology. Although ideology is an expression of the values of the ruling classes and it leads to misguided beliefs regarding the subject's position within the capital system, ideology is not a mere reflection of economic relations. On the contrary, ideology comes into existence in a cultural (not just economic) domain. Althusser (1968) distinguished an economic base (mode of production) and a superstructure (the legal system and the State) and an ideological structure (religious, moral and political beliefs). The superstructure base works towards the reproduction of capitalism while generating the conditions for the dominant class to rule (even applying oppression to the working classes). The ideological

system provided legitimation for the political and economic system. The State employed two types of systems in the reproduction of capitalism: The repressive state apparatus (RSA, i.e., institutions that use force to maintain the system such as police, the army, jails, etc.) and the ideological sate apparatus (ISA). The main function of the RSA was to eliminate dissent through the use of coercion. On the other hand, the ISA such as schools, the church, and the media worked to generate ideological interpellations. In other words, the ISA encourages individuals to behave in particular ways according to identities and roles that are necessary for the reproduction of the system. Such identities and roles are supposed to be consistent with the interests of the ruling class, which are inscribed in dominant ideologies.

Although under this theory ideology is seen as a representation of the imaginary relationships of individuals to their real conditions of existence, Althusser (1968, p. 162), believes that this imaginary condition of interpellation is grounded on social practices and agencies. In the same way, Pecheaux (1982) argues that such ideological interpellation can only take place within specific institutions or ideological apparatuses. Thus, by tying the idea of ISA to ideology, Althusser provides a site for ideological production, and a process by which ideologies (i.e., practices) end up being shared by groups of people.

Althusser's theory emphasizes a process by which people voluntarily adhere to identities and roles that are necessary for the reproduction of the capitalist system. This poses a problem with the idea of agency. Indeed, it is discussed to what extent individuals can "escape" ideology (and transform their reality) if − as Pecheaux (1982) has suggested − institutional sites and ideological apparatuses constrain what can be said and how it can be said. Pecheaux's notion is especially important for a linguistic theory and discourse analysis, because Marxist approaches

have stopped short of explaining how ideology constructs and positions subjects through language, and how language may be used to engage the subject with the world.

Marxist ideas have been widely used in Critical Discourse Analysis because of the interest in exploring and critiquing dominant ideologies to uncover power imbalances and social injustices; however, although this approach is a good sociological framework, it has problems uniting the macro (social level) to actual discursive practices (micro level). This remains one of the problems for the articulation of ideology in discourse analysis and linguistic theory. In addition to looking for solutions to the connection between the micro and the macro, the study of ideology has shifted from considering ideology as misrepresenting systems to actual material discourse practices that both shape and are shaped by social, cultural and economic factors. Finally, the conceptualization of ideology as an all-encompassing system has changed to consider the simultaneous existence of ideologies (in plural) in discourse.

Given the problems outlined above, many scholars have preferred to change ideology in favor of new concepts that are not so value-laden and with less theoretical problems. Perhaps the best known case is Foucault's idea of Discourse. For Foucault, Discourse can be understood as texts produced as knowledge about a certain field. These Discourses create and constrain the possible ways we can think, talk and act about such fields, and Discourses also create the methods and practices we have for studying those fields. Ideologies are manifested in discourse, if by ideology we understand power- supported Discourses.

Despite the criticism to the notion of ideology, as Žižek (2003) has pointed out, there has been a re-emergence of the concept in the social sciences. One example of the presence of ideology in linguistics is the work on linguistic ideologies (Woolard and Schiefflin, 1998).

Because of the importance of this concept in this project, I will explore this notion in the following section.

2.4.1 Linguistic ideology

In *Linguistic Ideologies,* Woolard (1998, p. 3) defines language ideologies as "Representations, whether explicit or implicit, that construe the intersection of language and human beings in the social world." Language ideologies – or the perceptions people have about language, its structure, functions and status – are important because they constitute links between social structures and forms of language. These ideologies rarely constitute ideas only about language, but rather they index social identities and roles that are re-created in public discourse:

> Linguistic features are seen as reflective and expressing broader cultural images of people and activities. Participants' ideologies about language locate linguistic phenomena as part of, and evidence for, what they believe to be systematic behavioral, aesthetic, affective and moral contrasts among the social groups indexed. That is, people have and act in relation to, ideologically constructed representation of linguistic differences. In these ideological constructions, indexical relationships become the ground on which other sign relationships are built. (Irvine and Gal, 2000, p. 37)

Woolard (1998, p. 9) identifies three specific sites where languages ideologies influence language:

1)   Actual linguistic practice. For instance, Mertz (2007) analyzed how prospective lawyers were socialized into the language used by lawyers in the court room. She found that classroom interaction – particularly that between professor and student – forced the student to adopt a style of interaction that they should defend when expressing their opinions, imitating in this way, the type of

arguments that they were expected to develop when conducting a case in the courtroom.

2)   Metalinguistic discourse. The explicit talk about language is also affected by language ideologies. For instance, Hill (1998) reports a study in which speakers of Mexicano considered their language as corrupted because of the interference of Spanish, which in turn, caused that social interaction to be devoid of *respeto* (respect). In contrast, "pure" Mexicano was associated with a discourse in which past times were considered better because of the relationship of language to rituals that maintained a strict social hierarchy.

3)   Regimentation of language. The ordering and structuring of language is traditionally carried out by institutions of power, especially in the case of minority languages whose populations do not have the money or specialists to carry out the task. For instance, the standardization of the indigenous languages in Mexico has been realized by mestizo, European or American linguists who have decided on basic factors such as which alphabet to use, to the creation of institutional spaces where the indigenous languages can be studied.

For the purposes of this work, points two and three are of great relevance. At the level of metalinguistic discourse, I will explore how indigenous and mestizo scholars represent and interpret (in text and talk) the identity, functions and roles of the native languages and Spanish within the intercultural model. At the level of the regimentation of language, I will analyze how the ideologies about language have influenced pedagogical decisions (e.g., choice language of instruction, development of academic languages in the native tongues vs. loan words from Spanish, etc) in the intercultural model. Ultimately, the analysis of language ideologies will yield

information not only about language, but also about the position of indigenous populations within Mexican society.

In summary, despite the theoretical and methodological problems surrounding the concept of ideology, I believe it is key in my study because of the light it can shed on the educational, social and political struggles surrounding the intercultural model. As Woolard (1998) pointed out, it may not be productive to try to find a unified notion of ideology, so for the purposes of this project, I will adopt a view of ideology as both systems of ideas or beliefs shared by a social group that are deployed in material practices contextualized in social institutions.

2.5 HEGEMONY

The last concept that I will discuss is hegemony. The bilingual intercultural model of education is supposed to help change relations both within the civil society and the State, and to diminish the control of the State over education aimed at indigenous communities; however, there are questions to be answered before it can be affirmed that intercultural education indeed would contribute to alter the social, political and economic structure of Mexican society. The concept of hegemony can help understand and analyze the possibilities of altering society.

Antonio Gramsci did not invent the term *hegemony*, but his name has become almost synonymous with the concept; however, hegemony was far from well defined in his famous *Prison Notebooks* (1971); for these reasons, the definitions of the concept vary from intellectual and cultural leadership, to the organization of consent or some kind of ideological processes that permeate society and helps the State to keep control of the masses (Ives, 2004). In any case, there seem to be some constant factors in the concept: First, hegemony implies ideological or cultural

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control exerted by the ruling classes over the working people. Second, such control results in *consensus*, which in turn diminished the need of force to maintain the status quo of the powerful. Thus, contrary to classical Marxism that sees the economic basis (and the use of force) as the only determinant of the distribution of power and the maintenance of the interests of the dominant classes, Gramsci emphasizes the role of culture, politics and intellectuals in the construction of class domination and struggle.

Gramsci proposes the concept of hegemony in order to explain why, despite the right conditions for a revolution in Italy, it had failed to happen. So, instead of just looking at the economic conditions, Gramsci analyzed the role that ideology played in the perpetuation of repressive structures. For him, political control was exerted in two ways:

1) Domination: It refers to the actual use of force by institutions such as the police or the army.

2) Hegemony: It refers to ideological control and the creation of consent between social classes. This ideological control is achieved through the regulation of beliefs – or dominant ideologies – through media and institutions that legitimate the privileged position of the ruling classes. Dominant ideologies persuade the subaltern groups about the fairness of the social, political and economic conditions, and create an imaginary nexus between the ruling and the dominated groups, in which mutual needs and concerns are shared (Fontana, 2001). Thus, the interests and needs of the bourgeoisie become the interests of the working class. This consensus about the fairness and correctness of the social order is internalized by a process of socialization into every area of daily life in such a way that it becomes part of the "common sense;" that is, the natural way in which the world works. Thus, ideology not only creates consent but legitimates the interests of the dominant groups. It also obstructs critical thinking because the "natural order"

created by consensus becomes hard to challenge for the dominated groups if they do not believe or envision other alternatives.

If hegemony plays such a big role, now the question becomes how it is achieved. In Marxism, society is composed of two basic elements: the economic structure (i.e., means of production) and the superstructure (i.e., institutions and beliefs). Gramsci believed that the superstructure was further divided in two elements: those institutions that were openly coercive and those that were not. The non-coercive ones, such as the church, trade unions, schools,[15] clubs, grass roots organizations, etc., were part of what he called civil society.[16] The State's control had been gaining terrain in civil society, permeating it with dominant ideologies that increased the State's control through consensus. In this sense, hegemony can be seen as political strategy. Within this strategy, one of the main players are the organic intellectuals. For Gramsci, the idea that intellectuals were independent from the State was erroneous since the State's ideology permeated the identities, roles, schools that produced such intellectuals and even the very same discourses that created their disciplines (for an example see Gal and Irvine, 1995). This was especially true in the case of the organic intellectuals that grow alongside the dominant group and were mainly in charge to disseminate hegemonic beliefs. For instance, priests and teachers teach people how to behave in acceptable ways in a society dominated by the values and beliefs of the dominant class. Organic intellectuals were keys in the creation of alliances between the dominant groups of society – or hegemonic blocs.

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[15] Some institutions can be considered both coercive and non-coercive. For instance, schools can be also coercive since in some societies it is compulsory, and there are national standards and procedures (e.g., examinations) that dictate who can and cannot receive credentials (e.g., certificates) that will allow him or her to continue in the school system and acquire cultural capital.

[16] Although traditionally civil society has been defined as those institutions that fall beyond the direct control of the State, such as clubs, grass roots organizations, guilds and so forth; however, that definition is contested because of the State penetration in those apparently independent institutions. Ives (2004) proposes to define civil societies as the field in which class struggle is held.

The question of hegemony as creator of absolute consensus is an issue that is greatly contested, opening the discussion about the possibilities of human agency. Gramsci's notion of subalternity casts a dark shadow on the possibilities of the masses to develop critical thinking and counter-hegemonic beliefs and practices since subordinate groups do not posses the ability to develop a coherent view of the world and their real place in the world and society (Ives, 2004). However, the work of Scott (1990) has shown that the grip of hegemony is not as tight as he shows in the so called "hidden transcripts", or the discourse and practices that occur "off record" and that are concealed from the dominant groups. Scott analyzes instances in which subordinated groups and individuals manifest their contempt against the injustices perpetrated against them and the privileges of the powerful. In addition to expressing their thoughts, dominated groups also acted in ways that prevented the system from running smoothly: for instance, doing bad work, or not being efficient, which in turn affected the interests of the factory owners, landlords or other power-holders. Thus, Scott cautions against considering hegemony as an all- pervasive phenomenon that is manifest in every aspect of the life of individuals. A display of actions and discourse that apparently conforms to hegemony may be no more than a set of falsely hegemonic practices; that is, an act, a masquerade performed both by the dominant and the dominated that helps to sustain the natural order of things.[17]

In addition to "hidden scripts," there are other historic examples in which hegemonic groups are forced to form political alliances with subaltern groups in order to maintain the status quo and diffuse class conflict, with the result that not only the interests of the ruling classes are represented. As I will show in the next chapter, such alliances are common in the history of

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[17] Scott (1990) argues that both subordinated and dominant groups perform a role in the game of domination. That is, subalterns have to obey (although halfheartedly in some occasions) but the powerful have to live up to the expectations of the people regarding their powerful positions: that is, no weaknesses, grandeur, arrogance, etc.

indigenous education in Mexico, in which the State has been forced to negotiate with indigenous teachers and populations in order to introduce schools to indigenous communities (and with it the values of mainstream culture), such that despite the efforts of the Mexican ministry of education, schools are controlled in great part by the traditions and values of the communities. These examples show that hegemony is not a condition that can be totally achieved. Rather than being imposed from the top down, hegemony is consensus created and negotiated between the ruling and the dominated classes.

2.5. 1 Linguistic hegemony.

In addition to understanding how ideological control is used to achieve consensus, the concept of hegemony can help us understand the relationship between subordinated and dominant languages, an issue that is at the core of the intercultural model of education. The concept of hegemony has been widely used in the social sciences. In sociolinguistics it has been used to explain the linguistic and social outcomes in situations in which minority languages are at disadvantage (see for example Ericksen, 1992; Shannon, 1995; Suárez, 2002). Wiley (2000) defines the functions of linguistic hegemony as:

> Linguistic hegemony is achieved when dominant groups create a consensus by convincing others to accept their language norms and usage as standard or paradigmatic. Hegemony is ensured when they can convince those who fail to meet those standards to view their failure as being the result of the inadequacy of their own language. (p. 113)

This definition can be applied to the indigenous schools of Mexico. As I will show in the next chapter, one of the objectives of indigenous education has been to facilitate the penetration of the State in the indigenous communities. Such penetration not only includes political and

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economic dimensions, but also cultural ones, in which the linguistic component has been the most important. Time and again, research has shown that indigenous parents and children believe that their language is inferior in status compared to Spanish and inadequate to achieve communication and upward social mobility. Such perceptions in part have been the result of their experiences, but also of the dominant ideology that has been inscribed in the educational system. In this context, teachers have played a role, inculcating hegemonic beliefs regarding the inadequacy of the indigenous languages for practical, intellectual and communicative endeavors and also in convincing the communities that the high prevalence of school failure is not the fault of the school system's lack of consideration of the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the children, but of the children's backwardness, laziness or lack of intelligence (see for example the experience of Martínez, 1982). As a result of linguistic hegemony, the education provided for the indigenous communities is assimilationist because the knowledge, values and beliefs of the communities are ignored. Also, the bilingual character of this type of education disappears under the pressure of the teachers – and the wider community – to make the children learn Spanish, which results in classroom practices in which the language of instruction is Spanish. Thus, instead of having truly bilingual classrooms, what is commonly found is a diglossic situation in which Spanish gains ground to the detriment of the indigenous tongues.

Indigenous teachers traditionally have been considered cultural mediators between the State and the population they serve. For instance, Montes (1995) studied a community in which the teachers functioned as political and cultural intermediaries between the Indian community and the State. Through symbolic activities, such as singing the national anthem and participating in civic ceremonies in the school, the teacher connected the otherwise isolated town with a broader national community, which reinforced the indigenous community's perception of

belonging to Mexico. In addition, the presence of the teacher and of representatives from the educational system in civic ceremonies assured the community that they mattered to the State, and thus strengthened their trust in the State that it could satisfy their needs, increasing in this way political consensus and diffusing class conflict.

In this project, I will adopt a view of hegemony as the creation of ideological consensus both through persuasion and legitimation. However, it is important to understand that hegemony, and hegemonic projects such as indigenous education, are not always successfully imposed. As I have shown above, the creation of consent does not imply exclusively the subtle imposition of dominant discourses. Subordinated communities also may reject these discourses and practices – both in subconscious and conscious ways – that challenge dominant groups and force them to negotiate the terms in which hegemonic projects are carried out.

2.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have outlined some basic theoretical concepts that will guide this project: bilingual education, interculturality (which I will expand in the following chapters), *indigenismo*, *mestizaje,* Discourse, Ideology and Hegemony. In order to understand the complex mesh of Discourses that constitute indigenous education in its broadest sense, it is necessary to explore how these factors interact in the area of indigenous education, and how they have "set the stage" for the intercultural model. Some of these concepts are contested, and no specific definitions can be given. In this case, I believe it is better to understand that a multiplicity of definitions and methodologies help to understand the same phenomenon from different angles.

CHAPTER 3: LINGUISTIC POLICIES IN EDUCATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I will analyze the history of indigenous education in Mexico in order to understand how it has evolved to become the body of contradictory Discourses and practices that is today. I will particularly emphasize three areas:

1) The cultural and linguistic goals of indigenous education. Discourses and Ideologies about language and society can be uncovered by analyzing the linguistic and cultural goals that prevailed in indigenous education at different points in time.

2) The type of intercultural relationships that were established through linguistic and educational policies.

3) The role of teachers – either as cultural or civil mediators – between the State and the communities.

What is important is how these factors fit in a more general scheme of a national project with respect to concepts such as citizenship and pluralism, which are core concepts in the intercultural model.

3.2 PRE-COLONIAL AND COLONIAL PERIODS

Florescano (1997) argues that talking about education during the pre-colonial period is difficult because of the lack of archeological sources. What is known about the major cultures in Mesoamerica, particularly in Mexico, comes from texts written by missionaries and chroniclers who documented the life of the conquered people. The most important of these texts is *The History of the things of New Spain* by Friar Bernardino de Sahagún[18], where the priest narrates the traditional way of life of the Aztecs and their history before the conquest.

However, it is known that the Aztec culture provided schooling for their children. According to their social class, children and young men were trained in the arts of war and the cult to the gods. Education for women was focused on domestic issues and cultivating virtues such as modesty, obedience and chastity. The school tradition of the Aztecs was taken advantage of by the Spanish conquerors, who adopted schools and the traditional ways of teaching (based on oral tradition and practices) to evangelize.

The Aztec empire also spread the Nahuatl language as a *lingua franca* to the people they conquered. The Aztecs fostered an elite bilingualism, training scribes in order to deal with the tributary and governmental issues, but the imposition as Nahuatl as the dominant language was not the goal (Florescano, 1999). At this point of history, it is difficult to talk about a national project; indeed, the idea of a Nation-State is something that will appear several centuries later, but it is possible to talk about an intercultural relationship between the dominant and dominated peoples. Bonfil Batalla (1994) argues that the Aztec empire exercised military dominance over some peoples of central and southern Mexico. Through their military power the Aztecs also

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[18] Friar Bernardino de Sahagún wrote his *Hisory of the things of New Spain* around 1550, but it was first published until 1829.

controlled commerce and politics. The dominated people had to pay tribute to their conquerors

and allow trade between them and other towns. Although commerce was practiced and tribute

was paid, the traditional forms of production were not altered and the ecological niches remained

intact since commerce and tribute used crops and products native to the area. In politics, Aztecs

approved the rulers of the dominated people and established war and peace treaties. Regarding

religious matters, the conquered peoples were not forced to give up their beliefs. Instead, the

Aztec pantheon was flexible enough to include deities from their subjects. Bonfil Batalla (1994)

concludes that in the relationships between the Aztecs and their subjugated peoples was not

based on an inferiority-superiority concept which would justify a relationship of domination:

> Behind these facts, as in the case of the religious policy, it can be found a notion about the "other" (other peoples, enemies or allies, subjugated or not) that do not go through a conception of natural and absolute inferiority. Furthermore: the cultural differences are not used to justify the domination, because if it was [the case], there would be efforts in diverse directions to "civilize" to the subjugated. And what appears is another thing: an acceptance of their ways of life, their systems of production, their religious beliefs, their ways of government and their language. Nothing of this turns out to be necessary to exclude, everything is compatible with the system and objectives of domination. (p, 119. my translation.)

Although Bonfil Batalla's notion of domination with equality can be contested, what he

points out is the possibility of a type of relationship in which the dominated peoples were able to

maintain their cultural and linguistic identities, as opposed to the domination established by the

Spanish conquistadors, which was based on an ideology of absolute superiority over the

dominated peoples. This ideology led to the destruction of the indigenous cultures.

The conquest happened at a time when Spain consolidated its power in the Iberian

Peninsula after the expulsion of the Arabs. Although it originated as an economic and political

enterprise, it also had strong religious foundations: the evangelization of the new world. These

two factors – the consolidation of the empire and the evangelic mission – determined the linguistic policies that would be implemented in America.

The first years after the conquest can be considered a "private enterprise" (Aguirre Beltrán, 1993, p. 30). That is, the conquistadors were granted by the crown farming lands and the Indigenous communities that occupied them as payment for their services to the king. These farms were known as *encomiendas* because the conquerors were appointed as the guardians of the Indians. In exchange for their work, the *encomenderos* should teach the Indians the fundamentals of the Catholic Faith and Spanish.

This feudal system became very strong in the new world, because in spite of the rules that guarded the Indians against the Spaniards, such laws simply were not enforced. Very quickly, *encomenderos* gathered economic power because of the inhumane exploitation of the Indian workforce, starvation and illness.[19] Once established as the economic elites, *encomenderos* also gained political power because the system was organized in such a way that high positions in the government and church could only be occupied by Spaniards. The Spanish crown felt the threat of a growing power and the difficulty of controlling it from a distance and took two measures: revoked the inheritable character of the *encomiendas* and appointed religious orders as the new evangelists for the natives.

As early as 1524, religious orders, particularly Franciscans, Augustinians and Benedicts arrived to the new world. In the carnage of the conquest, the priests not only took charge of spreading the Christian faith, but also protecting the Indians from the conquerors. Friar

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[19] There is some controversy about the reduction of the indigenous population's size during the colony because of the lack of a pre-Columbian and early colonial census; however, Lira and Muro (2000) partially agree with the traditional estimation that before the conquest there were about 4.5 million inhabitants in the territories that conformed New Spain. In the year 1576, 2 million people died because of a typhus epidemic. In 1597 only 2,500,000 Indians survived and this number plummeted again to 1.2 million in 1650. It was only in the decade of the 1680s that the indigenous population again reached 2 million.

Bartolomé de las Casas, wrote in 1556 *"Relación de la Destrucción de las Indias,"* where he described the abuses and the horror that Spaniards inflicted upon the natives, which makes it the first human rights document in the world. In the eyes of las Casas, the arguments used by the crown to conquer the new world were not valid, since the "naturals" already had a government and their idolatry was due to ignorance and not choice, since the Christianity was not known on the continent before the arrival of the Spaniards. The defense of the Indigenous world was the basis for the "laws of Burgos", which protected the rights of the natives in the colonial State; however, these laws were largely ignored, though they did have the effect of protecting the reproduction of the indigenous population so the labor force could be used in the mines and agriculture.

The purpose of the conquest, for the priests, was not motivated by mundane riches. As Florescano (1997) points out, the missionaries were immersed in a context in which Spain, after the expulsion of the Arabs and the discovery of the new world, was appointing herself as the savior of the old and new world. America was seen as an opportunity to carry out the evangelical message, which in Europe was degraded. The missionaries saw in the "natural" characteristics of the Indians the very virtues of the first Christians (i.e., goodness, temperance, humility and naivety). The Spanish missionaries thought these characteristics should be preserved from corruption through the isolation from contact between Indians and Spaniards. Thus, the intercultural relationships between these two groups were restricted through the creation of "Republics of Indians" or "Reductions." These indigenous settlements were self-sufficient, had an internal organization based on the indigenous tradition and were supervised by priests, who would teach the Catholic doctrine. Perhaps the most famous of these communities were the "Hospital towns," founded by the bishop of Michoacán Vasco de Quiroga. Inspired by "Utopia"

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by Thomas Moore (1992, [1516]), Quiroga established little towns in which people lived under strict Christian rules – private property did not exist and communal work was fostered.

These "Reductions" or Indian towns did not prevent the exploitation of the indigenous workforce, although they provided refuge zones, where the indigenous peoples could continue reproducing their cultures. However, the Reductions did maintain the separation between the castes and increased the governance of the conquered peoples because, in spite of their isolation, their belief systems and ways of life were dramatically altered by the conquest, Christianity and capitalism.

The regular clerics, who were focused on spiritual matters, had both practical as well as political reasons not to carry out the crown's orders to Castilianize the natives after the suspension of *encomiendas*. To begin with, the linguistic diversity of Mexico posed an enormous challenge. During the first years of the conquest, the Spaniards had used the service of translators or *nahuatlatos*, who would translate from Nahuatl to Spanish and vice versa, but their numbers were limited and the services of the *nahuatlatos* were required to command the workforce in legal matters and to finish the conquest. Simply put, there were not enough translators in different languages and dialects who could mediate between the missionaries and the Indians. To solve this problem, and under the request of Charles I, the Indian nobility was educated in the Spanish language and Christian doctrine so they could go back to their communities and spread Castilian and the gospel. A series of schools for Indian youth (e.g, San José de los Naturales, Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco, San Gregorio) were founded in the Colony, but even though they were successful in teaching Spanish, the Catholic doctrine and even Latin to the Indian students, these schools faced fierce opposition from Iberians. As Fuentes (1992) points out, the schools were not

interested in Indians who were able to translate from Latin and Greek, but in cheap laborers for the mines and *encomiendas.*

In view of the obstacles that teaching Spanish represented, the priests opted for a choice that was more feasible under their circumstances: spreading Nahuatl as a *lingua franca* among the indigenous peoples. The missionaries took advantage of the linguistic policy used by the Aztecs before the conquest and taught in Nahuatl to the communities that already knew the language. The priests also realized that the Indians were less reticent to learn the doctrine when it was taught in an indigenous tongue, and they had a better disposition when a peer functioned as a catechist, so many Indians were trained in the mysteries of the faith.

The missionaries were so committed to their evangelical work that they themselves learned the indigenous languages in order to translate the gospel and preach. Many of the grammars and dictionaries on the Indian tongues were developed during the 16th century. In addition, the priests wrote theatrical pieces in the indigenous languages that were represented by natives. These plays were used as an ideological arm to achieve conversion and teach the children a very important message: the inferiority of their culture and the religion of their parents. As Florescano (1997) explains, the plays represented adult Indians as souls who were lost in idolatry and vice, but Indian children were given parts in which they defeated the adults and saved them through Christianity. The ideological effects of such education had important consequences because children themselves functioning as vigilantes of their parents in religious matters. The new generation of Christians in the indigenous communities helped increase the control that the church already exerted.

It is interesting to note that in spite of the colonial relationship that was established, in which the Indians by definition were considered inferior and their intellectual potential was

questioned, their languages were considered (at least by the missionaries) as capable of transmitting the mysteries of the faith. Guzmán Betancourt (1997) argues that from the first moment the Europeans met the natives, their languages were considered systems apt for communication even though the intellectual capacity of their speakers was doubted: "the *sapientia* of the species is a matter of doubt, but it is more difficult to deny its capacity of *loquentia*" (p. 82, my translation). The works of Antonio de Nebrija, who wrote the first grammar for the Castilian language, provided the foundation for the linguistic work of the missionaries, who took it as a model for their own grammars. In turn, these grammars showed that the native languages could be transcribed using Latinate characters, described, and learned through the rules presented in the grammars. These facts helped the missionaries to construct their arguments in favor of using the native tongues to evangelize the Indians.

Guzmán Betancourt (1997) also shows that there was a heated discussion about the origins of the indigenous languages along the colonial period. According to the scholars, the indigenous languages could be traced back to the collapse of the Babel Tower, which would render the indigenous peoples as descendants of one of the tribes of Israel. The controversy about the root of the Indian languages shows the attempts of the missionaries to create a mythical – Judeo-Christian – origin for the American native peoples, which would place them on more egalitarian grounds with the Europeans, helping in this way the humanitarian labor of the clerics. The linguistic ideologies of the expressive capability and intellectual potential of the native tongues, as well as their "Judaic" origin were taken up by the criollo thinkers to justify the Independence of the colonies, as I will show below.

The work of the religious orders was limited during the three hundred years that the colonial period lasted. As Aguirre (1993) explains, by 1570 the missionaries were replaced by

regular clerics in central Mexico and were displaced to Northern areas where nomad groups lived or to the south, where the relationships between the conquerors and the natives were even more strained. In such places, knowledge of Nahuatl was not enough, and the missionaries had to learn languages and develop new grammars.

The resistance of the missionaries to teach Spanish to the natives was not well received by the Spanish crown. In a series of edicts in 1550, the Spanish king Charles I ordered the Castilianization of the colonies; however, the king's administrators and missionaries themselves always pointed out the impossibility of doing so. His son, Phillip II, attempted to enforce the laws in 1565, but again he found resistance from the colonies' administrators who pointed out the lack of human and economic resources, and from the priests, who argued that the indigenous languages were developed enough to teach the Catholic faith. Five years later, convinced by the arguments of the opponents to Castilianization, the king decreed Nahuatl as the official language of the Indians. He also specified that the priests in charge of Indian churches should know the language. This decree was well received by the criollo and mestizo clergymen who because of their knowledge of Nahuatl had an advantage over the peninsular priests, who were confined to Spanish-speaking centers.

In spite of the king's consent to maintain the sociolinguistic situation of the colony, in 1596 the Royal Council of Indias requested that the King adopt a policy of Castilianization again. The council argued that no indigenous language was complex enough to teach the mysteries of Catholicism, and that maintaining Nahuatl as the official language prevented the Spanish clergy – who had better morals than the native clergymen – to interact with the Indians. The King replied that it was not wise to force the natives to learn the language and ordered that

those who voluntarily wanted to learn Spanish should be provided with instruction (Zavala, 1997).

After the death of Phillip II in 1598, and until the 18th century, the crown pursued Castilianization. However, as Burns (1994) points out, the Spanish king dictated rules, but it was the viceroys in the colonies the ones who governed. The center of the empire was so far away, that there was no way to enforce the laws without the cooperation of the colony's administrators. But the viceroy and his officers knew that the social, political and economic situation of New Spain would not allow the implementation of the king's wishes. If the Indians were taught Spanish, the intercultural relationships between the castes would be altered because it could produce some mobility. The Spaniards justified the apartheid system of having "republics for Indians" (the so called reductions) and towns for "people of reason" based on the idea of preserving the natural humility and goodness of the Indians. If Indians learned Spanish, they would lose their virtues, become insolent and even worse: they would have access to jobs that were reserved for people who mediated between the indigenous communities and the Spaniards. In this area, the criollo and mestizo clergy were strongly affected because their source of jobs would be greatly reduced. For these reasons, the implementation of Castilianization never worked in New Spain.

In the 18th century, a new dynastic house ascended to the throne in Spain. The Bourbons changed the policies concerning the administration of the colonies, trying to move Spain away from her feudal past (Burns and Charlip, 2006). The Borbonic reforms, under the influence of the Enlightment, would try to spread Castilian, literacy and civil education. The interest on civil education was rooted on the growing concern of the ruling elites about the moral decadence and independence aspirations of the colonies. The reforms attempted to control the private as well as

the public life of the subjects through regulations that governed their good behavior, appearance (through strict rules about appropriate ways to dress), eliminated vices, restricted contact between the castes, and aimed to purify the expression of popular religiousness among others. The objective of such regulations was to increase the State's influence over the population through both ideological and coercive mechanisms that controlled their ideas, behaviors and emotions. For instance, Pietschmann (1992, mentioned in Florescano, 1997) reports that a civil administrator proposed to tax those Indians who refused to dress in the Spanish fashion, adapt to the occidental ways and behave as "people of reason." Controlling the way people looked was a step towards the creation of subjects who were governed by the new moral norms of the empire. These measures reflect the crown's attempt to consolidate the Spanish culture or *Hispanismo* in New Spain. If the conquest was an evangelical and civilizing mission, now the objective was the cultural unification of the colonies with the center of the empire (Heath, 1992).

In 1769, the archbishop of Mexico, Antonio de Lorenzana wrote a *Pastoral* in which he explained to the king the need to teach Spanish to the Indians. The archbishop argued that no empire in history had neglected to spread its language to its conquered lands. As Nebrija (1492) clearly stated, language has always been a partner of the empire, and the linguistic homogeneity of New Spain was necessary in order to achieve unity in the country and end the animosity of the conquered against the Spaniards. In the same venue, a committee of Indians wrote a letter asking the king to teach Spanish to them. The Indians argued that their linguistic isolation had left them in the darkness of ignorance in their Catholic faith, preserving and promoting vice. The letter ended requesting that the Colegio de San Gregorio be opened to educate the Indian youth.

After Lorenzana's declaration, King Charles issued a decree in which he ordered teaching Spanish to the Indians. He argued that the Indians should be subjects of the king, and that this

should be better achieved if they learned Spanish. The king also saw Spanish as a way to deflect away the tensions created by the colonial oppression, and as a way to facilitate trade and government.

As in the previous centuries, the crown's orders were blocked by vested interests. As Heath (1992) explains, teaching Spanish to the Indians represented a matter of power: Spanish clerics wanted the Indians to learn Spanish so the priests could access the Indian churches. On the other hand, criollo priests considered teaching Spanish to the Indians a threat to their jobs. In addition, Spanish, the language of power, was not considered suitable for the Indians.

Altering the *status quo* of New Spain was a major concern not only for the clergy, but also for the administrators of the viceroyalty. The social stratification that had been established during the past two centuries had ensured that the white and Spanish-speaking population maintained privileges that were denied to the rest of the castes; therefore, any attempt to alter such relations was doomed to fail. The Bourbonic reforms had important effects on the economic and political areas of the colonies, but not on the sociolinguistic situation.

By the end of the 18th century, in the threshold of the Independence wars, the criollo population of New Spain was resentful against the European elites who occupied administrative and religious positions that were closed to them. In addition, a feeling of nationalism was growing in the criollos as a result of the attacks of European thinkers such as DePauw and Buffon, who argued that the heat and air of America had a degenerative effect on its human population, fauna and vegetation. The best example of such degeneration was the Indians. Criollo intellectuals, such as Francisco Xavier Clavijero refuted these theories by writing a treaty in which Clavijero described the glorious past of the Indians, the virtues of their society and government and the conceptual elegance and intellectual potential of the native tongues (at least

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those who belonged to high civilizations, such as the Aztecs). However, as Staples (1999) argues, although the pre-Colombian Indians were glorified, no intellectual was interested in the problems of the living, flesh and blood Indians.

The colonization brought to Mexico social, economic and ethnic tensions that still affect the country today. Perhaps the most lasting of them is the creation of the "Indians" as the inferior "Other." As Bonfil Batalla (1981) argues, before the Spaniards arrived there were no Indians, but differentiated ethnic groups with their particular language, culture, forms of production and government. It is after the conquest when these different ethnic groups were lumped together under the generic name of "Indians." When the colonizers met the natives for the first time there was no dialogue attempting to get to know the other, but an imposition and a projection of the ideas about the new world and its mythical inhabitants that the Spaniards brought with them. Indeed, when Columbus first arrived to America, he did not realize that he had come to a different continent. Instead of adopting the words the native peoples used to designate peoples, places and things, Columbus renamed them with the words he knew from his readings. This is the birth of the term "Indians" (or *indianos)*, since Columbus believed he had arrived to India, he named the inhabitants of the islands ignoring the names the native peoples had for themselves. This is a common strategy used by dominant groups: denying the subordinated the right of self-representation and ascribing them to descriptions coined by dominant majorities (van Dijk, 1992).

Later on, when the colonizers understood the magnitude of the "discovery," they had to deal with the dilemma of defining the relationship between conquerors and conquered, and comprehending the very nature – human or not – of the natives. Todorov (1987) argues that in a colonial situation, the colonizers may assume two different attitudes: either they recognize the

other as an equal – and therefore subject to be assimilated – or they believe that the other is different and inferior. To justify the conquest, the Spaniards deemed the natives as inferior beings who needed to be civilized. It did not matter that the Indians demonstrated their capacity to speak, create a culture and a civilization the conquerors questioned the humanity of the Indians, and although concluded that they indeed were humans, they were of an inferior type. The conquest became a civilizing endeavor which would transform the Indians into Christians, and transplant the Spanish European culture to the new world. However, in spite of the brutality of the conquest, as Fuentes (1992, p. 141) argues, Spain engaged in a debate about the rights of the conquered peoples and the limits of the colonization, which could be considered the first debate on human rights in history.

Given the spiritual goals of the conquest, the teaching of Spanish to the Indian masses was not essential. Because of the natives' resistance to the language of the conquerors, as well as practical limitations of teaching and politics, the missionaries resorted to the indigenous languages to teach the doctrine. However, the Spanish language did play a role in the solidification of New Spain's society since it facilitated the communication among Indians, Europeans, criollos, blacks and other ethnic groups that came to the country. But if Spanish made it possible to communicate, it was religion and its moral values that became the true unifying factor between the different groups (Florescano, 1997); thus, Christianity could be taught in the Indians' language. The linguistic ideology that identifies Spanish as the language of the powerful elites prevented its spread to the Indian masses. To become a "ladino" (i.e., to learn to speak Spanish) would mean the loss of the Indian virtues of humility and obedience. In addition, the idea that the native tongues were sophisticated enough to explain the Catholic faith functioned as a double-edged sword: on one hand it placed the native tongues on more egalitarian grounds with

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Spanish, but on the other hand, the expressive and intellectual capacity of the languages made it unnecessary for the Indians to learn Spanish.

During the colonial period there were numerous attempts to establish a language policy that would achieve linguistic homogeneity (e.g., royal decrees of 1550, 1565, 1599, 1634 and 1686), but these were never successful because of practical and ideological problems. For instance, not even in the educational field was it necessary to learn Spanish. As Gonzalbo (1999) explains, what an educated person should be varies at different points in history. During the colonial time, education had a practical orientation. With the exception of elites who could access university studies, the masses – mestizo, criollo and Indigenous – obtained their education working as apprentices to master cobblers, blacksmiths, tailors, etc. A well-educated person was considered someone who knew his place in society and was a faithful Catholic. For the Indians, the model of good education included having the attitudes corresponding to a person occupying the last step of the social ladder and knowing (albeit superficially) the Christian religion. No scientific or academic formation was necessary, although the linguistic background of indigenous communities was criticized as an obstacle to communication and governmental control.

The maintenance of the Indian languages, as well as the isolation of Indian communities kept them apart from the rest of the population, which contributed to the preservation of their culture; however, the linguistic and geographic obstacles did not prevent the action of the State on the communities. The social organization of the communities (as well as that of the family) was altered after the conquest. Administrative positions akin to the ones used by the Spaniards were implemented in the Indian towns. *Majordomos, alguaciles*, majors and other public servants ran the government of the communities as well as the relationship with the cities and

towns of the "people of reason." The church – as an ideological apparatus – controlled the behavior of the people through the moral values of Christianity. In this context, Spanish was seen as a medium to achieve a major political (and even military) control over the Indian communities. However, the linguistic diversity of New Spain did not constitute a problem for the functioning of the colonialist State, as three centuries of colonization prove it.

The intercultural relations in the colonial society were very stratified and authoritarian. As Andrien (2002) explains, the elites – supported by the Catholic church – maintained an ideology that justified the society's stratification based on a hierarchical pattern established by god. The divine order naturalized social inequalities and determined the individual's rights and obligations according to her caste. However, this stratification was not free of resistance or contradictions. People resisted in several ways, from indigenous revolts (known as "wars of castes") threatening the colonial order, to forms of everyday contestation to the impositions of the colonial order. For instance, the growing numbers of people from mixed ethnic background shows that the rigid limits of the colonial order were being bent.

By the end of the 18th century, the economic elites of New Spain were aggravated by the political limitations they suffered. But most importantly, the poor and Indian masses were ready for a social change that was promised by the Independence wars.

3.3 INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

After the Bourbonic reforms New Spain suffered a bigger exploitation by the metropolis. Mining production almost doubled, which made Mexico the main mineral producer of the American colonies (Burns and Charlip, 2006). In addition to the mineral exploitation, agriculture and other

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industries (e.g., textiles, wineries) were prohibited in the new world in order to give Spain the monopoly of their production, forcing the colonies to buy from Spain manufactured products that they were otherwise able to produce. Along with economic restrictions, social mobility constituted another problem for the criollo population. As Villoro (2000) argues, the criollo elites were not in confrontation with the Spaniards because they both had access to the sources of wealth (i.e., mining, commerce, land, cheap labor), and very often constituted the same families. But a group of well-educated criollos (i.e., lawyers, physicians, clerics), who represented a small middle-class, was growing increasingly angry because of the obstacles they faced to improve their economic situation. The poor masses (impoverished criollos, mestizos, Indians and other castes) were also suffering the consequences of a centralized and restrictive economy and social control. Migration to urban centers in search for better opportunities, and the growth of shanty towns were a common phenomenon in the 18th century. These centers constituted hot-spots of social unrest that threatened the colonial order.

The small group of well-educated criollos was heavily influenced by the ideas of the Enlightment. The middle of the 18th century experienced an increased interest in the natural sciences and philosophy. The ideas of René Descartes started appearing in the universities' classrooms, displacing the works of the fathers of the Catholic church. The new conceptions about science and rationality attacked the foundations of the political colonial order. In a description of a painting in a chapel in Oaxaca, Mexico, Fuentes (1992) explains the way in which politics and religion were intertwined to control society:

> Saint Thomas Aquinas presides from heaven the basic political truths distilled in the heart of the Spanish America. In front of him, sits Saint Agustin, the doctor of the church whose ideas constitute another of the cornerstones of our spiritual and political life: The grace of God is not directly accessible to any individual without the church's assistance. To reach God, one must pass through the ecclesiastic hierarchy. This was a hermetic system to teach the revealed truth,

denying the participation of individual research or critique, but underlying the primordial necessity of tradition and the role of the church as the legitimate repository of tradition, propagator of the truth and infallible denouncer of error." (p. 153)

The cultural modernization of the colonies implied a reflection about the power of both the crown and the church, and the role of education in supporting the *status quo*. Indeed, the criollo *intelligentsia* criticized the universities as an instrument of the religious orders in the conquest, and pointed out the need for transforming these institutions to secularize the population and modernize society. The state of public education was also criticized because of its old-fashioned pedagogic techniques, the lack of applicability of the knowledge taught at schools in real life, and above all, the lack of opportunities that schools offered for the emergent classes, which were denied access to school because of their ethnic background. Interestingly, although education was a major concern for the enlightened criollos, the education of the Indians was not considered a priority.

The reflection about education also brought up discussion about other more practical issues, such as the need to improve the agricultural and industrial production through the instruction of the masses in new techniques for farming, using machines in mining and industries, etc. However, the concentration of wealth and farming lands in the hands of the Catholic church and big landowners prevented modernization. This fact increased the critique of the colonial regime and opened the door for the discussion about the principles of liberalism, especially those concerning private property and individual rights (Paladines, 1986).

The influence of the Enlightenment, as well as the growing nationalism in the criollo elites ignited interest in the colony's independence. The opportunity came along when José Bonaparte took the throne of Spain, and forced Ferdinand VII to abdicate. Since the colonies

belonged to the Spanish king by virtue of an agreement, Bonaparte was not considered a legitimate ruler, so governing assemblies – constituted by lettered criollo citizens – were instituted in the colonies. The assemblies attempted to rule instead of Ferdinand and wait for his return, but it was clear that the assemblies actually constituted an independence threat for the crown. On September 15th, 1810, the priest Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla initiated a popular revolt that attacked the oppression of Spaniards and their bad government, but pledged allegiance to the king. The revolt grew very quickly, attracting both the Indian masses that were promised the return of their communal lands and criollo elites who were seeking political and economic empowerment. The popular revolt changed towards a true independence movement pushed by the masses that were seeking better living conditions and freedom, but the criollo elites started withdrawing their support because the masses' demands affected their interests. Indeed, in the Chilpancingo Congress (1813), one of the main discussions was about the need of distributing farm lands from large landowners to both independentist soldiers and Indians, which was clearly against the interests of the elites. However, some criollo leaders also saw the opportunity to gain political power and decided to join the battle for independence. As Burns and Charlip (2006) point out, the Mexican independence war – contrary to other independence movements in Latin America – began as an authentic popular movement that was later appropriated by the economic elites in order to curtail the demands of the masses.

In 1821, the revolutionary war ended but social change did not take place as the masses had hoped. After a short-lived criollo monarchy, the criollo military and economic elites, along with the lettered intelligentsia, took the task of reconstructing the nation and building a new State. In that process, there were two main issues that had to be addressed. The first one addressed the rights of the criollos as the lawful heirs of the Mexican soil. This question was a

major concern for the independence leaders not only in Mexico but in Latin America. For instance, Simón Bolívar, in his Jamaica Letter (, 1977, [1815]) referring to his position as a criollo, explains

> "…we are, moreover, neither Indian nor European, but a species midway between the legitimate proprietors of the country and the Spanish usurpers. In short, though American by birth we derive our rights from Europe, and we have to assert these rights against the rights of the natives, and at the same time we must defend ourselves against the invaders…" (p. 107)

Years before the independence war, writers such as Francisco Javier Clavijero had praised the glories of the great Indian civilizations to defend America from the attacks of European-enlightened writers, who considered America as a source of human and animal degeneration (Staples, 1999). But, if the historical Indians were admired, no one appreciated the living ones. Although they were used as a symbol for the independence movement, the Indians claimed that the national sovereignty rested on the original peoples. This idea of the glorious indigenous past became an ideology that even today relegates the indigenous peoples as part of a mythical past, and not as active social and political actors.

The second issue that the young nation had to address was the type and shape of the new governments. There were discussions about returning to an Indian monarchy, a criollo monarchy, and a centralized or federal republic. The vacuum of power left by the colonial State left the country to build a new Nation-state. The first constitution of the new Republic, promulgated in 1824, was modeled after the constitutions of European Nation-states (especially the Spanish constitution of 1812). It asserts the idea that the State – as a form of political power – corresponded to a Nation and was solidified by cultural unity. In spite of the ethnic composition of the country, the new State was conceived under the idea that homogeneity meant unity, and that all citizens had the same rights and were equal before the law. According to Vázquez (2000),

out of every one hundred inhabitants, eighteen were white, twenty two were castes (people of mixed ethnic background) and 60 were Indians. The immense numeric majority of the indigenous population was not an obstacle for getting rid of them (at least at the discursive level). Indeed, the constitution of 1824 eliminated classifications by caste, and reduced ethnic, cultural and political differences to economic problems. Thus, the indigenous populations disappeared from legal documents and were lumped together with the Spanish speaking poor, regardless of their cultural and linguistic characteristics. Even worse, with the Independence, the indigenous populations lost the few laws that protected them and lost their lands to Spanish and criollo landowners.

The constitution of 1824 was one of the first attempts to impose a hegemonic national project. Once the colonial state fell, what was left was not a Nation-State as I indicated above, but geographical and administrative units that encompassed an enormous linguistic and ethnic diversity. The young countries had the task to create a nation, or what Anderson (1991) calls an "imagined" community. According to Anderson, nations are imagined communities because their inhabitants share a feeling of belonging and solidarity in spite of not knowing each other, These communities are also thought as limited, because their boundaries mark the limits with other nations, which are necessary to define the communities' identity. Finally, nations are sovereign, able to make their own decisions, and free of the divine will (p. 7).

The educated and economic criollo   elites imposed their idea of a nation. The ignorant masses were excluded from consultation, although the idea that sovereignty rested with the people was still used as an argument for political legitimization. In the newly created Nation-state, it was necessary to achieve political and ideological unification through allegiance of the

population and an incipient nationalism (or the "Mexican soul"). Education was seen as key to achieving these goals.

One of the discussions between the conservative (which advocated the continuation of the Spanish tradition) and the liberal parties (which was in favor of the ideas of the Enlightenment and liberalism) was about the type of education that should be given to the masses. They agreed on the idea that education was the only way to improve society and instill nationalism in the population. The liberals saw the educational colonial heritage as the cause of the illiteracy and ignorance of the masses, especially that of groups such as women and Indians. Although there was discussion about the need of educating women in order to prepare them to be the mothers of good citizens, indigenous communities were partially ignored.

Indians were considered by both conservatives and liberals as an obstacle to the country's progress. Indeed, the liberal intellectuals believed them to be inferior races, unable to advance without the help of the whites, so eugenics was seen as one of the solutions to "whiten" the population and, therefore, to contribute to the goals of progress. As Staples (1999) explains, if the ruling class could not get rid of the indigenous masses, they could ignore them as long as they did not represent a threat for the regimen. Thus, it was thought that the education aimed at the Indians should be a continuation of the colonial tradition, which concentrated on religious instruction, and teaching the Indians' rights and obligations as Christians and citizens in their native languages (p. 55). This fact constituted a strong contradiction with the education for the rest of the society, which was aimed at the secularization of the country in order to take away power from the Catholic church that fought to maintain traditional values and perpetuate the *status quo* (Galván Terrazas, 1985).

In spite of the opposition to the instruction of indigenous peoples, the constitution of 1824 as well as the intellectual and political environment in the country opened the door for dissent. The most influential defenders of the rights and capabilities of the Indians were a small group of educated individuals of indigenous descent. In particular, Juan Rodríguez Puebla, rector of the College of Saint Gregory, became one of the most vocal defenders of the Indians. He proposed that the college be returned to the natives since it had been opened for the general population once the ethnic classifications were abolished. He also proposed the implementation of a new school curriculum based on modern sciences. Most importantly, Rodríguez Puebla wanted to teach students in their own native languages (Acevedo, 1997). Opinions such as Rodriguez's were supported during a brief period in which Vicente Guerrero, an Indian himself, became president of the country; however, the conservative government of the 1830s challenged Rodríguez, arguing that creating an educational system for the Indians would only weaken national unity (Heath, 1992).

Reforms in mainstream education continued throughout the 1830s. In 1833, José María Luis Mora promoted an educational reform that eliminated the clerical control over education and organized the educational functions of the state. During the same time, the University of México was abolished because of its obsolete role for the new country given its religious orientation. Instead of the University, a number of educational "establishments" with an emphasis on natural sciences and pragmatic knowledge (i.e., agriculture, trade, constitutional law, etc.,) were opened. These laws were reversed by the conservative government, but in 1842, a new law established laic and free education. The objective of education was to form a "new race of men whose individual feelings identify them with independence and freedom" (Hale, 1972, also cited in Galván Terrazas, 1985), regardless of their cultural and linguistic background.

The official language of instruction would be Spanish and the curricula were based on western knowledge.

The homogenizing character of the new educational laws raised strong critiques from liberals who had faith in the power of education. Ignacio Ramírez, a prominent intellectual and politician, pointed out the existence of a huge indigenous population and the need of taking into account their linguistic and cultural peculiarities. He rejected the idea that equal access to a westernized type of education would help the indigenous peoples to become an integral part of the nation; therefore, Ramírez supported indigenous education and respect for Indian cultures, languages and customs as long as they allowed the indigenous peoples access to education and progress. In addition, he also claimed that Indians should take an active part in the government of their own communities, if they were to become part of the national project. Thus, he proposed a policy of acknowledgement of the "small nationalities" that existed in the country (Heath, 1992).

The progressive ideas of Ramírez were also attacked. Indeed, what prevailed in the country was an attitude of deliberate disregard of the indigenous languages, denying their vitality and everyday use, even though around three fifths of the population was indigenous. Instead, in 1835 the first Mexican Academy of Language was proposed. The argument for founding this institution was the danger of corruption that the Spanish language was suffering after Mexico severed ties with Spain. The academy would have a prescriptive role, maintaining the purity of Castilian, creating dictionaries and grammars and describing acceptable models for style, poetics and rhetoric. The institutionalization of the academy was delayed until 1875, but this time the objective of the academy was the standardization of the national variety, which acknowledged the influence of the indigenous languages on the Castilian tongue. However, as Cifuentes (1994) explains, not all the indigenous languages were allowed to have the same influence on the

Mexican standard, but only those considered to be "dignified" enough to be included in the corpus. The "Mexicanization" of Castilian, and its appropriation as the national language constitute a hegemonic cultural project that not only regulates the language that should be spoken by the country (in spite of the numeric majority of speakers of indigenous languages) but it is also an attempt to control the individuals' ethnic identity:

> I dare to hold the following theory. The colonial and postcolonial linguistic policies and their concrete or concomitant linguistic planning, implicit o explicit, did not have as main goal the manipulation of the linguistic situation, but of the ethnic-cultural identity. The policies destined to drive the Amerindian peoples to stop speaking their tongues were [an] instrument, not [the] goal. The linguistic and cultural uniformity and homogenization were seen as the previous condition to achieve the unity of the colonial empire and that of the young nation-States. (Zimmerman, 1997, p. 37. my translation.)

The idea of providing education beyond religious instruction to the indigenous masses became stronger after indigenous rebellions started erupting in the country. The indigenous populations continually fought during the colonial period in attempts to recover their communal lands, autonomy and traditions, especially their old religions. For instance, Florescano (1997) describes an insurrection of the Mayan Indians, who in 1546 rebelled against the colonial order. The Mayan priests announced to the people that the Gods commanded them to kill the conquerors, so the Indians besieged the town and killed the Spaniards, without sparing women or children. But what is more interesting about this revolt is that the rebels destroyed everything related to the lifestyle brought by the Spanish, including farm animals and plants. Insurrections such as this were called "war of castes," and they were used as powerful ideological weapons employed by the whites against the indigenous people, whose image as salvages was reinforced by the violent incidents perpetrated during the war of castes.

During the independence war, the Indians fought to recover their communal lands and their communities' autonomy. Insurgent leaders did not hesitate to promise to fulfill the demands

of the communities, but during the formation of the new republic, neither conservatives nor liberals believed that communal lands should be respected because this was not compatible with the liberal principles of individual freedom and property. In fact, new laws were created to force the indigenous communities to sell their lands. This policy increased during the decade of the 1850s, when Benito Juárez (an Indian himself) took office as president of the republic. Juarez's government believed that by selling the lands of the communities the country's economy would be activated through the incorporation of the Indian masses to the workforce, and the accumulation of wealth by an incipient bourgeoisie. Through Lerdo's law (1856), Juarez's government made available for sale communal lands which belonged to civic or ecclesiastic corporations. The communal lands of the Indians fell within this category, and they were sold to already wealthy landowners, and not to small proprietors as it was intended. Thus, the situation of the indigenous communities became even more precarious. As Aikman (1995) argues, communal lands not only represent a medium of subsistence for the indigenous community, they also allow the reproduction of their culture and their ethnic identity. Because of the land tenure policies of the government, as well as the Indians' demands to end taxations aimed at them, wars of castes started appearing. The white population responded by using the army to suppress the rebellions, but also through ideological work. In addition to ignorance and barbarism, the newspaper press of the time accused the indigenous population of wanting to eliminate the whites. In this way, the war of castes became a problem of racial hate, whereas the economic and social problems caused by the sale of the lands were ignored (Florescano, 1997).

The wars of castes showed the ruling elites the need to provide education to the indigenous population beyond religious instruction. Education became not only a tool for the progress of the country, but also a requirement to eliminate social strife and for the survival of

the whites (Staples, 1999). President Juárez believed that education would redeem the Indian masses and secure the nation's prosperity. To make the appropriate reforms, he appointed a committee which would create the new Law of Public Instruction (1857). The new education would be aimed at the unification of the citizens through the renovation and innovation in the curricula, increasing the number of schools and regulating teacher education. Subject matters such as reading, writing, grammar of the Castilian language, geography, math, physics, chemistry, hygiene, morality and notions of constitutional laws were included. In addition, elementary education was declared free and compulsory for the poor, but no special measures were taken to tend to the Indians' specific linguistic and cultural needs. In this context, education became a transformation process to change the natives into citizens (Quiróz, 1996).

Towards the middle of the 1870s, which can be considered the consolidation of the republic and its liberal project, the situation of the Indians had not changed. The education offered by the 19th century's governments was not culturally and linguistically suitable and did not take into account the opinion of those directly affected by the educational policies. Indeed, the lettered elites believed that the only way to abandon the backwardness caused by three centuries of colonization was through pushing the masses to acquire the new attitudes, beliefs and skills necessary for a modern country. The democratization of the country was one of the objectives of the liberal project. Intellectuals of the time did not believe in allowing the masses to decide the kind of education they needed, because of the fear that if they did, the Catholic Church could regain control. Therefore, control of public education was necessary (Galván Terrazas, 1985). However, this hegemonic project was not shared by all the people, especially the indigenous population, which resisted schooling and its implications. For instance, they refused to send the children to school as a way to prevent their acculturation and linguistic shift.

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The educational reform envisioned in the Law of Public Instruction was in trouble. Problems such as the shortage of funding for compulsory education, lack of institutional organization and facilities, as well as the lack of trained teachers made it impossible to achieve the goals set by the law. In general, the educational actions taken during the Reform (1856-1876) had little effect because of the government's instability, which was due to civil wars, foreign invasions and economic hardships.

By 1876, the country had been stabilized by the creation of a strong conservative State lead by Porfirio Díaz. Although ruling under a liberal constitution, Díaz established alliances with landowners, the church and the army, and foreign capitalists, which resulted in economic and political stability (Burns and Charlip, 2006). However, this stability was coupled with negative effects particularly on the *campesino* (peasant) and indigenous masses, which lost their lands to *hacendados* and foreign industries, and were recruited as cheap laborers whose living and working conditions were close to slavery.

Diaz' regimen was strongly influenced by the ideas of positivism. Progress based on scientific principles translated into the creation of factories, railroads, commercial ports, banks, electric power and, in general, a westernized lifestyle that admired the French tradition and denied the indigenous heritage. But perhaps the most important principle was that of "order." Contrary to liberalism, which considered individual freedom as the most important right, positivism considered order as the guiding principle. Through order, Mexicans would organize their minds, attitudes, thoughts, which in turn would lead to progress. The intellectual elite of the *Porfiriato,* known as the "scientists," believed that education was the ideal means to organize and transform Mexican people and society. Justo Sierra, one of the most relevant scientists of the

period, even argued that education was the best means for dominating the people, because without an educated society, it would be impossible to achieve any social and economic change.

Thus, education controlled by a strong State became one of the goals of the regimen. On May 25th, 1888, the Law of compulsory instruction was decreed:

> All the official schools of elementary instruction will be free. In schools, ministers of cult could not be employed, nor any person that had make religious vows. There will be ambulatory teachers of elementary instruction, who will go to places where there are no schools, to impart the teaching that law determines. Elementary instruction will be compulsory in the Federal District and [its] territories for males and females [who are] six to twelve years of age. (Tobián and Lozano, 1910, cited in Galván Terrazas, 1985 p. 27)

The year before, normal schools started working with the aim of training teachers who would be agents responsible for preparing citizens. The citizens could contribute to the national project through strengthening national unity and progress (Meneses Morales, 1998, p. 399). During the post-independence and Reform period, there was a shortage of teachers to meet the demand for the new educational plans. In addition, the bad academic preparation constituted a point that Diaz's administration was determined to attack given the political and social roles that the teachers would play in the wider context (Bazant, 1993). Indeed, given the frequent attempts of the Catholic church to regain control through schooling, it was necessary to educate teachers whose ideology was aligned to the States'. In turn, teachers would instill loyalty to the State in the children. This was particularly important for the teachers destined to tend to the indigenous population, which not only were isolated in their communities, but also presented active resistance to educational governmental programs. Given the small number of prepared teachers and the lack of facilities in rural zones, the figure of the "wandering" teacher was created. These teachers would go from community to community to preach national unity, civic education and basic literacy and numeracy skills, and above all, the Spanish language.

Once more, Spanish was seen as a tool that would make progress and national unity possible, but also it was an identity marker since the Mexican dialect would be the medium of instruction. With this measure, the legitimacy of the Mexican dialect and its indigenous influences was acknowledged, but it also showed a sort of "linguistic *mestizaje*" that defined the Mexican identity. So, the educational system adopted Mexican Spanish as the national language:

> not the pure Spanish [language], but the Spanish language modeled by our social and physical environment, by the rests of the half disappeared civilizations, and for the creations that have emerged in Mexico by the mutual penetration of the races. (Castillo, 1965, cited in Heath, 1992, p. 117)

The Law of Public instruction did not have the expected effects given the shortage of funds for public education in the States. However, the First Congress of Public Instruction (1899) opened the door to the discussion of the "Indian" problem again. The participants in the Congress manifested their support to the Indigenous population and their intellectual capabilities. They also pointed out the need to incorporate the indigenous communities into the nation through an undifferentiated educational system that would allow Indian children to interact with the rest of the population. In this context, the ideas about the Indians' inferiority would disappear once they had the opportunity to show the extent of their intelligence compared with the achievements of individuals from other races (Heath, 1992 p. 117). In addition to the ideas of positivism, Darwinism was prevalent among the ruling elites and the Mexican intelligentsia. Thinkers such as Ricardo Bulmes believed that the "Indian" race was destined to disappear under natural selection, and attributed the social, political and economic instability of the country to the natural inferiority of the Indians (which constituted the majority of the population). Other members of Diaz's government even declared the Indians to be intellectual nullities and a "degenerated race," for which education would not make a difference (Florescano, 1997). In

spite of the "scientific" attacks, there were intellectuals and civil societies that were working to provide protection and education to the Indigenous communities. Perhaps the best example (because of its influence on educational policies and the post-revolution period) was the *Sociedad Indianista Mexicana*, which was created in the last year of Diaz's regime (1910) with the objectives of both studying the indigenous "races" and provide scientific solutions to the problems that afflicted them. The members of the *Indianista* society were themselves influenced by positivism and Darwinism, and believed that Indians could be redeemed and educated to move up to a more evolved state. However, they shared the idea with the Darwinists that if left alone, Indians would continue degenerating and thus endangering the future of the nation. *Indianistas* believed in the power of education, and the "redemption" of the Indian population through charitable work that was focused in changing the lifestyle of indigenous individuals. For these purposes, the society created asylums in which the Indigenous children were boarded and instructed in personal hygiene, western manners and trained in vocational skills. The purpose of the philanthropic work of the society was not the assistance of the needy, but the creation of citizens who were suitable for the objectives of the Nation-State (Urías, 2002, p. 230).

In addition to the scientific study of the indigenous population, the society had a specific interest on linguistic research. The founder of the society, philologist Francisco Belmar believed that linguistics could help conform to the character of the modern nation. The society's work with the indigenous languages made them realize that if Castilianization were to happen, the indigenous languages should have a more active role in the education of the children and adults. Therefore, the society demanded Diaz' government to reform the policies aimed at the indigenous population. Justo Sierra, creator of the national high school and university, rejected the society's ideas about maintaining the indigenous tongues, arguing that multilingualism was

in fact one of the factors halting the country. Sierra argued that only linguistic unity could result in national unity and advocated for adopting Spanish as the national language, since this was the language that the country inherited from the colony, and was the language upon which the new nation was founded.

Resistance to ideas that challenged the dominant ideology regarding the nature of the indigenous population, as well as discussions about its rights, was very common during Diaz' regimen. Indeed, instead of trying to "redeem" the Indians through education or philanthropic work (as the *Indianista* society wanted), the repressive apparatus of the State dealt with indigenous subversion in violent ways. John Turner, in his book "México Bárbaro" (1998, [1910]), narrates how the army suppressed indigenous rebels who defended their territories against the invasions of foreign companies and large landowners. Entire indigenous communities were displaced from their towns to *haciendas* all over Mexico in order to disarticulate resistance and strengthen the labor force in places where they were needed.

In spite of the outstanding economic progress of the country, prosperity had not reached the poor but concentrated in the hands of national and international elites. There was increasing unrest between the lower economic classes and the small middle class. The indigenous communities, which still constituted the majority of the population, represented both a threat and an untapped resource: a threat because they continued rebelling against the plans of the government, and a resource because the incorporation of their labor force and lands could boost the economy. The memory of the "war of castes" was still in the minds of politicians, who in spite of their Darwinist beliefs about the imminent disappearance of the Indians through natural selection, could not deny the numeric importance of the population and the problems they may cause. Therefore, the education of the Indians – and their subsequent incorporation – could not

be avoided. The last educational effort (1911) aimed at the Indigenous population during Diaz' regimen established the so-called "rudimentary schools".[20] These schools had the objective "to teach, mainly to the individuals of the Indigenous race to speak, read and write in Castilian and to execute the most common fundamental arithmetic operations" (Calderón, 1912, cited in Galván Terrazas, 1985, p. 31). This last decree during Diaz' regimen did not have the expected effects because the objective was too broad: to alphabetize, and Castilianize both indigenous children and adults in two years without the necessary staff or funding to do it; however, rudimentary schools are important in the history of indigenous education because for the first time a qualitative difference between rural and urban populations was acknowledged.

In general, educational measures aimed at indigenous populations during the 19th century had limited consequences because of the lack of funding, lack of adequate teacher training, resistance of the indigenous communities and, in general, a dominant ideology that considered Indians as inferior beings. Despite the small achievements in the educational arena, in terms of government policies the 19th century constitutes a landmark in the construction of Mexico as a Nation-State. As Paz (1994) points out, the independence marks a search for the national identity. The Reform was a breaking point with the colonial past – represented by the Catholic tradition – and the establishment of the basis of the new State. Instead of a divine order imposed by god, rules created by men define the rights and obligations of the citizen. Equality, justice, and freedom became the guiding principles in a deeply religious and authoritarian country, making these ideals an imposition from the intellectual elites to the masses. The national project created during the 19th century was based on a European model in which homogeneity meant

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[20] These schools were also known as "escuelas de peor es nada," which roughly translates into, "It is worse not to have anything." Thus, the poor quality of such institutions was acknowledged, but it was also recognized – albeit cynically – that the situation could be worse if no schools were provided.

unity. In order to reach unity, it was necessary to impose a judicial abstract entity: citizenship. But contrary to the criollo and mestizo people, citizenship for the indigenous population did not imply the same rights and obligations. As Piel (1993) explains in her reflection on the consolidation of criollo nations in Latin America, the criollo States and societies found themselves in the middle of a contradiction: either maintaining the Indians in their colonial condition (which was the first action taken) or making them modern citizens. The latter would imply for the Indian communities the loss of the scarce privileges that the colony had given them; it would also imply for the criollo people the acceptance into their society of those who were excluded on the basis of their racial, cultural and linguistic characteristics. Unable to resolve this problem, the criollo elites opted for the suppression of the legal status of the Indians, which granted the ruling economic classes access to the lands of the communities, and made Indians liable to taxation. Indeed, the Indigenous labor force as well as the taxes imposed on them sustained the young republics after the break-up of the colonial system. But if the indigenous peoples were considered citizens under the law, they had not full access to their rights, and certainly no other model of citizenship (for instance one based on an indigenous model) was accepted.

The national project created by the intellectual and economic hegemonic groups was based on an imagined community (Anderson, 1991) that clashed with reality: a white, secular, literate, and politicized society that had nothing in common with the majority of diverse ethnic groups that populated the country. The ideal of a unified culture in one territory was far from real. Indeed, the territories that existed after the dismantling of the colonial state, did not constitute a Nation (defined as a territory and people), but a series of regions that did not have political, linguistic or ethnic cohesion. National integration had to be achieved through violent

mechanisms, and the creation of a nationalistic feeling through the invention of tradition (Hobsbawn, 2003), which was expressed in linguistic planning, literary creation and even judicial rituals. The new State took concrete measures to create such tradition; for instance, the standardization of Mexican Spanish is an attempt to create a proper expression that gives foundation to the national identity. Spanish was the tool for national unification. The indigenous heritage was also used to create a glorious past that could give foundation to the Nation-State. In this area, Morales Moreno (1994) describes the exhibition of archeological pieces at the national museum as a form of patriotic instruction to the people. Such archeological pieces played the double function of teaching nationalism to the visitors and providing the regime with symbols that represented the fatherland.

The national cultural projects excluded the indigenous populations, but from the economic point of view their integration in the economy was necessary to strengthen capitalism and the growth of a small bourgeoisie. However, the exclusion and attack against the "legitimate proprietors" of the lands – as Bolívar calls them – always constituted a problem for the criollo elites, heirs to the colonial regimen. The advent of positivism as a State ideology justified the exploitation of the powerless. As Paz (1994) insightfully explains, "Positivism offers a new justification for social hierarchies. It is not anymore blood, nor heritage, nor God who explain inequalities, but Science" (p. 143, my translation). However, Paz adds, neither liberalism nor positivism are a natural development of Mexico's history. Both philosophies were European models adopted and imposed on a society that had much more in common with feudalism. Thus, the intended effects of these philosophies were never achieved. Instead of ending with the social hierarchies created by the colony, science affirmed the superiority of the white elite. It mattered little that Indians demonstrated that they could learn to speak Castilian and acquire the customs

inherited from the Spaniards. They were not considered part of the "Mexican soul," since that privilege was reserved to those of European descent. The intercultural relations between the indigenous population and the mestizo and criollo people were just as restricted as in the colonial time (Quiróz, 1996), but without the protection that the humanistic tradition of Catholicism provided to the natives.

There is controversy about the extent of the educational policies aimed at the indigenous population during the 19th century. The environment of social strife and the foreign invasions that Mexico suffered (US, 1847; France, 1864-1867) did not provide the necessary economic and social stability to allow educational policies to reach their objectives. However, as Hidalgo (1994) points out, the 19th century in Mexico is important for bilingual education in several aspects. The road of cultural and political unification was established during this time. Since unity was understood in terms of linguistic and cultural homogeneity, education became a "panacea" (Staples, 1998) that would help achieve unity and progress. As Sierra clearly stated, "School should be the melting pot where national unity will be forged and the salvation board of our personality; we have to trust it [school] the unity and persistence of our character" (Justo Sierra, cited in Brice Heath, 1992 p. 126). Even if both conservatives and liberals agreed on the function of education in the useful creation of workers and patriotic citizens, they disagreed on the form that education should take. This opened the discussion about the role of the indigenous languages in the instruction of the indigenous population. There were advocates of teaching in the Indians' language, but the proponents of the "direct" method were more successful in imposing their educational policies.

The few efforts to educate the indigenous peoples were conducted in Spanish, with the subsequent failure of the students and the confirmation of the theories that explained the Indians'

backwardness. Their lack of progress was seen as an effect of the economic exploitation, superstition and patronizing attitude of the church. These explanations deflected away attention from cultural, linguistic and ethnic factors and emphasized elements that could be addressed with actions that focused on eliminating poverty. If poverty was the problem, then the type of education directed at the peasant population was also suitable for the indigenous masses. Teachers were educated to "…prepare citizens capable of realizing the national ideals" (Meneses Morales, 1998, p. 376) which were defined by the interests of the middle and upper classes (Robles, 1977, p. 49). Providing skills such as literacy, numeracy, civic and moral education was the focus of the curriculum of elementary schools. The cultural and linguistic specificity of the indigenous students was ignored in the curricula of teachers' education, although there was an attempt to train ambulatory teachers to work with linguistic minorities. This lack of training to deal with indigenous populations was an enormous contradiction of the educational policies of the 19th century, because teachers were entrusted with the duty of incorporating the Indians to the national life, though teachers were not given the tools to do it. But if the education of the Indians – and compulsory education in general - failed, the economic modernization of the country furthered the language shift towards Spanish because of the migrations (both forceful and voluntary) of indigenous individuals to urban centers, which increased language contact.

By the end of the Porfirato, the Mexican population was growing restless because of the lack of prosperity. Money was accumulated by a small national bourgeoisie and foreign companies while the majority of the population was living in extreme poverty. The repressive apparatus of the State (the army and police) suppressed worker and peasant movements as well as any attempt at political change. Diaz' regimen was lead by his motto of "much administration and little politics," which made democracy conspicuously absent from the national life. His last

reelection in 1910 extended his office to 34 years, making it one of the longest lasting regimes in modern history. Díaz' permanence in the government, as well as that of his ministers, was an obstacle for the young middle class intellectuals eager to gain power. Particularly, a small group of thinkers started challenging the philosophical, political and economic foundations of the government, which resulted in a call for arms lead by Francisco Madero. The armed struggle that started on November 20[th,] 1910 marks the first revolution of the 20th century

3.4 THE REVOLUTION PERIOD

The last presidential election of Porfirio Diaz' brought social unrest to the country. Peasant and worker strikes became more frequent, which were suppressed violently, provoking more resistance in the population. In addition, a growing opposition from political parties and members of the oligarchy accelerated the political downfall of the dictator. Francisco I. Madero, a wealthy landowner from the northern part of the country emerged as a presidential candidate. Madero criticized Diaz' social policies, arguing the oppression would only lead to more social strife, and advocated for small concessions to peasants and workers. Basically conservative, Madero regarded democracy as an instrument of social control, which would give the masses the illusion of participation while the lettered elites made the real decisions (Keen, 1996). In spite of his conservatism, Madero was able to call the people to arms on November 20th, 1910. Armed forces from northern Mexico, under the command of Pancho Villa, and indigenous armies from southern Mexico lead by Emiliano Zapata, joined Madero in the struggle. Diaz was successfully overthrown and Madero took office, but instead of carrying out the social and economic reforms that the worker and peasant masses demanded, he refused to implement an agrarian reform that

would restitute the lands to the indigenous and peasant communities that had been taken after the Reforma, and only made small concessions to workers. The indigenous army of Zapata, and the forces of Pancho Villa rebelled against Madero, seizing haciendas and distributing the lands to peasant communities, making it impossible to pacify the country. In addition, Madero left intact the structure of the army and other governmental offices, which were lead by aristocrats who wanted to go back to the old regime.

On February 18th, 1912, a coup d'ètat lead by the conservative general Victoriano Huerta (and supported by the American ambassador Wilson) overthrew Madero and murdered him, unleashing a wave of opposition and resistance in the country. Revolutionary leaders, like Venustiano Carranza and Alvaro Obregón joined the war that the armies of Villa and Zapata had begun, and overthrew Huerta and installed Carranza in power. Despite the triumph of the revolutionary leaders, internal struggles erupted among them, when Carranza, after promulgating the constitution of 1917 (which limited the power of the church, gave workers the most advanced labor rights of the time, regulated foreign capitals, gave the ownership of lands, waters, and subsoil to the nation and established free, compulsory and laic education) refused to uphold the most radical reforms. Carranza and the other revolutionary leaders considered education to be important, especially the education of the Indian and peasant masses. Carranza rejected the most radical ideas regarding indigenous education, but accepted the suggestions of Manuel Gamio, an anthropologist who was appointed as the director of the Direction of Anthropology and Regional Populations.

In 1916, Gamio had published the book *Forjando Patria* (Forging the Fatherland) in which he denounced the inadequate linguistic policies that had been implemented by previous governments and advocated for a change, given the numeric majority of the indigenous

population. Influenced by the work of Franz Boas, Gamio proposed applying anthropology to the study of the indigenous cultures in order to gain knowledge of their sociolinguistic, economic, religious, cultural and political situation. The information obtained in this study would serve to design a type of nationalistic education which would *incorporate* the indigenous communities into the country.

It was not until 1920, when the revolutionary leader Alvaro Obregón took office, that peace finally came to Mexico and the period of reconstruction started; however, it was not an easy task: the country was deeply divided, revolutionary generals and soldiers were back in their towns, with no jobs or lands and with a taste for power. In addition, indigenous, peasant and workers continued demanding lands and labor rights. In short, all the elements for a new revolt were in place, so the new government had to work swiftly. The construction of the new National state started in the decade of the 1920s when Obregón took office. He followed a policy of dismantling the old State, and reinforcing the new one so that the State would mediate the conflicts between social classes while carrying out social reforms and creating conditions for the accumulation of capital (Vaughan, 1982 p. 237). In this plan, education for the masses played an important role because on one hand, the masses considered it a right won by the revolution that would lead to progress and social mobility. On the other hand, elites wanted education to create the citizens and workers that the country needed and reinforce loyalty to the State.

The new educational system was entrusted to José Vasconcelos, the rector of the National University. Vasconcelos was a member of an intellectual-elite group formed during the Porfiriato and known as the *Ateneo de la Juventud*. This academy was created in 1909 and reunited the most promising young writers and thinkers of the time, who criticized the social and political policies of Díaz and the positivist bases of the regime. They looked back to the past to recover

the Latin and Greek cultural traditions and moral and aesthetic values in Mexico. The *ateneístas* considered themselves the precursors of the Mexican revolution, even though most of them chose not to get involved in politics during the war.[21] The influence of the *Ateneo* will later be evident in the educational philosophy and policies implemented by Vasconcelos, as I will show below.

Once Vasconcelos was appointed as the minister of the newly created Secretariat of Education, he lobbied to federalize education, making it the responsibility of the State to fund and control it. Federalization was very important in the plans of the new government, because if education should be the agent of unification for the country, it could not be left to local chiefs or governors who benefited from preventing the peasant and indigenous population from acquiring literacy skills and learning Spanish (Heath, 1992). Once the constitution was amended, the State took control of education, and therefore, tried to take control over the minds of the country's future citizens. It is interesting to note that the amendment to the 3rd article of the constitution – which deals with education – was not changed to match the real sociolinguistic situation of the country. The linguistic and cultural diversity was yet again ignored, and Castilian was made the national language, continuing in this way, the model of the Nation initiated by the liberal tradition of the 19th century (Nahmad, 1997).

Vasconcelos created a Secretariat of Education that was split into three departments: Elementary education, Fine Arts and Libraries. However, congress rejected his proposal and ordered him to add the Department of Indigenous Culture and Literacy. Vasconcelos rejected the

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[21] The importance of the *Ateneo* as the precursor of the Revolution has been questioned by many researchers. For instance, Vaughn (1982) argues that the *ateneístas* failed to create a solid critique to positivism, and still believed and supported positivist principles such as progress and generation. In addition, in their preoccupation to foster the classical cultures in Mexico, they neglected to acknowledge and explore the indigenous heritage (perhaps with the exception of Diego Rivera). Monsivais (2000) justifies the overestimated importance of the *Ateneo* on the need of the new State to create a culture of the Revolution.

idea of creating a section within the Secretariat in charge of indigenous populations. He believed that the indigenous peoples should be educated exactly under the same conditions as the rest of the Mexicans and not isolated in "reservations" as in the United States. Vasconcelos thought that education should increase the productive capability of the individuals as well as their thinking abilities. However, education was not to be based on the linguistic or cultural characteristics of the Mexican population. Vasconcelos' intellectual formation was based on the study of the classical cultures from Europe, and their moral and aesthetic values were the guiding principles for his educational policies. Indeed, the curriculum of elementary schools covered the history, literature, science and art of the Greek and Latin cultures. During Vasconcelos' tenure, the Department of Libraries of the Secretariat of Education printed the works of Plato, Socrates and other philosophers and distributed them among the indigenous communities that did not know how to speak Spanish, let alone read in the classic philosophers' languages.

Vasconcelos acknowledged the existence of the indigenous populations, but denied the right of the indigenous communities to preserve their languages and cultures. He opposed bilingual programs and special schools, arguing that these measures would only delay the "redemption" of the Indians. On the contrary, he advocated – at least at first – for using the direct method in teaching Spanish, as well as stressing instruction in national history, which according to him would promote the national integration. Learning to speak Spanish as well as being literate would help the Indians to improve their living conditions as well as acquire a "cosmic" or universal culture, which would teach them the norms of good citizenship.

As a way to Castilianize and bring education to rural communities, Vasconcelos created the "Houses of the People," which were the first institutions designed specifically for the indigenous communities. In addition to Castilianization, the Houses of the people had the

objective to teach basic literacy and numeracy, as well as to train the students in job skills and crafts, such as carpentry, animal husbandry, blacksmithing and others. The houses were run by newly graduated student-teachers, who listened to the call of Vasconcelos' to volunteer to work in the redemption of the indigenous communities. These rural teachers not only brought literacy to the rural towns, they also played an active role in fighting the power of the church and the big landowners, making it possible to carry out the agrarian reform.

The houses were effective in communities that were in intercultural zones, where a certain degree of bilingualism existed, but they were not able to penetrate the communities that were isolated and monolingual. To solve this problem, Vasconcelos created the "Cultural Missions" which were ambulatory schools composed of teachers, physicians, nurses, master artisans, experts in agriculture, cooks and other specialists. These specialists were supposed to teach the Indians literacy skills, Spanish, moral values and crafts that would allow them to incorporate themselves to the capitalist economy of the country, prepare them to migrate to the cities, and develop a feeling of nationalism which would lead to national integration. However, in spite of the teachers' efforts to Castilianize the indigenous populations, it was clear that a bilingual method was necessary to achieve this goal. Vasconcelos fiercely opposed bilingual programs because he considered that the indigenous languages had been defeated by the Spanish during the conquest. He even affirmed that the native tongues were not functional anymore because the Indians were shifting to Spanish, and therefore, there was no need to implement a bilingual system. Despite his opposition, the results of the Houses of the people and *Misiones* forced him to accept the use of the native tongues in the "rare" cases when it was necessary (Heath, 1992).

The national educational system proposed by Vasconcelos promoted national integration, but ignored the students' class, ethnic or linguistic characteristics. Indeed, as Vaughan (1982) has pointed out, Vasconcelos' educational policies not only disregarded the sociolinguistic situation of the country, they also avoided the need of making political and economic structural changes. Education was seen as a source of control and discipline, and the curriculum proposed by the Secretariat of Education reinforced this view, stressing nationalism and personal responsibility instead of collective rights (Vaughan, 1982, p. 253).

Vasconcelos was a philosopher and a writer, but he lacked depth in his analysis of the social conditions of the country and the effects they would have on his educational policies[22] (Grijalva, 2004). He was more concerned with enculturing the people and the creation of the Mexican identity based on the idea of mestizaje – the mixture of people of indigenous and European descent. Under the idea of racial uniformity, mestizaje eliminated real ethnic differences and oppressions that could challenge the hegemony of the State. The new Mexican men (or rather human being) was the product of the Revolution and his ancestral indigenous past. For Vasconcelos, such mestizaje was embodied in his concept of the "Cosmic race," or the harmonious blend of the main races in the world; however, he relegated the indigenous "race" to make contributions only at the physical level of endurance and activity, whereas the intellectual and cultural part of the blend should be covered by the white race.

Mestizaje – either as a cultural or biological process – was an ideology deeply imbued in the thought and policies created by the powerbrokers in charge of the Secretariat of Education.

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[22] Grijalva (2004) describes how Vasconcelos' disregard of Mexico's reality was perceived by his contemporary intellectuals. A point in case, the painter Diego Rivera, created a mural entitled, "The wise men," in which he depicted several artists and thinkers of the time and Vasconcelos, who sits on a white elephant, being oblivious to the everyday problems of the people. The mural also has an inscription based on a popular song that reads: "I would like to be a wise man, of much wisdom, but I would like better to have something to eat every day."

To achieve this mestizaje, the indigenous populations should be incorporated into the nation, even though this would mean the progressive linguistic and cultural shift of the indigenous populations under the influence of the national hegemonic culture. This thesis was known as *incorporation,* and the first official policies of the Revolution government were aimed at achieving this goal.

Manuel Gamio, who was in charge of the Department of Indigenous culture, had a different view than Vasconcelos and his policies. He rejected Vasconcelos' ideas about the superiority of the European races and cultures. As an anthropologist, Gamio believed that the Mexican native cultures were not inferior, and argued that the degree of evolution of these cultures was the result of environmental, geographical and historical conditions. Thus, the backwardness of the Indians was the result of the conquest, which isolated them in geographically inaccessible places, prevented them to participate in the national life and enjoy the advances of science and technology. Thus, Gamio gets away from racial and linguistic explanations about the inferiority of the Indian and adopts a culturalist view; however, he does not escape the trap of homogeneity. Indeed, if all cultures are equal, there would be no reason to integrate the Indian culture to the other, which by the way, is a westernized one.

Just like Vasconcelos, Gamio supports the idea of mestizaje, but instead of a simple biological process, he understands it as a racial, cultural and linguistic process that has to be lead by a controlled action by the State in the educational, political, and economic areas. Applied anthropology would provide the necessary methods to explore the indigenous community and to design an educational plan that adapts to the indigenous reality. In this way, Gamio proposes to depart from the indigenous languages and cultures to transition to the national culture, but still he does not grant the communities the right to preserve these elements. He claims that only the

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"positive" aspects of the Indian cultures should be kept, but the communities have no say in determining which aspects they want to preserve. In his most important project, Gamio proposed to study ten indigenous communities in depth, in order to come up with a plan grounded on the characteristics of the indigenous communities. He only got to develop his study in one zone: the town of Teotihuacan, where in addition to ethnographic work, he also tried to develop pedagogical methods to educate the Indians and Castilianize them.

Gamio's work is important in the history of indigenous education in Mexico because he implemented a new view of the Indian from an isolated individual, to a subject capable of being incorporated into the nation (Citarella, 1990). He also established the basis of a scientifically planned intervention to incorporate the indigenous communities instead of using forceful methods. But most importantly, he changed the view about the Indian "problem" from a racial and genetic point of view, to a cultural and historical one.

In 1925, Moisés Sáenz followed Gamio in the direction of the Department of Indigenous Culture. The humanistic policies of the previous years were de-emphasized in favor of a type of education that would prepare the students for the industrial development of the country. Influenced by the ideas of John Dewey, Sáenz stressed an "active" education that is pragmatically oriented. His main criticism to the "integral education" of the previous years is that it had no real effect on the communities, and because it concentrated on the formal aspects of education, such as reading, writing and the teaching of Spanish, which for many students had absolutely no practical applications. Sáenz was concerned not only about finding the best pedagogical methods to teach Castilian and literacy to the indigenous populations, but also in ways to applying them in real and meaningful ways, in order to prevent the atrophy of these skills.

Sáenz wanted to develop an educational plan that transformed the indigenous communities into *campesino* (peasant) because he considered that the Indian "problem" was neither genetic nor cultural, but social class. He insisted in incorporating political as well as economic elements in the analysis of the indigenous exploitation as well as in the policies aimed at them (Bertely, 1998).

Just like his predecessor, Sáenz believed in the concept of mestizaje, but instead of directing this process from the top-down, Sáenz thought that it should be constructed by the communities themselves. To achieve this, it was necessary to establish the socioeconomic, political and cultural basis that could combat regionalism in favor of a national consciousness. This national identity was not static, but in continuous change, so instead of trying to simply incorporate the indigenous population, Sáenz proposed to *integrate* México.

> I attempt, simply, that the Indian is considered as data, as a real and important factor of the problem of integration of Mexico. I am a fervent adherent of the "incorporation" of the Indian to the Mexican family, if this means, in biology, the natural process of mestizaje; in politics, to accept the Indian, with an egalitarian and democratic criteria, to the field of citizenship, an in the cultural, a conscious and respectful amalgam, but selective and intelligent, at the same time, of the autochthonous features and values with the typical and normative of the Mexican cultural design. I believe in a mestizo Mexico, which is the Mexican Mexico, but I also believe that the Mexico that we should form has to be integrated with all the ethnic, cultural and spiritual elements of our heritage. (Sáenz, 1982, [1939], p. 215, my translation)

One of the tools for such integration was education. Schools become once more the agents of civilization, translating the national project, and acculturating the indigenous populations into mestizo peasants. The acculturation of the Indians had the final objective of creating a mestizo national identity, which required the abandonment of the very characteristics that defined an indigenous community. The schools focused their resources to achieve these goals through the implementation of a series of actions. First, the schools concentrated on the

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Castilianization of the population. The creation of a national identity implied the imposition of Spanish, which would make communication possible among Mexicans, as well as the creation of an imagined community that shared the same language despite its past. Thus, Spanish not only would function for communication, but also as the means to get to know the other, which in turn, would foster national integration. Second, schools become centers for the teaching of democracy, understood in terms of communal and regional organization and self-sufficiency, not real political participation. Indeed, peasants and *campesinos* were co-opted in unions controlled by the State itself, transforming them into political clientele. The function of the school was very much conceived in political terms, not only fostering nationalism, but also constructing a *campesino* class consciousness that would help the government fight the power of the church and big landowners. Finally, the school had the objective to improve the living conditions of the indigenous communities, through the teaching of Spanish, literacy and job skills.

For the Mexican governments of the late 1920s, it was important to promote nationalism, civilize the Indians and integrate them into the productive campesino masses. National sovereignty was still threatened, and many foreign capitals still managed key industries in the country. Therefore, the integration of the Indians was necessary to regain national sovereignty and to create a Mexican capitalism, but this only could be achieved through a coordinated State action that incorporated socioeconomic, cultural and political elements (Bertely, 1998). Schools became the ideal center for such operations.

The coordinated educational action of the State was not enough to teach the national language to the Indians. Indeed, the students were resistant to learn a language that was being imposed by their teachers, and their opportunities to use it were limited to the few interactions that they had in the market or mestizo towns. In addition to these obstacles, there was a strong

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controversy regarding the appropriate methods of teaching Spanish among the officials at the Secretariat of Education. Sáenz attempted to solve this problem by inviting William Townsend to Mexico. Townsend, who was a Christian missionary working on the translation of the bible to Mayan languages, arrived in Mexico amidst the opposition of both academics and politicians who feared the religious proselytism of the linguist. Townsend was appointed to work on a pilot project in the Mayan areas of Chiapas and Yucatán, where he developed alphabets and manuals to teach the students to read and write in their own language. This experience, as well as other experiments conducted by Sáenz in the P'urhépecha area of Carapan, indicated that the development of pedagogy for indigenous education involved the use of the students' native languages.

The opposition to the use of the native languages in education was strong in the Secretariat of Education. As Vaughan (1982) has noted, the personnel from the Secretariat had been part of the Porfirista government, and still believed in the genetic inferiority of the indigenous population. In 1926, the "House of the Indian Student" opened its doors in Mexico City. This boarding house had the main objective of scientifically demonstrating the intellectual capacity of the Indians. The plan of Puig de Cassauranc (the new minister of Education) was to bring young monolingual Indians from different parts of the country and reunite them in a house, where they would be analyzed (i.e., intelligence tests, anthropological measurements), and taught Spanish, vocational and academic skills. The house functioned about seven years, translating the national project at the local level, instilling in the students a strong feeling of nationalism through rituals such as singing the national anthem, and also through State-promoted popular culture. The students would learn dances, ranchero songs and participate in festivals commemorating both civil and social festivities.

The House of the Indian Student has been quite controversial in the literature of indigenous education in Mexico. Negative views point out the devastating effects of acculturating young Indians, who had to endure terrible living conditions in the house (it operated with a low budget), the constant attack of their cultural identity and self-esteem, and the cultural shock they had once they returned to their communities (Loyo, 1996). On the other hand, positive points of view consider the House as an experience that demonstrated once and for all the intellectual capacity of the Indians, the possibility of their education and transformation into Mexican citizens. Since the students exceeded the expectations of their instructors and critics, the educational policies aimed at them had to change because of the experience of the Houses of the people (Dawson, 2001). In any case, the House produced unforeseen results: once the students were acculturated, many refused to go back to their communities, and demanded grants from the Secretariat of Education to continue studying, obstructing the plans of using them as civilization agents. The House became in this way a site of struggle against the hegemony of the national project.

The experience of Carapan and the House of the Indian made Sáenz shift his view regarding the integration of the indigenous communities. His practical experience showed him that educational policies imposed from the top-down would not lead to a change; therefore, he proposed to *socialize* both the Indian and the mestizo population:

> In socializing the Indian we will feverously have to socialize ourselves, and this means that in being good Mexicans we also learn to be better Indians. (Sáenz, n.d. cited in Heath, 1992, p. 159, my translation)

In 1931, a new secretary of Education took office, with the subsequent change in policy. Narciso Bassols got away from culturalist and social class approaches to the Indian problem and espoused a productivist paradigm. Bassols believed that the reformation work of the

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Revolution had come to a halt, and that it was necessary to stimulate the economy through a type of education that created a strong labor force. His educational policies aimed at rural education were focused on the development of industrial and agricultural skills in the students, and to foster social cooperation and interdependence. However, in his policies, the linguistic and cultural characteristics of the indigenous populations were to be sacrificed in favor of national unity and development. In the following (lengthy) quote, Bassols exposes his ideas on indigenous education:

> Indigenous education tends to realize a synthesis of two cultures in which the positive values of the indigenous races are kept and takes the western civilization, with the technical resources and the possibilities that industries contribute [to it]… It doesn't matter that in the process the characteristics that may be considered worthy are destroyed; it is impossible to remove the indigenous communities that live in extreme poverty, that lack lands to farm, or that [they] own it barren, from the penury of their habits, from the anti-hygienic of their nutrition, and the dark prejudices that dominate their consciousness… but it is also indispensable to perceive with the same clarity, that the folkloric manifestations of the Mexican people only should be fostered as long as they do not constitute a burden opposed to the economic development of peasants. (Cited in Aguirre Beltrán, 1993, p. 121. My translation.)

Thus, according to Bassols, the languages and cultures of the indigenous peoples – the cornerstone of their identities – are only folkloric manifestations that should be respected as long as they do not interfere with their economic development. Following this line of thought, Bassols transformed Vasconcelos' cultural missions to prepare rural teachers to tend to the indigenous communities, and to train peasants to increase their productivity. Just as in the previous cases, the rural normal schools had precarious results in the indigenous areas.

In 1934, the educational action of the State towards the indigenous communities was consolidated under President Lázaro Cárdenas. During his office, *indigenista* policies were strongly backed by several actions. First, the creation of the Department of Indigenous Affairs

(which had legislative capacities) ensured the existence of a governmental office specialized in indigenous matters. Second, the 3rd constitutional article was amended to declare education as socialist; and finally, there was an important budget allotment to public education. As Keen (1996) points out, in previous governments, leftist ideas were used to co-opt labor and peasant masses that sympathized with these ideas, while the State retained control. Cárdenas was more radical in his thought (at least during the first years of his rule), and promoted land distribution, worker's strikes and *indigenista* policies, which concentrated in a great part on educational action. Thus, the socialist character of the Mexican educational system was constitutionally defined. However, socialist education was far from being truly socialist, which might have turned workers and peasants against the ruling economic elites (Lechuga, 1982). In this context, the socialist character of education was intended to consolidate the Revolution and to continue the secularization of the country. Under socialist education, the State became the sole administrator of the educational system, excluding the participation of the church from administering education, which provoked a wave of contempt, not only from the Catholic Church itself but from the population in general.

Historical materialism became the guiding thought in the educational policies directed at the indigenous communities, but as Arriarán (2001) has pointed out, Latin American Marxism tended to deny the cultural reality of the Indians and reduce the problem to a social class struggle. For the socialist nationalism of the 1930s, the Mexicanization of the Indian population could only be achieved through their incorporation to the economy by having access to technology, lands and their grouping in trade unions. The indigenous identity then is subsumed under a proletariat consciousness that should be fostered through education. During this time,

schools became a center not only for children, but for the whole community. Adults were instructed in their labor rights, agricultural techniques, vocational skills and nationalism.

The implementation of socialist education was left to the teachers, who exerted a powerful ideological control over the communities. During Vasconcelos' office, teachers were considered laic missionaries who selflessly would take the gospel of progress and education to the isolated communities. Under socialist education, they also had the responsibility of: organizing the community to take collective action; to instruct the people on their rights as laborers and peasants; to mediate between the local community and the national level as intercultural bridges and in general; and to bring about progress and social change. The teachers, particularly those of indigenous background, also gained a class consciousness through their political involvement with the communities, which in posterior years would help them to create an indigenous *intelligentsia*.

In addition to including economic and political factors in the educational programs aimed at the indigenous communities, during Cárdenas' office a strong discussion began on the implementation of bilingual education programs. Evidence from Townsend's work at the front of the Summer Language Institute, as well as Sáenz and Gamio's project, shed light on the importance of the use of the native tongues in the education of the oppressed linguistic minorities. Under the recommendation of these academics, a bilingual transitional program was adopted, which represented an enormous advance after more than a century of direct Castilianization. Apparently, with this new action, the Indians were accepted with their linguistic and cultural characteristics. But just as Lastra (1997) has argued, the use of the students' native tongue in their instruction did not eliminate the national goal of homogeneity, because the vernaculars were to be used only as a way to facilitate the transition to Spanish. And even though

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officially an "indirect" method of Castilianization was adopted, bilingual education was not a reality because of the lack of teachers, materials and pedagogic methods to implement it.

In 1936 the constitution was amended again to include bilingual education in the 3rd constitutional article. At least at the discursive level, the Mexican government shifted its policies regarding the indigenous populations, which were seen as subjects susceptible to integration despite their linguistic and cultural characteristics. Furthermore, these very characteristics were considered acceptable in the process of learning Spanish and becoming a citizen. Learning Spanish became the vehicle of communication, not the requirement to be Mexican. Even though the lack of teachers, methodology, and materials prevented the true implementation of bilingual education, this change represents an important shift in the point of view of the policy brokers, who acknowledged the linguistic, psychological and social advantages of the native tongues in indigenous education (Acevedo, 1997). In 1939, the First Assembly of Philologists and Linguists took place in Mexico. The assembly established the guidelines for the linguistic policies of the country. In the same year, the First Interamerican Indigenista Congress also took place in Mexico, which by that time was considered an authority in indigenous affairs. At the Congress, the bases for *indigenista* policies in the continent were established, particularly those concerning bilingual education. The discussion in the congress focused on the ways to Castilianize the indigenous populations. The supporters of using the native languages in the educational process were contradicted by proponents of the direct method, who argued that the lack of research, methodology and teachers made it impossible to implement bilingual programs. At the end, the congress agreed to support bilingual education and to foster linguistic and anthropological research to promote the welfare of the indigenous communities. The Congress was concerned about the situation of the indigenous population and to find scientific ways to integrate them into

the national community; however, as Bonfil-Batalla (1981) argues, at no moment were Indian representatives consulted.

The 1940s mark the end of an era of great advances in indigenous affairs, particularly indigenous education. The end of Cárdenas' administration also slowed down agrarian reform and the struggle for laborers' rights in favor of conservative social and economic policies that increased the State's control over the masses and the means of production. Indeed, the government that followed Cárdenas attacked bilingual education and transformed rural schools from active communal political centers to places where the students were trained to form part of the capitalist industrialization process that the country was undergoing. In addition, the teachers were transformed from active political agents to apolitical professionals (Ginsburg et al, 2003). In general, the educational system suffered a conservative turn when the socialist character of education was eliminated. The decade of the 1940s represented such a shift from previous governmental policies that Aguirre Beltrán (1993) declared that it was tragic for Mexican education in general and in particular for indigenous education. Despite these turns to the right, the discussion on the type of education that Indians should receive lead to an enormous amount of research on the Indian tongues and bilingual education, which in turn influenced educational policies aimed at this population. But perhaps the most important result of the anthropological and linguistic research is the conceptualization of the Indians as individuals on equal grounds as the rest of the population. Before the incorporationist and integrationist thesis, Indians were seen as remnants from the past that would disappear because of their genetic inferiority. After Gamio and Saenz's work the indigenous populations were accepted in the national project together with their languages and cultures, as long as they did not interfere with the modernization of the

country. In this way, equating uniformity with unification did not escape the progressive views of academics and politicians (Del Val, 1993).

The presence of the State in the indigenous communities in order to increase its control was a result of the implementation of *indigenista* educational and linguistic policies. As Bertely (1998) argues, the lives of the communities were significantly altered by the presence of the school and its political action through the creation of cooperatives, workshops, committees and other forms of organization; however, the imposition of the State project was not vertical: the communities resisted, negotiated and got empowered by the very institutions designed to control them. For instance, Rockwell (1994) describes how rural communities transformed the State's plans by accepting or rejecting teachers who the villagers thought would be inappropriate for the children. Thus, the community got empowered and the State kept control of its hegemony by negotiating with the people. In the same way, the teachers who had been trained to work as political agents in the communities acquired the class consciousness that they had been preaching and organized themselves in labor unions, which would later become a very powerful political client of the government.

The *indigenista* policies of the 1930s also brought about a process of ethnic revitalization in the indigenous populations. The Department of Indigenous Affairs started organizing councils in the indigenous communities and sending its representatives – mainly indigenous teachers – to congresses organized by the department itself. These congresses, which were controlled by the Department, had the objective to organize the indigenous peoples in such a way that the State could respond to their demands, and in turn, transform them into political clients; however, these congresses very soon became sites of struggle where the representatives became intercultural mediators between the national and the local level, beginning, in this way, the so-called

participation in *indigenismo*. The influence of these early experiences would lay the road for the future indigenous movements in the 1970s.

3.5 TOWARDS AUTONOMY

The government's opposition to bilingual and socialist education represented a serious setback on indigenous education, but the government was forced to change its policies in view of the failure of a massive alphabetization campaign in the indigenous communities. The new minister of education – Jaime Torres Bodet – believed in the need to understand the social, linguistic and cultural characteristics of the indigenous communities if unification of the country was to be achieved. As a result, the Institute of Literacy in Indigenous Languages was established to help educate the indigenous population. The main goal of the institute was to educate the indigenous students in their own language before they were introduced to Spanish. Torres Bodet's ideas, as well as the work of the Institute, were difficult to carry out due to the lack of resources, especially linguists, anthropologists and bilingual teachers.

In 1946, the Department of Indigenous Affairs, which had been established during Cárdenas' office, was transformed in a bureaucratic organism, with no legislative or administrative powers. But in addition to these problems, the Department of Indigenous Affairs was based on ideological principles that the previous administration tried to fight (Nahmad, 1982). The new President, Miguel Alemán, was more interested in fostering the industrial development of the country than in linguistic and cultural matters, so he transformed the Institute of Literacy in Indigenous Languages to a governmental office dedicated to educate only

monolingual speakers. Despite the constraint in its functions, the Institute was active in training bilingual teachers and producing primer books in five indigenous languages.

In 1948, as a result of the agreements of the Interamerican Congress, the National Indigenista Institute was founded (INI). The main goals of the Institute were:

- To research the problems of the indigenous communities, and to propose actions to the executive branch of the government to solve these problems.

- To coordinate and direct the actions of governmental offices regarding indigenous populations.

- To be the official consultant on indigenous affairs.

- To conduct research on indigenous matters and to broadcast the results of its research projects and studies.

The INI started its functions during the decade of the 1950s through a series of regional centers located in intercultural zones. The director of the program, Gustavo Aguirre Beltrán, is the first academic to systematize the theoretical body of *indigenista* policies and to propose a plan of action that was based on an authentic (not induced) acculturation of the indigenous peoples. Thus, instead of trying to integrate the communities, the goal was to achieve an authentic acculturation that was the result of economic, social and political changes. Beltrán conceptualized the Indian populations not as isolated entities, but as communities that were in contact with mestizo groups in the so-called intercultural regions. In these zones, the intercultural context reproduces the historical conditions of subordination and domination that were established during the conquest. The indigenous communities inhabited *refuge zones,* which geographically, were the worst farming lands in the area. These refuge zones functioned as a satellite of a *ladino (*mestizo) community which controls the indigenous settlement at the

economic and political level. The subordination-domination patterns are reproduced at different levels in the economic, social and political interaction between the two groups. These unequal interactions are sustained by an ideology that naturalizes the domination of the Indian groups as a natural product of the mestizo superiority (Aguirre Beltrán, 1991).

Aguirre Beltrán analyzed the cultural processes within these zones and concluded that education would have to be focused on altering these costumes of subordination/domination to produce a cultural change in the intercultural relations. To accomplish such a change, the regional centers focused on the translation of the national project at the local level, using the native languages as a medium of instruction in schools. Bilingual education was accepted as a tool of acculturation; both the native tongues and the actions of a native teacher (who had been trained in official *indigenista* institutions) would diminish cultural shock and eliminate resistance to education. Indeed, Aguirre Beltrán was especially careful to recruit domestic bilingual individuals who would be able to convince their community of the benefits of education and the center's.

Indigenous education in the regional centers incorporated indigenous traditions and knowledge in the curriculum, which represented a departure from previous policies. In addition, the school emphasized that the subject matters taught to the students had a strong relationship with their everyday lives; however, the ultimate goal was that the local knowledge would be compatible with the national culture, which in turn would foster nationalism. For this reason, even though the native languages were used as the medium of instruction, and education in the first language was a goal, they were only transitional. Castilianization was the general objective, because it was not believed that a Nation could be viable if it was formed by culturally and linguistically diverse groups.

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In Aguirre's acculturation project, bilingual teachers played an important role. Defined as cultural promoters, they were entrusted with the translation of the national project to the local level, and to function as intermediaries between the State and the community, which allowed them to amass cultural, symbolic and economic capital in their communities.

The INI continued working with its bilingual method and regional centers. Between 1951 and 1970, 12 regional centers were created, and later 50 more. Its work was further supported by UNESCO's declaration on the indigenous populations and their rights to be educated in their native languages. The Secretariat of Education, which worked independently from the INI did not decide its linguistic policy towards Castilianization until 1963, where the Assembly of the National Technical Council of Education decided to adopt bilingual education as a way to facilitate and speed up the learning of Spanish. Despite the increasing support to bilingual education and the efforts to train bilingual cultural promoters and increase their numbers, the use of the native tongues in the educational process was inexistent (Acevedo, 1997). Lack of materials and methodology prevented the implementation of bilingual programs, but perhaps the most important factor was an ideological one: both parents and teachers refused to use the students' first language based on the belief that Spanish was the only language suitable for education.

The decade of the 1970s marks a shift in the policies aimed at the indigenous peoples of Mexico. The anti-colonialist struggles in Latin America and the world fostered the creation of indigenous movements that started questioning the transformation of their communities and their subordinated position. The indigenous teachers who had been trained at *indigenista* institutions, with the purpose of becoming acculturation agents developed an ethnic consciousness (see for instance Vargas, 1994) that lead them to demand changes in the governmental policies as well as

take on positions within the institutions that took charge of indigenous affairs. This constituted the initial steps towards the so-called *critical indigenismo.* The reaction of the government was the incorporation of such demands into the official educational system. Indigenous "Supreme councils" were organized, leaders designated, and a "tradition" around these councils invented in the form of ceremonial centers, dresses, music, rituals and the uses of native languages in civic ceremonies. As Aitken (1996) explains, this is a traditional strategy used by the Mexican State to reaffirm its hegemony by incorporating dissident opinions into its discourse and providing resources to tend to their demands. In this way, the State affirms its legitimacy and deactivates potential trouble spots. However, the indigenous intelligentsia had a great power of organization and mobilization, and pressured for real changes particularly in the area of education.

In 1974, the first Congress of Indigenous Peoples took place, having as one of the main points in its agenda support for bilingual education. Instead of looking at the indigenous languages as mere transitional instruments, the Congress advocated for using them as a fundamental element in the construction of a national project that revalued the indigenous cultures. In the same year, the Secretariat of education declared that its main priority was to create a "common" language for all the Mexicans without detriment of the Indigenous tongues. To achieve this objective, a bilingual-bicultural model of education was proposed. It is important to note that although the Secretariat of Education acknowledged the maintenance of the Indian tongues, it did not consider their further development.

This idea is taken up by ANPIBAC (National Association of Indigenous Professionals), which in 1979 denounced the colonialist character of indigenous education and emphasized the need to participate in the creation of type of education that could satisfy the problems of the indigenous groups. The year before, because of pressures from indigenous groups, the General

Direction of Indigenous Education (DGEI) had been created at the Secretariat of Public Education. The purpose of the Direction was to implement the National Educational Program at the indigenous level, and to adopt and develop a critical pedagogy in indigenous education. Perhaps the most important feature of the DGEI was that it would be managed by indigenous academics and researchers who would create plans and programs of study, didactic materials, develop specific methodology for the teaching of the first and second languages, and above all, establish the ideological basis for an education for the indigenous people. In 1982, the "Educational Project for the Ethnic Groups of Mexico" was presented to the Congress, which approved it immediately. In it, bilingual-bicultural education was defined as:

> Bilingual-bicultural education is one that is implemented by the indigenous peoples themselves and will serve the development of individuals and the community…
> Its bilingual nature will be in the fact that during the pedagogical process.... Students will be taught to speak, read, and write and the linguistic-grammatical structure of the Spanish [language] in particular or simultaneously according to the degree of difficulty of the teaching/learning process, and the level of bilingualism of the students. Students will be taught to speak, read and write the linguistic and grammatical structure of the Spanish [language].
> Its bicultural character will reside in the fact that first we must teach and foster the indigenous culture in particular and then the universal values of other cultures. (ANPIBAC, 1982, p. 235, my translation.)

The project proposed by ANPIBAC was never implemented, and in fact, the programs and curricula that were followed in the schools remained monolingual and monocultural. In order to carry out the plans of bilingual-bicultural education, actions in different areas should have had taken place. First, it was necessary to provide legislative support to provide an institutional character to bilingualism and biculturalism. Second, the plans of study and curricula should have been modified to accommodate ethnic contents and the bicultural perspective, which would make necessary new textbooks, and even modify teacher education to prepare teachers who were able to deal with the model and its implications. In view of these obstacles, the Secretariat of

education resolved to "elaborate a generic curriculum for the rural areas and to adjust to the real attributions [of the context] in terms of linguistic suitability and incorporation of some contents, that …have been denominated ethnic" (SNTE, 1994, p. 4; cited in Corona, 2003 p. 68).

The bilingual-bicultural model did not produce the expected results (see Guzmán Gómez, 1991). To the implementation problems, the model also faced opposition from parents and teachers, who insisted on having Spanish as the language of instruction. In addition, the model was criticized because of the social inequalities that were implied. Indeed, the burden of becoming culturally and communicatively competent in two different linguistic codes and of being capable of functioning appropriately in culturally different contexts was placed on the dominated groups (Hernández, 2001). Furthermore, the very concept of biculturality was amply criticized, because as Scollon and Scollon (2001) argue, the ability to function in two different cultures with the same level of competency is still an unachieved ideal (see Paulston, 2005 [1992]).

But beyond the theoretical problems, the bilingual-bicultural model failed because the indigenous perspective was never included. Instead of exploring, developing, implementing and including the indigenous knowledge into the curriculum, the Secretariat of Education developed the so-called "ethnic contents," which were added to the curriculum. In this way, biculturalism was transformed from being a holistic perspective to isolated information. The anti-colonial character of education that was supposed to be developed by the indigenous researchers also did not take place. Schools continued working as acculturation agents and the domination/subordination relationship was not eliminated by education. After all the political negotiations, linguistic and cultural research and other actions taken to implement this model, it is important to ask why it did not receive institutional support.

By the late 1980s, the Mexican government started an educational reform framed under neoliberal policies. The so-called "Educational modernization" subordinated education to economic considerations.[23] This translated into the decentralization of the educational system, which returned the responsibility of the administration of education to the states,[24] required the increase of "social participation" (i.e., the reduction of federal money) in the funding of education, and removed legal obstacles to religious and private institutions to offer educational services. The guidelines of the "Educational modernization" became the industrial values of total quality, equity and productivity. Under these ideas, the secretariat of education defined basic[25] education as:

> In the limits of the end of the century, the need to improve the quality of basic education and to extend it to social groups that do not receive it yet in sufficient form is up to date. In basic education, essential values, fundamental knowledge and intellectual competencies that allow learning permanently should be acquired. In it [basic education] is awakened the curiosity and enjoyment for knowledge and collective and individual work habits are formed. The value of a good basic education will reflect in the quality of the personal and communal life, in the capacity to acquire skills for the productive activity and in the full development of study opportunities… (SEP. 1996, p. 19, my translation)

The goal of education became to train productive workers to be able to function in a globalized economy and free trade, who were also tolerant to the presence of foreign capital and influences in the country (Ginsburg et al, 2003). This new take on education represented a sharp turn from the policies of the 1930s that fostered a strong sense of nationalism. For the indigenous population the educational reform represented yet another setback despite the provisions regarding the need to extend culturally suitable education to the indigenous groups. The

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[23] Buenfil (2000) in her analysis of the "Educational modernization" program concludes that it is almost a "literal" translation of the recommendations of the World Bank.
[24] The decentralization of the educational system concentrated on returning the administrative powers to the states, while the Secretariat of Education retained control over curricular content (Ornelas, 1997).
[25] Basic education includes both elementary education (grades 1 through 6) and secondary education (grades 7 through 9).

industrial and productivist paradigms that guided the educational reform contradicted basic values that maintained communal life. In addition, the "quality" principle was a problem for the indigenous schools, which traditionally have suffered from having low budgets, lack of facilities, scarce didactic materials, poorly trained teachers, and above all, linguistic and cultural inadequacies in the curricula and plan of studies. The indigenous schools just could not keep up with the new higher standards, which translated into higher school failure.

Despite these problems, the educational reform and changes in the cultural policies of the State may have opened a door for the indigenous populations to articulate their demands and to increase their direct participation because of the weakening of the Nation-State under the globalization process. Indeed, the official discourse about the homogeneous mestizo identity of the country has shifted to a discussion about linguistic and cultural diversity. In 1992, president Salinas amended Article Four of the constitution to acknowledge the pluricultural character of Mexico. The Article was also amended to "protect and promote the development of their [indigenous peoples'] languages, cultures, uses, customs, resources, and specific forms of social organization" (Mexican Constitution, 1992).

The amendment of the constitution represented an enormous step towards recognizing the existence of the indigenous peoples and their linguistic and cultural characteristics. Never before in the Mexican constitution had the indigenous population been mentioned (Nahmad, 1997). However, the amendment was carried out without consultation with the indigenous groups and no measures to warranty these changes took place. Furthermore, the constitution acknowledged only individual and not collective linguistic or cultural rights. The attitude towards indigenous affairs was quite ambiguous and it reflected on other constitutional articles that were related to the indigenous survival. For instance, the 27th article, which regulated land distribution to

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peasants, was amended to allow the sell of *ejidos* (communal lands), while at the same time, the fourth article changed to protect the resources of the indigenous population (Hindley, 1996).

Despite the contradictions in the State policies, the indigenous movements were empowered by the discussion about multiculturalism, partly because of the support they got from NGOs who supported their ethnic discourse, and partly because of their own organization and mobilization capabilities. Within the discourse of the indigenous movements, education still plays an important role in the social, economic and political advancement of their communities and in the preservation and development of their cultures. The indigenous movement emphasizes a multiculturalist paradigm that both recognizes the linguistic and cultural characteristics of the indigenous peoples and fosters their autonomy. This was clearly stated in the San Andrés agreements, which resulted from the dialogue between the Zapatista Army of National Liberation and the Mexican government after the indigenous rebellion of 1994.

The Zapatista uprising (which happened just as Mexico signed the NAFTA agreement with the US and Canada), forced the Mexican government to rethink its policies towards the indigenous peoples, while the latter acquired an increased visibility at the national and international level, and demonstrated its capacity for political negotiation. The rebellion also revitalized the discussion about indigenous education, which had suffered a halt after the creation of the DGEI and the failed implementation of the bilingual-bicultural project. In the early 1990s, the intercultural model irrupted in the academic discussion about bilingual education. Officially adopted by the Secretariat of Education in 1996, the model was supposed to be a complete departure from *indigenista* acculturation tendencies and to incorporate a multicultural perspective, even though it was not proposed by indigenous groups but implemented from the

Secretariat of Education. I will explore in detail the philosophical foundations of interculturalism as well as its evolution in the Mexican educational system in Chapter Four.

3.6 CONCLUSIONS OF THIS CHAPTER

The history of bilingual education in the last century shows discontinuities and ruptures that are the result of the changing conditions in both the national and international context. However, there are elements that remain constant. Probably the first factor is the need to include the indigenous population into the national project. The form of this inclusion may vary from incorporationist and integrationist paradigms that erased cultural and linguistic characteristics, to multicultural (or even intercultural) models that would allow a new kind of relationship between the indigenous and the mestizo groups. The second factor is the dominant ideology that naturalizes the domination of the indigenous groups by the mestizo population. The State ideology of *mestizaje* provides a sense of biological and cultural synthesis that maintains the cohesion of the Nation-State. As Bartra (1989) has insightfully pointed out, this national culture (*mestizaje*) functions as a mediator between class and ethnic struggles by "[transporting] real social actors to a realm where they shed most of their original contradictory features, transforming them into characters who serve the sham of national unity" (p. 68). One of the assumptions of educational ideologies has been that linguistic shift and acculturation will be enough to include the indigenous population into the national project and to achieve nationality. However, as reports of discrimination experiences show (see for example, Gall, 1998; Hidalgo, 1998; Romer, 1998) it is far from real. People who are closer to the "indigenous somatic type" overwhelmingly form part of low socioeconomic classes, while criollo descendants still occupy

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powerful positions in the economy and government, perpetuating in this way, social, political and economic inequalities (Bonfil Batalla, 1994). Thus, the "imagined community" (Anderson, 1991) that would be unified by means of a racial and cultural blend shows deep fractures at its foundations.

To achieve the national project of unity and economic development, education had been used as one of the main tools. The extension of education to indigenous communities had the objective to socialize the students to be workers and citizens that the economic projects required. Uniform plans of study, curricula and texts would ensure the transmission of the State ideology and reduce the linguistic and cultural differences of the population. Within this scheme, indigenous bilingual teachers played a significant role as acculturation agents; they have proved to be very effective intermediaries between the State and their communities, by connecting the local life to a wider national context. For instance, through invented traditions such as social and civic festivities, or rituals such as singing the national anthem and organizing the school time and space to match those of the mainstream schools, indigenous teachers effectively translate the national project to the communal level (Montes, 1995).

The linguistic policies that form part of the indigenous educational project have greatly varied according to the national and international contexts. In general, previous to the decade of the 1940s, the tendency was direct Castilianization, which changed after evidence showed the advantages of using the native languages in the education of the indigenous groups. However, this trend has not been linear and has shifted according to the groups in power. It is interesting to note though, that contrary to the official discourse that supports bilingual education, it has not been effective in the maintenance of the native languages. On the contrary, it has favored a shift to Spanish. This can be explained, according to Hidalgo (1994), because the real objective of

bilingual education in Mexico was not preservation but the transition to Spanish, which is achieved more efficiently if the students' mother tongue was used during the first years of schooling. The conflictive diglossic situation of the indigenous languages, as well as economic pressures to learn Spanish complete the context that accelerate the shift to Spanish.

The result of the educational policies aimed at the indigenous communities is highly paradoxical. On one hand, there are advances in the acknowledgement of the pluricultural and plurilinguistic composition of the country, while on the other hand, indigenous education continues to be segregated, which contributes to the elimination of cultural and linguistic differences (Bertely, 1998, p. 93). These contradictions in the educational policies show tensions that reflect the state of Mexican society. In addition, they show that hegemonic projects are not entirely cohesive, and even if they show cohesion (at least at the discursive level), they tend to lose it when they are translated into practice. Hegemonic projects are not vertically imposed; they have to be negotiated with the target population, which may result in the empowerment of the later. In this way, despite the homogenizing tendencies of the indigenous educational policies, Indian intellectuals and communities have found within the new pluricultural discourse a site of struggle where they can come up with their own proposals (see for instance, Hamel et al., 2004). The intercultural model – which was imposed from the top-down- may represent a new possibility for negotiation.

CHAPTER 4: MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION, INTERCULTURALISM AND INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Three, I did a broad overview of the linguistic policies that have been implemented in Mexico over the last years. This review shows that these policies have moved from cultural and linguistic assimilation to the preservation of the native languages and cultures. The extent to which this has been accomplished is another issue, but at least at the formal level there has been a theoretical and methodological swing from monoculturalism to multiculturalism.

Despite the popularity of the term multicultural – and its related partner, intercultural – there is no consensus on what these concepts mean. The lack of agreement regarding the meaning of multiculturalism and interculturalism is a pervasive phenomenon in multicultural and intercultural education. The continuous academic, philosophical and political discussion regarding the meaning of both multiculturalism and interculturalism creates a discursive space in which different actors can articulate their objectives and hopes, but also opens up a margin in which hegemonic forces can operate to maintain the status quo. For instance, in an educational model imposed from the top-down, it is up to the school system to define how key concepts such as diversity and culture are to be understood and how to address them in the curriculum. This cooptation may deactivate the "subversive" goals of the models and steer them towards more

institutional objectives. As I have shown in the previous chapter, this has not been an uncommon event in indigenous education in Mexico.

The history of indigenous education has continuously shown that the State's goals have prevailed over the wishes of the indigenous groups; therefore, it is necessary to explore in which ways the intercultural model of education may indeed represent a feasible educational alternative for the autonomy and development of the ethnic minorities.

In this chapter I will briefly analyze the concept of interculturalism and its evolution. I will also explore the connections between multicultural and intercultural education, and finally I will present how the Mexican school system has defined intercultural education and the legal framework that supports it. Understanding the polysemy of both interculturalism and intercultural education will allow us to uncover how different actors articulate their discourses, and how these discourses overlap or divert, creating in this way a stratified concept.

4.2 MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Although the roots of multiculturalism can be traced back to the late 60s, the institutionalization of multicultural education has a shorter history. The term multiculturalism became relevant in the context of curriculum reform in public schools in the United States during the 1980s. Academics (mainly those of Marxist and feminist tendencies) who were concerned about the portrayal of European, male and protestant culture as the norm for the rest of the world, pointed out the marginalization of the contributions – and the oppression – of other ethnic groups and women. In addition to criticizing "white supremacy," there was a strong rejection of

concepts such as race as a valid category of analysis, so the term "culture" acquired new importance as an explanation for different human experiences (Dietz, 2001).

In the area of education, the recognition of difference was a response against paradigms that considered differences either as threats to national unity or as deficiencies. In the first case, educational models were based on the idea that children should assimilate to the mainstream culture through education; therefore, schools should provide the linguistic and cultural experiences that would fade out and eventually eliminate their native culture. Assimilation models included immersion programs that rejected any bilingual or bicultural instruction. Assimilation models also included segregationist programs that were also aimed at transculturing children while maintaining them conveniently apart from the majority of students. Native cultures and languages were not only seen as a threat for national unity, but also as the reason of the academic problems of minority and immigrant children. Their languages and cultures were deficient for academic achievement, which in turn created low socio-economic status (SES). These cultural and linguistic deficiencies should be compensated through education. Compensatory programs focused on providing children with the skills to succeed in school, but very often that meant renouncing their mother tongues and cultures in order to be accepted in mainstream schools.

In this context, multicultural education was conceived as a way to provide fairer conditions for the minorities to develop their cultural identity, to improve school achievement, and to provide minority students' with the same opportunities as their white peers to fully participate in society.

The multicultural perspective in Mexico fueled the indigenous movements of the 1970s that resulted in modifications to the curriculum of indigenous education, mainly those concerned

with the use of the mother tongue as a valid means of instruction, and the preservation of the students' cultural identity. Although the resulting bicultural program could be classified as multiculturalist was ultimately transitional as I showed in Chapter Two.

Just as in the case of multiculturalism, it is difficult to offer a clear definition of multicultural education because its meaning depends on the model in question (for a review see García Castaño et al., 1997). In addition, multicultural education is not a monolithic entity: it is in constant evolution both at the theoretical and practical levels. According to Gorski and Covert (1996; 2000) multicultural education focuses on three major objectives: individuals, the schools, and society. I will analyze each objective separately.

1)   The individual

Multicultural education acknowledges the intrinsic dignity of all human beings, their human rights and their capacity for learning. Since individuals are cultural entities, multicultural education also recognizes the need to provide the necessary conditions that ensure the development of both their cognitive skills and cultural identity as a requirement to achieve the students' full potential.

In addition to developing their potential as individuals, students need to be prepared to function in an increasingly multicultural society. This implies the acquisition of academic, work and communicative competences, but above all, the acquisition of critical thinking that allows them to analyze their own prejudices and approach other groups with an open mind.

2)   Schools and education

Although multicultural education has three objectives, the change of schools and education plays a central role because of the role of schools in reproducing social hierarchies and structures (Bourdieau and Passeron, 1990). Academics and social researchers working under the

theoretical frame of multiculturalism have pointed out the need to implement multicultural programs aimed at changing the curriculum and the function of schools. Such programs would have the ultimate objective of transforming institutions and society at large. As a way to start the discussion, multiculturalists have pointed out that most of the problems concerning low achievement were localized in children from ethnic minorities (mainly blacks and Latinos). Although the influence of other variables were later acknowledged (e.g., family income, parents' education level), the ethnic component was taken as a starting point (Dietz, 2001)

Multiculturalism has emphasized the notion of identity not only in terms of personal development, but also as a social phenomenon, since some groups tended to identify with their peers rather than with the national community (e.g., Chicanos, Puerto Ricans). Therefore, it was essential to address cultural identities in schools. Multiculturalists argue (see Duarte and Smith, 2000; Dietz, 2001) that traditional schools and curricula deprive minority students from opportunities to develop their cultural identities since almost the totality of the history and knowledge presented in the schools does not reflect the students' experiences. Indeed, traditionally, schools tend to be Eurocentric (even in Latin America), showing the arts, history and science of Europe and the westernized dominant elites. Indigenous knowledge is plainly ignored or presented as an archeological relic. Thus, the curriculum had an acculturating effect instead of fostering the cultural development of the students.

Castenell and Pinar (1993) have discussed how curriculum can be understood as a racialized text. That is, the knowledge that is presented to children as well as the way it is taught reflects the way in which a society wants to be seen and how it represents its own identity. By excluding some groups (e.g., African Americans) or by constructing an official history and identity that ignores the oppression and resistance of minorities, the majority effectively silences

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the voices of the Others, presenting a homogenized view of society that legitimates their own interests.

Mainstream schools fail to provide minority children with adequate learning conditions because it creates cultural, pedagogic and affective conditions that have adverse effects on the students' learning. There are several examples (see for example Heath, 1983; Vogt, Jordan and Tharp, 1993) in the literature regarding minorities (be it ethnic, linguistic or economic) in which the mismatch between the schools' and students' culture translates into low achievement, failure and higher school drop-out rates. By restructuring the curriculum to make it inclusive of other voices and experiences, the schools strengthen the identity of minorities and help mainstream students "appreciate" the contributions of other groups. It is expected that learning about the Others will combat erroneous perceptions that produce prejudice and racism.

Multicultural education also focuses on deconstructing those pedagogic methods that favor some groups over others. For instance, educational discourse analysts have uncovered how teachers inadvertently reinforce the participation of boys in class discussions, and marginalize girls, who tend to have less competitive interaction styles (see for example Kelly, 1988).

In the transformation of schools and education, teachers have a pivotal role. The educational profession has tended to be apolitical in the sense that teachers tend to perceive themselves as deliverers of knowledge, not as agents of social change (Ginsburg and Lindsay,1995; Ginsburg, 1995). Multiculturalism (particularly critical multiculturalism) invites teachers to take an active role in questioning their practice and reflecting on how it may reinforce inequalities. In addition, teachers need to modify their techniques and materials to make them more inclusive of other cultural experiences and to make it more accessible to other learning styles and preferences.

3)   Society

The ultimate goal of multicultural education is the transformation of society. Only through providing all individuals – no matter their ethnic, linguistic, cultural background or gender – the same opportunities to access resources (be it educational, economic or cultural) and develop their cultural identities would it be possible to achieve a democratic society.

The extent to which multicultural education has been effective or even doable can be debated. For instance, Grinter (1992) offers an interesting critique to multicultural education in the UK. He comes to the conclusion that it has failed to change the economic and social conditions that perpetuate inequalities for minorities (especially blacks), because multiculturalism is essentially flawed at its theoretical conception: prejudice and racism by themselves are not the direct cause of the marginalization of minorities. Instead, we should understand how economic structures are racialized. That is to say, the unequal distribution of economic resources has been naturalized under a dominant ideology that poses "whiteness" at the top of the hierarchy. Thus, racism and prejudice cannot be understood only as a problem of incorrect perception and ignorance; rather, we should look at them as an articulation of class and economic elements. Interestingly, Banks (1992a) refutes Grinter's criticism by claiming that multicultural education cannot be understood outside its cultural, social, economic and political context, and argues that at least in the US, multicultural education has been more successful in part because it represents a progressive ideology that attempts to empower marginalized groups in society. Finally, Banks wonders to what extent criticisms to multicultural education are products of academic discussions in the absence of advances in practical strategies that can be used in the classroom.

Grinter and Banks' discussion reveals some deep fractures in multicultural education. Despite Bank's (1992b, p. 89) argument that most advances in the field of multicultural education are at the theoretical level, many criticisms stem from the fact that there is not a theoretical consensus in the definition of key concepts such as multiculturalism, culture, multicultural education, its goals and procedures. These theoretical struggles reflect different theoretical preoccupations about how to deal with diversity and the challenges to citizenship and education that it poses.

In their analysis of multicultural education, Duarte and Smith (2000) identify four theoretical perspectives under which different models of multicultural education can be classified: ethnic-studies multiculturalism, antiracist education, critical multiculturalism and liberal multiculturalism[26]. The last two are relevant for the purposes of this project because as I will show later on, there are resonances in the Discourses of the participants of this project. I will examine these perspectives in depth before addressing the theoretical shift from multiculturalism to interculturalism.

4.2.1 Ethnic studies multiculturalism

This perspective is rooted on the assumption that schools have suppressed some ethnic groups from the curriculum, which has helped to perpetuate the cultural hegemony of the white majority. Such exclusion has had bad repercussions in the students' self-esteem and pride about their cultural heritage. In view of these two elements, early ethnic studies advocated not only the inclusion of minority history and knowledge in the school curriculum, but also for the separation

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[26] I use Duarte and Smith's (2000) classification as the basis for the analysis, but provide further information that helps understand the main issues in each model.

of minority students in institutions that would help them develop a cultural identity through the exploration of their collective experience.

Ethnic multiculturalism has evolved from curricular reform towards the institutionalization of this perspective in institutions of higher education. Black and Latino studies departments in colleges and universities now deal with the same issues of power imbalances based on race or ethnicity, and are engaged in the struggle for eliminating it through granting minority students the same access to resources and educational opportunities as their white peers.

4.2.2 Antiracist education

Antiracist education stems from the disappointment of researchers with conservative views of multiculturalism, since it has failed to solve the minorities' major concerns (e.g., access to education and jobs, equal wages). Contrary to its goals, the institutionalization of multiculturalism has effectively reinforced the status quo, subverted minority resistance, and maintained inequalities by focusing on cultural enrichment and psychological factors (i.e., self-esteem and identity), which deflects attention away from the real causes of the minorities' social and economic problems.

Antiracist education poses that multiculturalism is flawed in its assertion that the cause of racism is attitudinal. On the contrary, antiracist education sees power imbalances from a Marxist perspective that explains the roots of racism on the unequal distribution and accumulation of capital and the exploitation of the proletariat. Historically, poor voluntary or involuntary immigrants have been forced to accept low-paying jobs, which benefit the employers

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by keeping wages low, but affect the local workers who are forced to accept lower wages in order to be competitive. The tensions created by this unfair system are blamed on the non-white competitors and not on the manipulations of capital. Those who support antiracist education say that despite the competition element, whites have had higher social mobility in society because of the social and economic structures that were established by Europeans (or its descendants) through slavery, colonization or conquest. In this context, racism functions as an ideology that has been historically used to naturalize the dominance of whites in order to maintain the hegemony of the ruling elites. Such ideology of white superiority cannot be combated only through educational actions that focus on changing attitudes. Antiracist education also rejects multiculturalism's idea about the possibility of perfecting social structures and the assimilation of different cultural components into a harmonic society. On the contrary, society is an arena of conflict in which dominant values tend to be imposed over non-whites; therefore, it does not make much sense to concentrate solely on moral values when the root of the problem is economic (Grinter, 1992; Troyna, 1993). Furthermore, antiracists question the assertion that schools function to prepare minority students with the skills that allow them to participate on equal grounds in society. Quite the contrary, since schools are part of the capitalist system, schools work "not to achieve equality, but quite the reverse: to reinforce inequality" (Willis,1981, p. x).

Antiracists also call for the politicization of schools and curriculum. As Thomas (1984) argues, "antiracist education is also political education" (p. 24). This means that students should learn how to question the structural, economic and social roots of inequality in order to confront the effects of racism on the students' lives (no matter their ethnic background). Students need to transform themselves from receivers of knowledge to active agents of social change through

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critical analysis. For instance, by detecting and challenging stereotypical views (e.g., Latinos are lazy) that perpetuate racism in schools and society at large.

In order to politicize education, teachers would have a pivotal role since they are the ones in charge of actually implementing the antiracist curriculum. Sleeter (1996) has pointed out that teachers tend to minimize the impact and extent of racial prejudice (both in psychological and material aspects) since racism is considered an individual expression rather than institutionalized phenomena. Therefore, teachers need to be aware of the ways in which racism penetrates all aspects of their profession, and acknowledge the role they have not only in transforming schools but also society.

Antiracist education has been widely criticized. First, it is considered more political propaganda than actual pedagogy. Second, teachers and parents are opposed to the idea of schools functioning as a center for politics (Shaw, 1992). Also, antiracist education has been criticized (Mansfield and Kehoe, 1994) for being "reductionist." That is, by focusing on race, they are actually deflecting attention away from other forms of discrimination (i.e., religious, linguistic, gender). Furthermore, by using race as an explanatory construct antiracist educators may be validating racists' claims about the legitimacy of this concept to explain non-white oppression. Finally, antiracist education suffers from the same illness as other approaches to multicultural education: it is more a theoretical construct than applied pedagogy. Antiracist education needs to clarify and refine its methodology, particularly concerning how to address prejudice, because there is some evidence (albeit not very strong) that antiracist interventions in the classrooms may change the students' attitudes but not their actual behavior (McGregor, 1993). In other words, instructing children about racism may help change what they express but not what they do when they interact with others.

Ethnic-studies multiculturalism and antiracist education are essentially opposed views despite their coincidences on core issues such as dialogue across groups, the need of ridding school curricula of cultural biases and the importance of mother tongues in instruction. Antiracists have rejected any attempts to merge perspectives arguing that both approaches are incommensurable (Grinter, 1992).

4.2.3 Critical multiculturalism

Although Duarte and Smith separate critical multiculturalism from antiracist education, this division is rather artificial since there are elements that appear in both perspectives. Some authors (e.g., Merino and Muñoz-Sedano, 1998) locate antiracist education within the critical multiculturalism paradigm. Therefore, it is important to understand critical multiculturalism as a theoretical hybrid, based on neo-Marxist theory and postmodern thought.

Just as in the case of antiracist education, critical multiculturalism criticizes the cultural (as well as political and social) hegemony exerted by the ruling elites, but does not limit itself to a racialized analysis. Critical multiculturalism shares with critical discourse analysis a preoccupation about the role of language and representation in the construction of meaning and identity. It sees identities as both social and discursive products, not intrinsic characteristics of human beings or groups. Such identities, in turn, are structured by the way educators talk about certain groups. For instance, depending on their ethnic origin or social status students can be classified as at-risk, culturally deprived or learning-disabled. Furthermore, Critical multiculturalism criticizes liberalism's apparent tolerance to difference. Indeed, the belief that all

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cultures may conciliate their differences and live together overlooks how power and privilege have worked to create inequalities from differences (McLaren, 1995).

The works of Paulo Freire, Pierre Bourdieu and Michael Foucault have heavily influenced critical multiculturalism and its pedagogical expression: critical pedagogy. Contrary to common assumptions that deem schools as democratic centers that provide students with the knowledge and skills to achieve social mobility, Bourdieu and Passeron (1990 [1977]) argue that schools – despite their democratic disguise – are sites destined to reproduce the cultural superiority of the ruling classes in order to maintain hegemony. Schools, through their structure, curriculum, knowledge and practices, make sure that the cultural capital (i.e., ways of thinking, knowledge, skills, values and academic credentials) of the economic elites are seen as the only legitimate forms in society. Cultural capital also facilitates the acquisition of social capital (i.e., relations, group memberships) and symbolic capital (i.e., credentials) that determines the status quo of an individual. Thus, children need to go through a stratified school system that favors the ways of dominant classes in order to get the knowledge, credentials and relations that validate them in the social hierarchy that allows them to "succeed." Those students who resist the symbolic violence of schools are subject to failure or drop-out. This failure is blamed on the personal characteristics of the child or the deprived culture from which they come, not on the structural organization of schools. Thus, one of the most democratic institutions of society (school) is in reality an instrument for the reproduction of inequalities. As Bourdieu expressed, his theory proposes a:

> …model of the social mediations and processes which tend, behind the backs of the agents engaged in the school system – teachers, students, and their parents – and often against their will, to ensure the transmission of cultural capital across generations and to stamp pre-existing differences in inherited cultural capital with a meritocratic seal of academic consecration by virtue of the special symbolic potency of the *title* (credential). Functioning in the manner of a huge

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classificatory machine which inscribes changes within the purview of the structure, *the school helps to make and to impose the legitimate exclusions and inclusions which form the basis of the social order....* And, in societies which claim to recognize individuals only as equals in right, the educational system and its modern nobility only contribute to disguise, and thus legitimize, in a more subtle way the arbitrariness of the distribution of powers and privileges which perpetuates itself through socially uneven allocation of school titles and degrees. (1990, p. x, emphasis mine)

Paulo Freire (2005) also criticized the traditional forms of school and schooling. An advocate for adult and informal education, Freire believed that schools have adopted a "banking" model. That is, teachers deliver knowledge while students serve as repository (just like making a deposit at a bank). "Banking" is identified with traditional forms of education in which students memorize and repeat, and submit to the teacher's authority. Critical thinking is excluded as a way to control the students' actions and creative impulses. Freire proposes a libertarian pedagogy that aims at awakening the students' consciousness in order to transform reality. For Freire, educational activity should be dialogical (and not just curricular), in which both students and teachers engage in a dialogue, working with each other and teaching each other. This dialogue also opens the door to incorporate the students' experience as a valid form of knowledge, and is also a step towards the transformation of oppressive social structures through praxis (which can be understood as a cycle of theorizing and action that leads to social change).

From the above authors and works, critical multiculturalism incorporates into its theoretical framework a preoccupation to question and challenge domination, and to develop students' critical consciousness. In order to understand the relationship between power, knowledge and domination, the notion of Discourse has been adopted from the work of Michel Foucault. Since power is situated within legitimized forms of knowledge, critical pedagogy aims at identifying which Discourses are privileged and which ones are denied access to educational

institutions. Therefore, the goal is to restore the suppressed voices (i.e., women, linguistic and cultural minorities, the poor) in the classroom, the curriculum and the schools at large. Thus, schools need to become a site for social struggle and political action.

Critical educators, such as Henri Giroux, Michael Apple and Peter McLaren have developed models that have as its ultimate goal the transformation of pedagogy from an apolitical entity to a politicized practice.[27] For instance, Giroux (1995) proposes to create an "insurgent multiculturalism," which is not "a multiculturalism that is limited to a fascination with the construction of identity, communicative competence and the celebration of tolerance. Instead, I want to shift the discussion of multiculturalism to a pedagogical terrain in which relations of power and racialized identities become paramount as part of a language of critique and possibility" (p. 120).

Both Giroux and McLaren are interested in raising consciousness within not only the oppressed, but also the dominant groups, whose power has been naturalized by discourse and socioeconomic structures. By deconstructing the ideologies that have positioned "whiteness" as the standard against which other groups are compared, it is expected that students from dominant groups question their own status. In addition, Giroux (1995) also argues that it is necessary to move beyond liberalism's emphasis on difference and challenge essentialist ideas such as "blackness," "poorness," "femaleness," etc., in order to empower oppressed groups.

Critical multiculturalism has been criticized on the same grounds that antiracist education. That is, the appropriateness of joining political action and education. In addition, the

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[27] Although these authors focus primarily on the United States, their ideas have been taken up by some other pedagogues who work in multicultural settings. For instance, see the work of Jorge Gasche (1997) with indigenous teachers in Peru. Although he does not describe his own work as founded on critical pedagogy, I believe he belongs to this theoretical tradition.

strong Marxist ideas and its emphasis in questioning what has been identified as the ways of the WASP (white, Anglo-Saxon, protestant) have ruffled some feathers in conservative circles.

4.2.4 Liberal multiculturalism

Perhaps this is the theoretical perspective that is most commonly identified with multicultural education. Modern multicultural democratic societies are concerned with making possible that people from different linguistic, economic and ethnic backgrounds live together in respect and equality. However, the multicultural condition poses specific problems for the traditional conception of education. For instance, as liberalism proposes, treating students without regard to ethnicity, race, gender, socioeconomic status, religion or any other trait assures fairness of treatment and guards the democratic principle of equality under the rule of law. Thus, liberal multiculturalism is concerned with reconciling individual rights with collective interests.

However, critiques to liberal pluralism point out that equal treatment for minority groups may not be non-discriminatory or guarantee the same outcomes for them. Indeed, granting access to school to children from disadvantaged groups does not mean that they will have the same opportunities to be as academically successful as their mainstream peers, or ever worse, that they will have the same opportunities in the job market. For liberal multiculturalism, the problem does not reside in the unfairness of economic or social structures, but on the creation and application of laws that maintain balance and grant equal access to institutional resources to disadvantaged groups. Since multiculturalism acknowledges the existence of diverse groups in society, there is a strong emphasis on respecting difference and finding common grounds on which they can agree and live together in a stable society; however, as McLaren (1995) points out, such

difference is respected as long as there is some "family resemblance" to the mainstream culture. Therefore, radical departures are not allowed since contrary to its stated Discourse, the ideology behind multiculturalism is one of sameness: the belief that everybody is able to compete in a capitalist society no matter their background. This view has been deeply questioned because of the historic, social, structural and even attitudinal problems that prevent disadvantaged groups from accessing resources and achieving social mobility. Thus, multiculturalism's respect for difference is only a mechanism that reinforces homogeneity. As McLaren argues (1993, p. 130, rephrasing Ebert, 1991), "socioeconomic relations of power require distinctions to be made among groups …in order to organize subjects according to the unequal distribution of privilege and power."

Liberal multicultural education assumes the perfectibility of social structures – without necessarily a political or economic transformation. Thus, issues like racism or prejudice are not considered problems caused by unequal distribution of economic resources or by the institutionalization of ideologies that have protected the vested interests of dominant groups. On the contrary, liberal multicultural education explains prejudice as a psychological/perceptual problem that should be addressed by providing students with more information and by teaching the students how to interact. In this sense, the school's action is transformative but not political. For the aforementioned reasons, some critics such as Grinter (1992) argue that antiracist education (and I would say more critical views) are theoretically incommensurable with liberal multiculturalism, closing the possibility to any reconciliation; however, in the last few years there has been an increasing awareness in multicultural education about the need to be concerned with issues beyond the inclusion of ethnicity and culture in the curriculum and address issues

like discrimination, justice and equality (see Mansfield and Kehoe, 1994). These issues are taken up by intercultural education.

4.3 MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION AT LARGE

It is beyond the scope of this project to evaluate the effectiveness of multicultural education. There has been plenty of controversy about it in educational literature in the last years. For instance, Nieto (1995) shows how multicultural education has been criticized by the right as subversive against the cannon, and by the left, which argues that multicultural education is utterly romantic. Even worse, the counter hegemonic value of multicultural education has been questioned because if on one hand it gives recognition to minorities, on the other it deflects attention away from structural issues that perpetuate their lower status quo (Whitty, 1985). Despite these criticisms, I believe that multicultural education is important because it addressed the possibility of creating a type of education that is non-homogenizing and respectful to cultural difference, which opened the door to proposals such as bilingual education.

In Mexico, the discussion about multicultural education has been idiosyncratic,[28] marked by the presence and struggle of indigenous groups for the recognition of their languages and cultures. But although the discussion about multicultural education in the United States has centered on the recognition and maintenance of difference, in the last few years Europe and Latin America has shifted the discussion from the acknowledgement of difference to the interaction between different cultures, or interculturalism. However, there seems to be some controversy regarding the meaning and the goals of intercultural education. In the next sections I will address

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[28] The word "multicultural education" does not appear in the mainstream Mexican educational context; however, it is possible to find the concept in the educational programs aimed at indigenous minorities.

some of the overlaps and disjunctions between multiculturalism and interculturalism, and the concept of intercultural education as it has been defined by the educational community and the Mexican school system.

4.4 WHAT IS INTERCULTURALISM?

In the literature on multicultural education, there seems to be juxtaposition between the concepts of multicultural education and intercultural education. Indeed, some researchers choose to use them interchangeably (e.g., Cushner, 1998), while others explain any differences as purely contextual: multiculturalism is a term preferred in the U.S., while Europe and Latin American favor interculturalism instead[29]. Bueno (1997) has strongly criticized the bifurcation between multicultural and intercultural education:

> This false polemic or irrelevant debate…is originated when there is a manifest attempt to disjoint the richness that emerges from this body of knowledge, when it is forcibly attempted to silence the strength and depth of this discussion. That is to say, when it is attempted to shift doubts towards a linguistic and semantic question, trying to avoid the profound questions. (Bueno, 1997, section 2.1, para. 2. my translation)

Contrary to what Bueno asserts, the difference between multicultural and intercultural education is not a semantic one. The epistemological bases of each perspective determine its goals, objectives, target population and methodology among other areas. The debate between multiculturalism and interculturalism revolves around basic ideas of liberalism and democratic societies. Liberal democracies are based on the principle of a shared national identity that

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[29] Olivé (1999) argues that the term "multiculturalism" is related to different epistemological and ethic perspectives, which creates an enormous variability in multicultural models. Thus, in some contexts multiculturalism is identified with progressive views (mostly based on Neo-Marxism) while in some other cases, multiculturalism is used in conservative manners, to actually use difference as an excuse to maintain segregation and inequalities.

emphasizes unity above difference. Those individuals who share an identity are also citizens whose rights (e.g., freedom, citizenship and equality before the law) are universal and homogeneous. On the other side, as I explained in the previous section, multiculturalism emphasizes difference. This focus on difference is multiculturalism's major strength and weakness since concentrating on difference may lead to reinforcing the isolation of minorities. Giovanni Sartori (2001) believes that multiculturalism as it is currently understood is a political program that fosters social rupture by affirming difference. He proposes to use the idea of pluralism – or the genetic code of a free society – to denote the degree of "openness" of a society. Open societies have three main characteristics: 1) critical rationalism; 2) individual freedom; and 3) tolerance. Pluralism is closely related to tolerance and diversity. Pluralism implies tolerance, respect and acceptance of diversity (be it ethnic, cultural or ideational); however, there is a critical difference: tolerance respects values that belong to others, while pluralism acknowledges and assumes them as its own values (as a society). Pluralism is aware of the differences that emerge when there is interaction among human groups, and considers dissent as something that enriches the human experience. Sartori also claims that despite pluralism's respect for diversity, it is not obliged to create it, since a diverse society might not be the best option for its survival. But in view of diversity, pluralism is required to create an intercultural dialogue, in which conflicts are resolved by an adjustment process in which different interests are conciliated. Thus, pluralism's basic principle is neither consensus not conflict, but a dialectical relationship that ensures intercultural peace through the reciprocal acknowledgment of the groups involved.

Pluralism's embrace of intercultural dialogue opposes multiculturalism's emphasis on difference. For Sartori, multiculturalism is antipluralist because it rejects mutual recognition and

privileges separation over integration. For these reasons, multiculturalism creates the very problem that it is trying to fight. On one hand, multiculturalism promotes equality, but on the other hand, it makes visible differences, which reinforces and even multiplies them. By creating cleavages (i.e., dividing lines) along race, gender, religion or other dimensions, multiculturalism obstructs intercultural dialogue, which results in the "dismembering" of a pluralist community to produce closed and homogeneous communities (Sartori, 2001, p. 127).

Multiculturalism acknowledges the existence of diverse groups in a society, while pluralism emphasizes its dialogical interaction. This relationship is called interculturalism. Just as in the case of multiculturalism, it is difficult to offer a definition for interculturalism because of the different models and social-historical contexts involved. The idea of multiculturalism in Europe has emerged as the result of recent migrations mainly from Africa and Latin America. These voluntary immigrants[30] pose new citizenship problems for western societies which are finding it difficult to accommodate the new "arrivals" without necessarily assimilating them. The idea of interculturalism offers a ground on which a basic understanding about the rules for living together can be established while maintaining respect. On the other hand, interculturalism in Latin America has focused on questioning the basis of nation-States – that is, on the ideology of *mestizaje* and the exclusion of indigenous peoples resulting from a history of colonization. Thus, interculturalism in Latin America goes beyond the simple acknowledgement of difference.

Although in its initial conception interculturalism focused on recognizing diversity and cultural identities, it evolved over time to a reflection on the conditions that created social, economic and cultural asymmetries and the need to renovate the concept of citizenship on the

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[30] The idea of voluntary immigrants has been questioned on the light of the socio-economic problems that have forced millions of people out of their country. The term "economic refugee" has been used to refer to this kind of population.

light of a national project based on intercultural principles (Moya and Moya, 2004). In this process, the idea of intercultural dialogue has been deeply questioned. Indeed, is it possible to talk about a dialogue between equals when there is an enormous imbalance in power? Obviously, the current conditions of democracy in Latin America are not favorable for an intercultural society; therefore, interculturalism aims at changing such conditions through action and a dialogic relationship between the involved cultures. In summary, interculturalism can be understood as a "process of social negotiation that from a reality strongly marked by conflict and asymmetric power relations, looks to build dialogic and fair relations between social actors who belong to different cultural realms on the basis of acknowledgment of diversity" (RIF educators, 2004, section 3.2, para. 5. my translation). Interculturalism is a continuous dialogue that replaces ethnocentric views, establishes a mechanism that regulates interaction between cultures and guarantees them space to develop their autonomy (Cunningham, 2201 p. 20). The broad political agenda of interculturalism has led some researchers to see it as a Utopia (Klesing-Kempel, 1996; Schmelkes, 2001b) that is necessary to achieve through the modification of the whole society and its institutions.

Interculturalism has been seen as a way to harmonize conflict and to allow minority groups to have a voice; however, critical perspectives reject this utopian vision. Indeed, traditional views of interculturalism focus on the positive aspects of interculturalism (e.g., tolerance, respect, democracy) but tend to neglect realities. As Morales (2000) points out, there are many types of interculturalisms that could range from relatively pacific interaction to extreme violence. For instance, the intercultural relationships between the indigenous peoples and mestizos in Guatemala are conflictive, marked by systematic, social, political and economic injustices.

Under critical perspectives, multiculturalism can be considered as an instrument of capitalism in the world system, which creates a hegemonic fiction regarding human rights and the possibility of justice without changing the underlying economic system. Slavoj Žižek (1998) argues that multiculturalism is the ideology of global capitalism, which attempts to maintain its hegemony by promoting a respectful attitude towards ethnic groups, and yet this attitude continues being Eurocentric and racist. Just as Blommaert and Verschueren (1998) point out, the discourse of tolerance is creating a new racism, one that respects the identity of the Others, but intrinsically rejects diversity and affirms its own superiority. My own notion of interculturalism lay along these critical opinions. I consider interculturalism as a Discourse and political response to the challenges posed by globalization and its effects on the composition of traditional nation-States. Under the discursive acceptance of diversity and tolerance, interculturalism continues to be a State policy based on the interests and priorities of hegemonic groups. In addition, by portraying interculturalism as a utopia, it delays and justifies the difficulties of reaching its goals. Nonetheless, interculturalism may represent an opportunity for indigenous minorities to acquire political power (including autonomy) if interculturalism is founded on their own interests and controlled by themselves – that is, a type of interculturalism created and regulated from the indigenous social basis and supported by the global community. In this way, indigenous populations may be able to articulate their own projects within the cultural and social policies of the State, which for the first time is constrained by a Discourse of tolerance sanctioned and watched by the international community. Interculturalism can be a liberatory reality – and not just a utopia – if the indigenous communities engage in dialogue and political action.

Globalization plays an enormous role in the emergence of interculturalism. In fact, one of the reasons identified by the Mexican educational system as a propeller of intercultural education

is globalization. In the following section, I will analyze the interplay of globalization, citizenship and interculturalism.

4.5 GLOBALIZATION, INTERCULTURALISM AND CITIZENSHIP

Dietz (2001) believes that multiculturalism can potentially transform national identities, and in fact it is redrawing the boundaries of the nation-State towards the global community. Gibson-Graham (1996, p. 121, mentioned in Stromquist and Monkman, 2000, p. 4) defines globalization as "a set of processes by which the world is rapidly being integrated into one economic space via increased international trade, the internationalization of production and financial markets, the internationalization of a commodity culture promoted by an increasingly networked global telecommunication system." This process – as the definition implies – has effects at several levels. Stromquist and Monkman identify three domains: the economic, the political and the cultural.

1) The Economic and Political Domains

Free trade and international enterprises have changed the role of the State to a mediator of the market. The market has overgrown the State, but the dangers posed by the market are no less than the ones imposed by authoritarian States. Indeed, free market does not mean prosperity and freedom for everybody. Markets are controlled by multinational enterprises whose best interests are financial, not necessarily the needs of the poor. On the contrary, one of the structural effects of globalization is the expansion of economic inequalities. In view of the weakening of the State, international organizations and civil society have acquired new power to pressure governments to enter in a Discourse of tolerance, respect to human rights and democratization. In

addition, the increased intercultural contact due to mass media and immigration has brought about awareness about ethnic and cultural diversity.

2) The Cultural Domain

The influence of technology and industry has created new consumption patterns and social division of labor. For instance, many manufacturing jobs that were typically occupied by men are now being taken by women. This new division of labor has altered traditional social roles, which in turn has generated violence against women, and increased immigration.[31]

The influence of the western culture has also tended to change traditional values and behaviors towards the so-called U.S. pop culture. The homogenization of culture facilitates the penetration of the market since it is easier to cover the demands of a common public. Together with culture, the English language is also spreading in what has been called "linguistic imperialism" (Pennycook, 2001). The expansion of a few languages is threatening the subsistence of minority languages. Indigenous tongues are perhaps the most endangered given the economic pressures that force minority speakers to leave their communities and the lack of resources and interest to preserve them; however, although globalization is indeed fostering a common culture, this is not a unilateral process. Cultural resistance emerges as a reaction to the extension of the "American way." The reaffirmation of ethnic identities and even fundamentalisms (e.g., religious, nationalism) provide a safe ground for the reproduction of cultures that seem threatened under globalization.

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[31] Perhaps the most important example in the way economic relations are changing traditional social roles is the case of the women of Ciudad Juárez, México. In about ten years, more than 500 women have disappeared or found dead in slums in Ciudad Juárez. Although most of the crimes have been attributed to organized crime, a percentage of the murders is due to sexual and gender violence. According to Livingston (2004) this violence is due in part to the changes in social roles pushed by economic factors in a strong patriarchal society

Although globalization is a quite visible phenomenon, just as in the case of interculturalism there are different points of view. Touraine (1996) affirms that globalization is not a description of the current economic environment, but an ideological construct of neoliberalism. García Canclini (1999) considers globalization as "a set of homogenization processes, and at the same time, an articulated fractioning of the world, that reorganizes differences and inequalities without suppressing them" (p. 49, my translation). This process not only has effects at the economic level, but also at the cultural one, in *imaginarios* (roughly understood as social representations).

Globalization is controlled by power centers (i.e., political and financial), with the aim of creating global cultural homogeneity. Despite the controversy surrounding globalization, it is undeniable that it is having major effects in the educational arena. Carnoy (2000) rejects the idea that the new economy has not created conditions that affect classroom life and the delivery of knowledge. Carnoy believes that the most profound effect of globalization so far is not at the pedagogical level, but at the ideological one. Under neoliberalism, the idea of education as a right has changed to education as a commodity. This has been accompanied by educational reforms lead by recommendations of international financial institutions to reduce public spending. For instance, in her study of educational reforms in Mexico during the years 1988-1994, Buenfil (2000) concludes that it is almost a translation of the suggestions made by the World Bank. Budgetary cuts and the decentralization of educational systems have created adverse conditions for poor countries that do not allocate enough money for education to its poorest districts. In addition, the financial responsibility of the cost of education has been shifted to parents who very often are unable to pay for the education of their children.

Globalization also has affected the way in which knowledge is created and circulated. Since the market dictates which areas require the most professionals, hard sciences and technology are receiving major monetary support, in detriment of arts and humanities.

In the previous chapter I showed how indigenous education (and education in general) has aimed at the construction of citizens. The intercultural model requires a type of citizen that is ready to live in and accept diversity. This is an enormous departure from cultural policies that fostered *mestizaje* and monoculturalism. In this new context, it is necessary to analyze the kind of challenges that interculturalism pose to traditional notions of citizenship, and the alternative model that emerges from an intercultural society. I will address this issue in the following section.

4.6 INTERCULTURAL CITIZENSHIP

The free market is blurring the borders between countries – and creating new ones too. Mass media allow the rapid flow of information and facilitates political, economic, social, cultural and scientific exchanges. A very real effect that we are witnessing is the weakening of the State under the influence of the free market. Paradoxically, this weakening has also created the necessary conditions for transnational legal systems that protect universal rights (Gómez Dacal, 2003). In the context of a globalized world, what is the role that schools should play in the formation of citizens?

One of the main objectives of schools is to prepare students to face the economic, social and cultural change that globalization brings. Ortega, Touriñán and Escámez (n.d. para. 3) identified education for citizenship as a strategic element for the well-functioning of society because of its influence on the creation of values necessary to live in a diverse society and

because education provides the basic competences to live in an increasingly complex world. Education has to focus on the formation of citizens who are able to actively interact in civil society and engage in an intercultural dialogue aimed at the creation of a democratic society (Martínez, 2006).

Giddens (1999) understands civil society as the space between the State and the market. In civil society, voluntary social organizations (e.g., NGOs) exert independent collective actions focusing on solving problems that have been created by the weakening of social policies controlled by a fading State. A case in point: indigenous communities in the Mexican state of Chiapas have decided to take on the education of their children in view of the State's inability to provide them with a linguistically and culturally suitable instruction. The community has defined the curriculum and trained and paid the teachers' salaries. Such teachers are speakers of the children's native language, and they are members of the community who are accountable to the community for the education that children receive. Such actions have been taken as a response to the ability of the State to satisfy their demands.

The emergence of civil society, as well as the gradual diversification of society in general has raised questions regarding the concept of citizenship upon which the relationship between the State and society is based. Traditionally, citizenship has been understood as a relationship between rights and obligations that are linked to nationality. That is, if a person is born in a Nation-State, then she is invested with rights and obligations that the State should guarantee. The idea of citizenship emerges with the Enlightenment as a defense against the privileges of aristocracy. To combat inequalities, the notion of equality before the law was developed. However, the notion of impartiality implied in the principle of equality before the law has been questioned because of the exclusion of certain social groups. As I have shown in Chapter Two,

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granting citizenship to the indigenous peoples in the 19th century did not mean real access to rights, but rather the attack to their communal lands that were protected under special legislation during the colony.

The relationship between cultural diversity and legal rights have exposed the need to reflect on citizenship and the possibility to accommodate ethnic, cultural, religious, gender (among other) differences under the same law. As Rosaldo (1994) has pointed out, citizenship is not a monolithic entity. Rather, people participate in citizenship in different degrees that are determined by factors such as sex, social class or ethnic group. Thus, it is necessary to think about citizenship as an intersection between different dimensions that could be understood as different levels of participation. RIF (2004, section 3.4) divides citizenship into five elements:

1) Citizenship in the "formal" sense: defined in terms of rights and obligations.

2) Citizenship as a practice: exerted through freedoms and access to services (e.g., education, healthcare, justice) and consumption.

3) Citizenship as a local dimension: exerted through participation in local and community governments.

4) Citizenship as a national dimension: this is the traditional notion of citizenship linked to nationality.

5) Citizenship as a supranational dimension: this implies belonging to a community beyond national borders (e.g., European Union).

If citizenship is understood as an intersection between the dimensions mentioned above, then it is possible to think about citizenship not only in terms of civic, political and economic

rights, but also in terms of cultural and social rights. Under this perspective, citizenship can be explained as a continuum to which a person can belong in different degrees. For instance, some ethnic groups may exert their citizenship in the formal sense at the national level, but in practice their rights may be denied when these groups do not have access to basic services such as education or healthcare. Because of the contradictions inherent in the concept of citizenship and the influence of multiculturalism, the discussion around the traditional concept of citizenship has been extended to include the idea of cultural citizenship. Rosaldo (1994) refers to cultural citizenship as:

> …a deliberate oxymoron, a pair of words that do not go together comfortably. Cultural citizenship refers to the right to be different and to belong in a participatory democratic sense. It claims that, in a democracy, social justice calls for equity among all citizens, even when such differences such as race, religion, class, gender, or sexual orientation potentially could be used to make certain people less equal or inferior to others. The notion of belonging means full membership in a group and the ability to influence one's destiny by having a significant voice in basic decisions. (p. 2)

As Rosaldo (2004) points out, the idea of cultural citizenship has been contested in academia and politics. It has been questioned because the relationship between culture and citizenship has not been explained, and because the proposals to realize cultural citizenship present serious theoretical and practical problems. However, in the Latin American debate surrounding indigenous communities, cultural citizenship has had resonance, particularly the model proposed by the political scientist Will Kymlicka.

From a liberal perspective,[32] Kymlicka (1995) asks about the relationship between ethnic minorities and multicultural States (i.e., States that acknowledge diversity). Kymlicka rejects the

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[32] Kymlicka writes from a liberal multicultural perspective that despite its interest in granting collective rights to national minorities, it prioritizes the rights of the individual. Since communities are thought to be aggregates of individuals, individuals morally precede and make possible the existence of the community. The community only

idea of the State's neutrality because the indiscriminate application of law may result in damage to minorities that need protection for their survival and reproduction. Kymlicka's ideas contradict liberalism's tenet of individual rights as leveler of difference. According to this point of view, equality would eliminate the need of special rights for certain groups, and therefore, it would guarantee equal treatment before the law. However, Kymlicka points out that individual rights have failed to take into account the characteristics of minority groups (e.g., linguistic, cultural, religious). Therefore, the problems of such groups cannot be solved, or even worse, the cultural basis that allow their survival have been attacked.

Kymlicka defined two types of States: 1) Polyethnic: this is mainly formed by immigrants, and 2) Multinational: this State still preserves original groups that were incorporated to the new nation through processes such as conquest or colonization. Kymlicka argues that there are three ways to think about rights for ethnic (or cultural) minorities in these two contexts. First, he describes polyethnic rights, which are aimed at protecting some cultural or religious characteristics of minorities in multiethnic States. For instance, under this law traditional costumes or the celebration of certain holidays would be protected. Second, the State should also offer rights to governmental autonomy in the case of national minorities. These rights would only be applicable to groups that are not immigrants, and that still maintain ties with the lands and cultures that existed previous to conquest or colonization. Because of their previous existence, they are entitled to maintain their identity as separate groups within the new nation.

facilitates the means for individuals to achieve their objectives regarding the "good life" (i.e., prosperity, happiness); therefore, it is up to individuals to decide which cultural practices are worth preserving or changing. In addition, the internal restrictions imposed by the community to its members are subordinated to the rights of individuals, who can choose to leave the community at anytime. On the contrary, the communitarian perspective rejects the idea of communities being mere aggregates of individuals. Individuals are seen as the historic product of the social and cultural practices of the community. Therefore, privileging the rights of the individuals above of those of the community would lead to the destruction of both the community and the individual. Communitarism seeks to achieve equilibrium between the rights of the individual and collective rights (Montecinos, 2004).

This would be the case of indigenous groups of Canada or Catalans in Spain. The third type of rights is the so-called political representation rights, and they are granted to minorities such as women, people with disabilities or members of the gay community because they are under-represented. Kymlicka claims that a true democracy needs to recognize ethnic and cultural difference through a representative system that includes these groups because traditionally they are silenced under the rule of white, middle-class men.

At first sight, Kymlicka's model attacks one of the basic tenets of liberalism: individual rights. However, instead of opposing individual rights, Kymlicka argues in favor of special rights for cultural minority groups. Group rights are considered a protection for the survival of the minority groups, without restricting the freedom of its members. Kymlicka makes two distinctions to this respect: 1) external protection: these are actions taken to defend the group against the pressures of the mainstream culture; 2) internal restrictions: these are limitations imposed by the cultural group to its own members against destabilizing effects from external influences. The group may restrict its members from going to public schools, but the group cannot impede an individual from making the decision to actually leave the group and form part of the mainstream society.

A criticism to Kymlicka's model is his notion of culture. Waldron (1999) argues that Kymlicka's model assumes that individuals are products of a single national or ethnic community. There is little space for interaction among cultures, and the stability of a cultural community is maintained by isolating the community and maintaining order from within. Perhaps the strongest criticism refers to the obstruction of intercultural dialogue because of the separation created by differentiated rights. Kymlicka (2002) acknowledges that indeed, there could be problems attaining an intercultural dialogue in multicultural states, but this is the result

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of peoples' proclivity to learn about the global culture instead of the "internal" cultures. For instance, it is more profitable to learn English to interact with the outside world, to carry out business, to travel, etc., than to learn Nahuatl or any other indigenous language. A truly multicultural State and intercultural citizenship should focus on fostering interculturality starting "at home" before advancing to the global scenario.

Despite the limited applicability of this model – it is limited to western, multicultural societies – Kymlicka's arguments have had resonance in the Latin American indigenous movements. The emphasis of indigenous movements is basically focused on the acknowledgment of social, linguistic and cultural marginalization, as well as in the recovery and defense of communal lands. As Aikman (1995) points out, there is a special relationship between the indigenous communities and their lands:

> …territory is a fundamental factor with respect to the indigenous peoples to preserve their cultural and spiritual costumes. The interdependency with the land, philosophy and cultural creativity is expressed in the every-day life and cultural groups of every indigenous group. Land is not valued just because of its' economic potential, but because it is the basis of cultural knowledge and the source of different indigenous philosophies It is the center of the practical use of learning and the source of history, development and wellbeing of indigenous [peoples]. (p. 666, my translation)

Kymlicka's model has been used to argue in favor of collective rights for indigenous minorities or "made minorities" (which implies a majority disempowered by the mainstream society), and the construction of intercultural citizenship. Moya and Moya (2004) are skeptical regarding the possibility of developing an intercultural citizenship because of the problems that collective rights create regarding the distinction between public and private rights. Moreover, collective rights challenge traditional conceptions about national identity, history, and the relationship between the State and groups that traditionally have been excluded from or

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forcefully assimilated into the national project. Cisneros (2004, p. 5) explains the rationale underlying collective rights for indigenous peoples:

> It is assumed that indigenous peoples and communities have the right to re-establish their linguistic and cultural unity and remaining prerogatives that belong to them, as well as of disposing of natural resources of their own territories and in its case, of the territorial waters that are included [in these territories] and utilize them for their development, progress and benefit of its members. Collective rights pose the official recognition of indigenous languages and the right to their everyday use in all aspects of social, politic, economic, legal, administrative or educational life. The recognition of territorial autonomy and the right to the use and exploitation of natural resources, both renewable and non renewable, as well as traditional forms of each community regarding land ownership also implies that the ancestral and communal property of the native Peoples is respected.

In Mexico, the discussion around collective or group rights emerged from the Zapatista rebellion in 1994, and the posterior peace talks between the Mexican government and the Zapatista Army. The "Acuerdos de San Andrés" signed in 1996 between the Zapatista representation and a peace committee was a blueprint for legal reforms that would grant the indigenous peoples collective rights. Despite the signing of the agreements, they were not materialized in its original form. It was argued that some of the proposals were in contradiction with constitutional rights such as that of private property and autonomy. In 2001 the government of Vicente Fox approved constitutional amendments that hypothetically reflected the demands of the "Acuerdos de San Andrés" but in reality constituted superficial reforms that did not allow indigenous communities to achieve autonomy from the State, which caused the suspension of the peace talks between the Zapatista army and the government.

Even in the case when certain advances were made, there are strong obstacles that prevent us from talking about collective rights. For instance, the "Ley General de Derechos Lingüísticos de los Pueblos Indígenas [General Law of Linguistic Rights of the Indigenous

Peoples]" (Cámara de Diputados, 2003) established both the collective and individual rights of peoples and indigenous communities to protect, use, develop and promote their indigenous languages. The law also declared indigenous languages as national languages and acknowledged their validity in legal courts, and public (e.g., education, communication, business) and private matters. However, in order to implement this law, other legislation was necessary to create as well as infrastructure (e.g., legal institutions), social awareness and education of both mainstream and indigenous populations. The lack of these elements has seriously affected the implementation of the law. A case in point: one of the provisions of the General Law was the creation of the National Institute of Indigenous languages, which would be in charge of strengthening, preserving and developing indigenous tongues. The shortage of resources to carry out a sociolinguistic census to systematize the data regarding the existing languages has created problems to define adequate plans of action according to the sociolinguistic situation of each language. Indeed, it is not possible to apply the same rules to endangered languages with only a few speakers left than to stronger languages that have an alphabet and are being written and circulated. In view of these obstacles Cuevas, (2004) concludes that linguistic rights in Mexico are still in early development. Cisneros (2004) goes beyond that, declaring that the Mexican State is not in a position to guarantee individual rights to indigenous persons (e.g., health, education) let alone collective ones.

In the educational discourse surrounding interculturality, the idea of "educating for intercultural citizenship" or more specifically, for "cosmopolitan citizenship" in a globalized world is a very prevalent one. Most of the discussion focuses on how to help students develop tolerance towards other cultures, and how to successfully communicate and solve conflicts, in order to develop an ethical citizen that is able to reflect on her attitudes and practices towards

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other groups, but most importantly, to accept difference as part of the human experience (see for example Cortina, 2000; Gozález, González, Marín and Martínez, 2004).

But is it possible to talk about cultural citizenship without acknowledging the collective rights of groups that have been traditionally excluded? Under such circumstances is it possible to establish an intercultural – and therefore egalitarian – dialogue? I think that the same questions raised by critical and antiracist multiculturalism regarding the lack of a political dimension in multicultural education apply to this case. Undeniably, the challenges created by globalization are forcing us to rethink the type of knowledge and competences required by children to interact in diversified societies. In Latin America and Europe, this task has been assigned to intercultural education.

4. 7 INTERCULTURALITY IN EDUCATION

It is interesting that educational institutions – an ideological apparatus as Habermas (1968) calls them – that have been used in the assimilation of ethnic minorities, have been designated with the task of making way for intercultural education. Traditionally, the inclusion of the discourse of interculturality in education is attributed to struggles of indigenous peoples to have their voices heard. Undoubtedly, this is one of the factors that contributed to a multicultural – and eventually to an intercultural – perspective in indigenous education; however, intercultural education was not a proposal of indigenous movements. On the contrary, in the case of Mexico, it appeared in academic circles and was later officially adopted by the school system. Muñoz Cruz (1997) argues that the intercultural discourse in education can be considered a new mechanism through which indigenous groups could be incorporated to the world economic

project of globalization. Indeed, educational reforms in Latin America have been supported by international organisms such as the World Bank, UNESCO, OIT, and UNICEF, among others.

As in the case of multiculturalism and interculturalism, it is difficult to offer a clear definition of what constitutes intercultural education. It has been described as a type of education based on the collective rights of indigenous nations to preserve their languages and cultures (Godenzzi, 1997; Zimmermann, 1997; Cunningham, 2001). Intercultural education also entails participation on equal terms with majority societies (Ramírez, 2001; Muñoz Cruz, 2002), it promotes tolerance (Kleymeyer, 1993), respect (Klessing-Rempel, 1996; Sifuentes, 1996), cultural understanding (Ramírez, 2001; López, 1997) and the valuing of indigenous scientific knowledge and cosmogonic views (Ramón, 1993; Hernández, 2001; Quishpe-Lema, 2001). In Europe – in addition to tolerance, respect and cultural understanding – intercultural education is aimed at creating conditions for peaceful interaction between immigrants and the local population, and at the solution of academic deficits and school "integration" problems suffered by immigrant children (e.g., García and Granados, 1999). The broadness of the concept shows interpretations that reflect different historic and social realities, but also theoretical problems.

Dietz (2001, p. 39) claims that the multicultural (and intercultural) discourse was "pedagogizised" too early. That is, since one of the main goals of multiculturalism was to solve the problems of a multicultural society, particularly those suffered by minority children at school, multicultural and intercultural education were institutionalized to face such problems, but there were some conceptual and practical problems that had not been solved. For instance, there is not a unified definition of what constitutes intercultural and multicultural education. Second, the debate about interculturalism tends to be restricted to the educational realm. Educators create academic Discourses that circulate among them, ignoring to a certain extent the social context in

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which they were originated and the possible connections with other social sciences. Finally, most intercultural education programs are not properly founded on empirical evidence. Many of the competences or "tools" held by interculturalism are thought to have effects on the students' attitudes, but there is not enough information to support this claim.

Despite the problems in defining intercultural education, it is possible to identify some common strands:

1) The acknowledgement of linguistic and cultural diversity as objects of public policies in multicultural societies (Muñoz Cruz, 1999).

2) The importance of language and culture in the constitution of identity, which has resulted in legislation aimed at preserving both factors.

3) The acknowledgment of the role of the first language in learning processes in general and second language learning in particular (Cummins, 1997; López, 1998; Hamel et al, 2004).

4) The need to formulate an intercultural pedagogy that includes not only linguistic and cultural elements from the minorities, but also a reconceptualization of which knowledge should be taught at school (curricular contents). Under this view, indigenous knowledge acquires legitimacy as academic knowledge. In addition, there is also the acknowledgement that learning is culturally situated and there are culturally determined ways to learn.

5) This pedagogy also implies new ways of interaction between teachers and students and a new role for the teachers as mediators between minority and majority students (Ipiña, 1997; Serrano, 1998).

6) The participation of communities is important in the construction of intercultural education. In this sense intercultural education attempts to be communitarian, or at least community based.

7) A democratizing discourse that proposes the equality of all cultures. Intercultural education is a defense of diversity and its cultural expressions. It is based on tolerance, respect and mutual enrichment through a dialogic relationship.

These strands address three dimensions at different levels: Pedagogical, methodological and political. Lopez (1997) offers a definition that comprises these three such elements:

> From education, interculturality is seen…as an option of educational policy, as pedagogic strategy and as a methodological approach. As an option for educational policy interculturality constitutes an alternative to the homogenizing approaches …and tends to the transformation of the relationships among societies, cultures and languages from a perspective of equality, pertinence and curricular relevance; [intercultural education] is considered…as a tool in the construction of a citizenship that is not based on the exclusion of the other and the different. As a pedagogic strategy, it constitutes a resource, a different and meaningful pedagogy in pluricultural and multilingual societies. As methodological approach, it is based on the need of rethinking the relationship between knowledge, language and culture in the classroom and the community, to consider the values, knowledge, languages and other cultural expressions of ethnically and culturally differentiated communities, as resources that help in the substantial transformation of pedagogic practice. (p. 57, my translation)

4.7. 1 Intercultural education as policy

Intercultural education in Latin America emerges as a response against bilingual bicultural education. Bilingual bicultural programs were transitional in essence. They used the language and the culture of the students to ease their assimilation into mainstream society. Bilingualism was implemented in a narrow way in most programs, since the students' mother tongue was used to achieve a threshold at which the students could start learning in their second language. In the same way, the concept of culture adopted by transitional approaches was limited to materials,

products or festivities, while conveying (through the use of textbooks, classroom practices, school festivals, the media, etc,) the superiority of the mainstream culture. These policies fostered subtractive bilingualism and monoculturalism through linguistic and cultural assimilation. Intercultural education as a policy aims at building a type of bilingual education that both maintains and develops the native languages. This is a radical change from other approaches, where the goal was the mere use of the indigenous languages with pragmatic purposes without necessarily having in mind its development, which implies a process of language planning, creation of new laws and institutions in charge of doing sociolinguistic and educational research. Intercultural education also aims at finishing assimilation and segregation by establishing harmonic and egalitarian relations between the groups involved. This is attained through a dialogue (interculturalism actually supposes a dialogic relationship) and the transformation of education through intercultural pedagogy that extends beyond schools to integrate families and communities.

Intercultural education as policy faces many problems because its implementation depends on human participation (e.g.., teacher education, administrator training, participation of families and communities, etc.,), materials (e.g., money, schools, textbooks, educational materials in general), and legislative support. Perhaps the latter is the area that needs most attention, since in the opinion of my informants, intercultural education has no strong basis since the institution in Mexico in charge of implementing it (CGEIB) does not have faculties to impose any changes, only to suggest them. In addition, profound legislative changes, especially those that lead to a new relationship with the State, are yet to be attained.

4.7.2 Intercultural education as pedagogic approach

One of the most important issues that intercultural education has to solve is how to implement concepts such as diversity, tolerance and respect among others and apply them to a pedagogic practice. In a strict sense, intercultural pedagogy has to help children to acquire knowledge and competences that allow them to interact productively in society. It has also to provide children with meaningful learning for their academic, professional and personal development, all of this in a context of cultural respect.

In order to achieve these objectives, the General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education (CGEIB) and the Mexican educational system (SEP, 2001, p. 16) propose that education programs need to be based on educational equality, quality and suitability. Schmelkes (1994, p. 4) defines educational quality as:

> "as the capacity to provide children with the mastery of basic cultural codes, the ability to participate in democracy and citizenship, the development of skills to solve problems and continue learning, and the development of values and attitudes in accordance with a society that wishes a life of quality for all its inhabitants."

According to López (2005, p. 28) Educational quality is comprised by other elements, among them equality and cultural suitability. Equality in education includes access to educational opportunities for all children without regard to their sex, ethnic background, language, or socioeconomic status. The goals of equality are to avoid school failure and drop-out, and to encourage conditions for meaningful learning. Finally, cultural suitability refers to the relevance of learning objectives in the lives of children and their communities. It implies pedagogic modifications that respect learning styles and the acknowledgement of the situational

nature of knowledge and learning. Also, cultural suitability requires the modification of classroom practices and interaction to reflect the multicultural condition of the schools[33] and the inclusion of the community. This element is of the utmost importance due to the indigenous cultures' way of learning and the integration of individuals into the community's social life. Indeed, intercultural pedagogy (particularly that offered in places with a strong indigenous population) should reflect some principles that organize the life of the community and its main values (e.g., solidarity, reciprocity, collective decision making, etc.). Research in this area has shown the advantages of incorporating culturally defined ways of learning in schools (e.g., Paradise, 1994). In addition, communication patterns in the classroom should be taken into account. My own observations in indigenous schools suggest that the regulation of talk, interaction between peers, paying attention to the teacher and participating is different in indigenous classrooms, which has caused problems with traditional teacher-centered approaches (see Philips, 1983 for an extensive study on communication in the classroom in indigenous schools and communities). In order to create the conditions for meaningful learning, intercultural pedagogy should be centered on the student, and then continue to include the knowledge and objectives of the community, the region, the country and finally, the world. Thus, the approach is grounded on the individual and his cultural experience, but its ultimate goal is to form citizens who identify themselves with the wider nation. These goals are reflected in the Mexican Secretariat of Education's definition of intercultural education:

> Intercultural education will be understood as that which acknowledges and tends to cultural and linguistic diversity; [that] promotes respect to difference; [that] procures the formation of national identity from favoring the strengthening

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[33] Evidently, these goals are contestable. For instance, equality of access does not necessarily mean equality in results, as critical multiculturalism has pointed out. So even if schooling can be made available to all children, that does not mean that they will be equally successful in their professional endeavors since other factors (e.g., symbolic capital) also intervene.

of the local identity, regional and national, as well as the development of attitudes and practices that are conductive to the search for liberty and justice for all. (DGEI, 1999, p. 11)

Intercultural pedagogy should also address more practical concerns; for instance, one concern is the design of books and didactic materials, especially those written in indigenous languages. It is especially important to establish what constitutes an intercultural perspective (beyond using the students' native tongue) and how to reflect it in the textbooks' content. So far, there are strong criticisms regarding the lack of the intercultural perspective and contents in official textbooks (Molina, 2003).

Finally, intercultural pedagogy also implies a deep transformation in the teachers' classroom practices. Teachers should accommodate for learning styles and culturally-determined ways to learn and communicate in the classroom (see Philips, 1983). Traditional teacher roles and classroom management techniques may not be functional under intercultural pedagogy. Teachers need to function as role models for students who are acquiring competences for life-long learning. They also need to show how to "build bridges" and communicate with the mainstream culture (Ipiña, 1997; Serrano, 1998).

In addition, since the overall goal of interculturalism is the democratization of society, classrooms should be models for democracy. This would imply the modification of classroom practices that privilege status (e.g., teacher over students, boys over girls) in favor of seeking consensus and listening to the students' voices. Thus, the teachers' role as authority figures decline as their role as guide and informants increases. The democratization of the classrooms may be just as important as paying attention to cultural and linguistic factors.

4.7.3 Intercultural education as methodological strategy

It is necessary to re-conceptualize the relationship between knowledge, language, and culture in the classroom context and the community. Particularly, it is necessary to account for how language and culture are linked to the development of the students' identity, and then determine how it should be dealt with at the pedagogical level.

In intercultural education, the linguistic factor is perhaps the most common element addressed, but it is still one of the areas that needs more attention. Paradoxically, one of the main goals in indigenous education had been the transition to Spanish, but indigenous teachers tend not to be trained in teaching Spanish as a second language. In addition, many indigenous teachers are illiterate in their own native tongue, which makes it difficult for the teachers to use the children's native language as the medium of instruction. Methodological as well as theoretical aspects about teaching and learning languages should be part of regular teacher education. Literacy programs in native languages should also be made available to teachers. If teachers are illiterate in their native languages, it will be impossible to implement the intercultural model.

A second methodological problem is an epistemological one. Traditionally, curricular contents have been based on "canonical" (i.e., western) knowledge and history. On the other hand, there is very limited information regarding the conception of scientific knowledge held by the indigenous communities and the actual knowledge generated by them. Also, education has ignored the role of traditional wisdom (i.e., experience-based knowledge) in educating indigenous children. This experiential knowledge plays a significant part in the children's primary (i.e., family, community) and secondary (i.e., schooling) socialization in indigenous

communities. There is little information on how the indigenous conception of knowledge, wisdom and science clashes with the western knowledge taught at schools, and the possible effects on indigenous children's ways of understanding nature and the world. That is, westernized schools teach scientific knowledge in modules or independent disciplines while indigenous cultures tend to understand phenomena in global and interdependent ways (RIF Educators, 2004, section 2.1). For instance, mainstream schools tend to analyze communities by separating biological from social elements (e.g., biology and social science classes). For indigenous communities, understanding society would necessarily be joined to nature and natural phenomena.[34]

Determining which knowledge should be included in curricular contents is a contested issue. Because of the communitarian emphasis of intercultural education, some researchers advocate for allowing the communities to decide what indigenous knowledge to include in the curricular contents (Schmelkes, 2002). However, after years of contact with western ways, sometimes it is difficult to delineate a boundary between indigenous and non-indigenous knowledge and technology.

The construction of the intercultural curriculum is not an easy task, since this involves educational research and the design of didactic materials that reflect the intercultural model. Textbooks in Mexico tend to marginalize the indigenous knowledge, and present a biased representation of the indigenous history and peoples. They are relegated as symbols of a long gone past and as the foundation of the nation, but their current presence and importance is reduced (Alvarez, 1992).

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[34] I have seen this "holistic approach" (so to speak) in action in indigenous schools, where a teacher taught a lesson about the survival of the town due to its natural resources. After that discussion, the children went to the mountain to collect seedlings of an endemic tree. The seedlings were planted in small plastic bottles and cared for by the students. Later, the teacher used the little trees to show the effects of light on the photosynthesis process.

Another important element that should be addressed within the methodological aspect of intercultural communication is the concrete form that intercultural relations should take (Zimemrman, 1997b). That is, the degree of integration or confrontation that intercultural dialogue should take would better be defined at the content level. Admittedly, intercultural relations are a matter of practice, but there should be guidelines at the curricular level. Since one of the pillars of intercultural education is intercultural communication, it is necessary that students communicate with children from other ethnic and cultural groups. As Merino and Muñoz (1998) point out, it is individuals and not cultures that are the ones who communicate, so intercultural education should facilitate contact and dialogue. In cases when this is not possible, other strategies have been suggested (e.g, role-playing, debates, reflection of the students' own values and appreciation of other points of view) in order to change biased attitudes towards minorities. But as research has indicated (Mansfield and Kehoe, 1994), changing the students' expression of beliefs does not necessarily mean changing behaviors.

Most importantly, if intercultural communication is at the foundation of intercultural education, then language should have a major role in educational programs. Certainly, as I have shown throughout this chapter, there is an enormous emphasis on bilingualism, but this is understood in terms of mastering two linguistic codes. Although bilingual-bicultural and intercultural-bilingual programs imply in their own definitions a relationship between language and culture, and language and social interaction, there is a limited explanation about how students should acquire the appropriate social use of language or communicative competence (Hymes, 1972). Sociolinguistic and pragmatic aspects in language teaching is an area that should be explored in depth, since it has profound methodological implications for teachers. For instance, in her study of the Warm Springs Indians, Philips (1983) studied communication

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patterns in indigenous communities and its relationship to school failure. She concluded that children did not participate in the classroom because the social conditions of participation in schools differed from the ones of the community's. Philips recommended that children be taught the appropriate rules of language usage in the dominant culture. This example shows that sociolinguistic aspects of language learning have to be explicitly addressed. It also follows that such aspects may only be learned from interaction with the mainstream culture, which entails – as I argued above – the search for conditions which allow indigenous and mestizo children to talk to each other. Of course, this is easier said than done because of geographical isolation, lack of economic resources or plain prejudice.

The dimension of intercultural education explained here lead to an important point: the transformations of society, schools and schooling. It is clear that any educational model cannot change reality by itself, and intercultural education is not the exception; however, these three dimensions imply a deep change in the conceptualization of education and its objectives. Touraine (2000, p. 269-270) thinks that education in an intercultural context should break with the traditional models of education that socialize children in the high values and knowledge of a hierarchical society. He proposes to create a *school for the subject*, which focuses on personal freedom, intercultural communication and democratic action. Touraine describes three main principles in his school for the subject;

1) Freedom of the personal subject: schools should abandon the idea that it is necessary to socialize children as if their personal and collective histories did not matter. This means that education should be individualized; it also means that both schools and home should converge in educating children.

2) Diversity: contrary to the principle that schools should teach universal values and cultural principles, the school should emphasize diversity and the recognition of the Other. Emphasis on diversity implies fostering intercultural communication and works against communitarian schools and national forms of education that ignore the cultural, linguistic, historical experiences of the Other.

3) Compensation for unequal situations and unequal access: assuming that children have the same skills and knowledge just because they went through the same school system is unfair for children in lower SES classes. The school should tend to the needs and capacities of individuals.

In summary, Touraine proposes a school that moves away from socializing children into the values and culture of stratified societies towards paying attention to the individual and emphasizing communication, thus avoiding a simple transmission of knowledge. The primary goal should not be the creation of citizens and workers, but to help individuals to become subjects through personal development and self-expression. Although Touraine's ideas have been contested, I agree with his assertion that traditional schools reduce education to forms of public instruction that support the ideology of the State. Since the goal of intercultural education is to go beyond simple criticism to schools that actually transform education and community life, then the idea of focusing on the subject is actually a key factor in intercultural education.

4. 8 CULTURE AND (INTER)CULTURAL COMPETENCE

There is one element that permeates the political, pedagogic and methodological aspects of intercultural education: culture. Certainly, this is one of the words that appear the most in the Discourse of intercultural education, but interestingly, it is also very imprecise. There seems to be a degree of consensus on the idea that teaching languages goes hand in hand with teaching cultures, and also the recognition of the importance of culture in the identity development of the students, but there is less agreement of what actually constitutes culture. Having a definition of culture is of utmost importance because as Liddicoat (2004) has pointed out, the cultural component in language education is a language planning problem itself. If intercultural education sees as its foundation respect to different groups and its cultural expressions, intercultural education has to consider how to include cultural components and its representations in the curriculum, and most importantly, how to develop intercultural competences. Precisely, this is one aspect that different approaches to intercultural education have ignored or underemphasized. As Merino and Muñoz (1998) argue, intercultural or multicultural models of education have tended to adopt a notion of culture that emphasizes ethnocentrism instead of interconnections with other groups.

Indigenous education programs in Mexico have tended to establish an isomorphic relationship between language and culture (Díaz-Couder, 1998). Regardless of the ethnic diversity of the country, the "indigenous culture" had been addressed (at least until the inclusion of ethnic contents in the curriculum in the 1980s) as one homogeneous problem. Thus, programs and plans of study were designed for one big undetermined indigenous population that was assumed to have the same cultural characteristics.

In his study of theories of culture within anthropology, Keesing (1974) distinguishes two major paradigms. The first group of theories considers culture as adaptive systems that relate human communities to their ecological settings. Cultural change is seen as a process of adaptation similar to natural selection. The second group of theories is classified under the umbrella term "ideational" although in reality they include three major approaches. The first one sees culture as a cognitive system or an underlying "grammar" that attempts to explain the ideational codes lying behind actions. The second group considers culture as a structural system. Perhaps the most important theorist within this approach is Levi-Strauss who views "cultures as shared symbolic systems that are cumulative creations of minds; he seeks to discover in the structuring of cultural domains-myth, art, kinship, language – the principles of mind that generate these cultural elaborations." (Keesing, 1974, p. 78). Finally, the last group of theories sees culture as a symbolic system of shared symbols of meanings. Culture is an organized system of symbols that are intrinsic in the sense that they are shared by a social group. Culture comprises complex schemes or rules of behavior (costumes, habits, traditions), that act as control mechanisms such as plans, rules, or instructions. Such control mechanisms are not innate, but learned. Despite – to some extent – their artificial nature, human beings depend on these mechanisms to regulate their thoughts, actions and ways to organize and interact with the material and social world. Under this view, culture is not limited to just artifacts or ideas. Rather, culture is seen as practice, as the lived experience of the individuals.

The anthropological debate surrounding the concept of culture has permeated intercultural and language education; however, traditionally, the notion of culture implicit in educational programs has been quite limited. The following are some broad perspectives that are commonly found:

High culture. This focuses on the major literary and artistic achievements of some social groups. Claire Kramsch (1995) argues that this approach is founded on the idea of the existence of a universal culture that was transmitted through classical languages. In order to know the culture of the group in question, it is necessary to know its canonical texts; therefore, there is an isomorphism between culture and literary texts.

Culture as factual knowledge. This is a wide category that includes general knowledge about the target culture (e.g., geography, history, artifacts, traditions, festivals, etc). In order to know the culture – besides the language – it is necessary to know concrete information about the country (or countries) in question.

Culture as social organization. This conception refers to the social institutions (e.g., family, community, etc.,) and to the values, beliefs, knowledge and view of the world that characterize a group. In order to know a culture, it is necessary to understand the reasons – that is, values, beliefs, knowledge – that determine certain ways of acting.

Culture as practice. Under this view, culture is seen as praxis and not as a system. Culture is constituted by communicative practices that allow us to understand the production of meaning during interaction. This communicative interaction is situated (depends on context), negotiated and variable. To know a culture is to know the rules of interaction of a community and be able to participate in it.

Depending on how culture is conceptualized, pedagogical strategies follow. Research on this area has shown that most programs tend to emphasize "folkloric" aspects of culture, such as material aspects, festivals, and traditions or mere factual information (see Galloway, 1985 as cited in Omaggio Hadley, 1993, p. 360). Furthermore, although in general teachers recognize the importance of teaching culture in order to achieve intercultural understanding, they see teaching

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culture as a secondary priority in the curriculum (Bandura and Sercu, 2005). There are several reasons why teaching culture has received a lot of attention at the theoretical level, but it has been neglected in practice. First, teachers feel overwhelmed trying to cover everything in the curriculum. Second, teachers themselves have a limited knowledge of the culture in question (see Seelye, 1984) or do not have the theoretical toolkit that allows them to teach culture. Many teachers lack of a clear definition of culture or, even worse, lack an understanding of the reasons that make it necessary to teach culture (Carr, 1999). Finally, and most importantly, the teaching of culture tends to be relegated to language classes, instead of making it a cross-curricular endeavor. Certainly, the relationship between language and culture makes language classes ideal candidates for teaching culture, although as Lambert (1999) points out, this relationship has been largely assumed and not explored well enough. Indeed, one of the key elements in the research agenda of intercultural education is to specify what kind of cultural and linguistic content produces – or at least enhances – intercultural competence.

Díaz-Couder (1998) proposed a model that incorporates different sociocultural dimensions in the educational process. Díaz-Couder claims that any educational policies for the native peoples of Latin America should begin with the acknowledgement and respect of their social and cultural identities (p. 22); therefore, the model spells out in which ways language, ethnic identity and especially culture should be addressed in the curriculum:

1) Language: the model encourages the implementation of bilingual education programs in order to improve the education aimed at ethnic minorities and foster their empowerment.

2) Ethnic identity: this should be strengthened through the teaching of the group's history, civic education and fostering the students' ties to the group.

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3) Culture: the model rejects the idea of separate indigenous and mestizo cultures and proposes a continuum in which different groups could be located. The cultural dimension includes several aspects of culture that have different ways of implementation in the curriculum:

a) Material culture (e.g., artifacts, products): used mainly as didactic materials (realia).

b) Cultural knowledge about nature: traditional knowledge and beliefs regarding the environment. This knowledge must be used as part of the scientific legacy of the group and incorporated in the natural sciences curriculum.

c) Cultural institutions and social organization patterns. This area should be addressed in social studies classes, but also this cultural knowledge should direct the school's organization and the relationship between the school and the community.

f) Cultural values and beliefs: they should organize the social relationships in schools (i.e., teacher-student, student-student) as part of the hidden curriculum.

g) Cultural communicative practices: intercultural communication rules that need to be learned during interaction with other groups.

In my opinion, Diaz-Couder's proposal is a step in the right direction. The model offers a complex view of culture and how its different components could be integrated in the curriculum. Furthermore, this model touches a central point: the issue of (inter)cultural competence. The ultimate goal of intercultural education has been the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes that allow students to appreciate and create difference in the world (Carr, 1999). Unfortunately, intercultural education in the context of Mexico and Latin America has been identified with indigenous education, and the need to teach Spanish as a second or foreign

language to indigenous children. For instance, some of my interviewees manifested that the "inter" part of intercultural education meant being able to speak in Spanish and a native tongue. Thus, intercultural competence is understood in terms of the mastery of the linguistic code, not being able to communicate in social and cultural appropriate ways or accept other perspectives and perceptions of the world. Therefore, any models of intercultural education should incorporate a clear notion of intercultural competence.

Kessing (1974), in his study of culture, proposed the term "cultural competence" as a way to join social meaning with individual behavior. Drawing on a definition of culture that sees it as the knowledge a person needs in order to successfully interact as a member of a society, Keesing suggested that this knowledge is in essence an individual's personal theory about how a society works. Such theory may vary from individual to individual since some persons may know more than others; however, there is a degree of convergence with respect to these shared theories, which constitutes culture. The degree to which individuals share in that culture constitutes cultural competence. Thus, in order to understand cultural competence, it is necessary to tease out its elements.

The idea of being able to perform appropriately in a target culture has been present in the notion of communicative competence since the decade of the 1970s. Hymes (1972) proposed the term "communicative competence" as a criticism to Chomsky's notion of linguistic competence. Hymes argued that Chomsky's distinction between competence/performance was insufficient to explain the actual rules of language usage during interaction. The idea of a speaker whose actual linguistic performance was impervious to external elements (i.e., emotional, psychological, physiological, environmental) and whose production was always according to rules was not supported by actual evidence. According to Hymes, a model that attempts to explain language

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should incorporate both linguistic competence (i.e., phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic and lexical components) and social-cultural factors that affect communication. Hymes proposed an approach that focused on uncovering the rules of interaction in communication. This approach should explain the rules that compose the communicative competence of the members of a community in terms of the shared competence of its members regarding the production and interpretation of socially appropriate speech.

The notion of communicative competence incorporated considerations about the sociocultural nature of language. Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) further developed the concept of communicative competence by defining its components:

a) Grammatical competence, which is composed by phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic and lexical elements.

b) Discursive strategy, which refers to generating coherent and cohesive texts and different genres.

c) Sociolinguistic competence, which refers to the speaker's ability to generate speech that is appropriate for different sociolinguistic contexts.

d) Strategic competence, which is composed by verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that are used to compensate for communication breakdowns caused by the lack of competence in other areas.

Canale and Swain's model leaves room for cultural factors in communication. Indeed, some of its components (i.e., discursive and sociocultural) are shaped by the social and cultural life of a particular speech community. Indeed, generating a coherent and cohesive text depends on a culture's definition of what constitutes appropriate texts. For instance, Scollon and Scollon (2001) explain the different speech patterns used by Chinese and American speakers. While

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Chinese speakers prefer to introduce the topic of the conversation after a lengthy introduction, American speakers go directly to the point, introducing the topic first and providing supporting information afterwards. This pattern is culturally preferred. In the same way, sociolinguistic competence is culturally defined. What lies in the center of sociolinguistic competence is what is considered appropriate according to the context and the cultural values involved during interaction. Although cross-culturally the existence of the same type of speech acts has been confirmed, the way of realizing them differs from culture to culture (see Kasper and Blum-Kulka, 1993). Thus, apologizing, complaining, complementing, etc., is carried out in different ways (e.g., indirectly or directly) in different cultures. Sociolinguistic norms are actually part of the culture; therefore, acquiring sociocultural competence in a language implies acquiring the culture in which the language is spoken. On the other hand, grammatical and strategic competences are not culturally defined, since the first one is defined by the language structure, while strategic competence greatly depends on individual factors.

Swain and Canale's model has been very useful in the teaching of second and foreign languages since it spells out the type of competences that a speaker should achieve in order to acquire proficiency. Particularly, the area of sociolinguistic competence has been emphasized since it is thought that intercultural communication problems will be solved if the subject acquires the cultural norms of interaction in the target language. Paradoxically, this is not the case. As Kramsch (2002) points out, advocates of intercultural communication are very optimistic regarding the power of teaching socio-cultural norms of verbal and non-verbal communication to students. By teaching the conventions of interaction of the target culture, instructors are not teaching rules of intercultural communication, but a kind of intracultural communication where the model of the sociolinguistic competence of the native speaker still is

the ideal to be achieved. Unfortunately, second and foreign language learners are also cultural products who bring their "baggage" to intercultural encounters. Such encounters are not based on one or the other cultural group's norms, but rather they are negotiated during actual interaction. Thus, according to Kramsch, it makes more sense to adopt an approach similar to Scollon and Scollon's (2001) in which the goal is not to be like a native speaker, but to be aware of the problems that may arise during an intercultural encounter and being able to solve them. This is – in part – what is called intercultural competence.

According to Crozet, Liddicoat and Lo Bianco (1999), the notion of intercultural competence appeared in the pedagogic discourse of foreign language education as a paradigmatic shift occurred. The idea of teaching culture as an integral part of language education constitutes the basis for intercultural competence in a globalized world. In addition, under the influence of the critical paradigm, the idea of multiple meanings and voices set the stage for an approach to intercultural communication that acknowledged the impossibility of communication without breakdowns and the problems related to the notion of biculturalism[35] (see Paulston, 2005 [1992]). Instead, the notion of a point of intersection or "third place" emerged (Liddicoat. Crozet, and Lo Bianco, 1999). This place – or intercultural competence – considers intercultural interaction not as a matter or assimilating to the other culture at the expense of one's own cultural frame, but to finding an intermediate ground in which the intercultural speaker has an "ability to interact with the others, to accept other perspectives and perceptions of the world, to

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[35] Biculturalism preceded the idea of interculturalism and was widely used in indigenous education (see Chapters 2 and 3); however, theoretically it presented several problems. In the work cited above Paulston argues against the idea of individuals developing two sets of cultural competences –one for each culture—. Rather, she proposes that bicultural individuals in fact have and two set of performances and an underlying set of cultural competence, which is used according to the cultural context. Paulston's work supports the idea of intercultural competence, and more importantly, poses important questions regarding the components of intercultural competence and its development through foreign language instruction.

mediate between different perspectives, to be conscious of their evaluations of the world"

(Byram, 2001 p. 5).

So what constitutes intercultural competence? There seems to be some consensus that includes linguistic skills, cultural knowledge, skills and attitudes. Although it is possible to learn about some cultures without actually learning the target language, this represents an enormous disadvantage in terms of being able to interact with speakers from other cultural experiences and being able to realize and experience cultural difference, which is necessary in order to achieve intercultural competence. As Crozet et al (1999, p. 4) point out:

> The key to full participation in multicultural contexts involves a realization of cultural and linguistic relativity. This can result only from the acknowledgement and analysis of both the native culture and the target culture as they are mediated through language. This mediation through language is a central element in that language itself constitutes an interpretive framework through which the social world is both analysed and created. Without a linguistic experience of difference, a cultural experience of difference cannot reach the same depths.

Language is only one component of intercultural competence. Byram (1997) identifies three more:

1) <u>Intercultural attitudes</u> (*savoir etre*). This implies a willingness to look into other ways of life and ways to see the world. It also involves the ability to suspend our beliefs about the correctness and naturalness of our own practices and beliefs and relativize them in view of other practices and beliefs. Attitudes relate to curiosity, openness and willingness to know the other.

2) <u>Knowledge</u> (*saviors*). This refers not to particular cultural knowledge, but to an understanding of how social groups and identities work (both one's own and the target culture's identities). Byram identifies two components to intercultural knowledge: 1)

knowledge of social and 2) knowledge of those processes and products. That is, knowledge about how people see themselves and other people. The idea underlying intercultural knowledge is that speakers need to know information about his or her interlocutor's world and ways of interacting so communication can proceed.

3)   Skills. Byram identifies two main types of intercultural skills: 1) Skills of interpreting and relating (*savoir comprendre)*, which involves the ability to understand documents, experiences or events from another culture and relate them to one's own culture. 2) Skills of discovery and interaction (*avoir aprendre/faire)*, which refers to the ability to acquire new knowledge and integrate it within the existing one. Intercultural speakers and mediators need these skills to manage communication problems in real time.

Finally, attitudes knowledge and skills can help speakers interact in intercultural encounters, but the weight of their cultural assumptions still can interfere and create rejection to other practices, beliefs and values; therefore, it is necessary that intercultural speakers develop *critical cultural awareness* (*savoir s' enganger*), which is the ability to evaluate on explicit and reasoned criteria the cultural products and practices from the target culture and one's own culture.

Byram's model has strong implications on intercultural bilingual education. First, language instruction acquires a central role in the achievement of intercultural competence. Although theoretically it is possible to learn about other cultures in the students' native language, that kind of monolingual multiculturalism only reinforces the idea that "the Other" is the one who needs to accommodate to the mainstream society by learning the language and practices of the majority (see Lambert, 1999). Second, intercultural education implies the teaching of values. Byram explicitly states that the job of the teacher in intercultural competence is not to teach

values to the students, but to make them aware of the role that their values, beliefs and wider cultural practices have on their appreciation – or lack of thereof – of different cultural groups. However, intercultural competence involves the development of a position that acknowledges the inherent dignity in all human beings, which implies the development of values that have in high regard diversity, tolerance, respect and ultimately, democracy. Of course, the model does not solve the problem pointed out by critical multiculturalists: knowing about another cultural group does not necessarily mean automatic appreciation or respect for the other culture. In the same way, knowing another language does not imply appreciation or communication with the target culture. Similarly, fostering democratic values implies some kind of political education. As I have argued previously, teachers are ill-prepared to teach cultural content, let alone political issues in the classroom. This situation gets particularly difficult for countries with indigenous contexts in which issues of internal colonization, linguistic, social and economic oppression need to be addressed. We can conclude after reviewing interculturalism in education that intercultural education should go beyond the mere incorporation of ethnic contents in the curriculum. Such incorporation, per se, does not ensure that the students are going to develop the knowledge, attitudes and skills that lead to the final objective of interculturalism: the creation of a democratic society.[36]

4.9 INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN MEXICO

In 1992, president Salinas de Gortari unilaterally amended the 4th constitutional article of the Mexican constitution to recognize the multicultural character of the country. This event was not

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[36] Admittedly, schools' capacity to solve society's problems is limited, so it would not be expected that schools by themselves could solve social and economic problems; however, the democratization of society is one of the elements that appear the most in the Discourse of intercultural education.

an isolated case. During the 1990s, Latin American countries such as Peru, Guatemala, Ecuador, Bolivia and Colombia took steps to acknowledge the linguistic and cultural rights of their indigenous populations. In some cases, constitutional amendments were followed by educational reforms that adopted bilingual intercultural education (see Moya, 1998).

For Mexico, the acknowledgment of the multicultural condition also signaled the country's entrance into modernity, and of fully opening the door to a market economy. Under these conditions, the acceptance of multiculturalism became an ideology that replaced assimilationist models, and recognized the creation of new identities under the influence of globalization.

A series of events in the educational field occurred during this period: teacher professionalization, decentralization of schools, and the appearance of the term "intercultural education." Although the term intercultural education was first used in the context of indigenous education in Latin America during the 1970s, the adoption of the concept in the official discourse on indigenous education in Mexico does not occur until the 1990s. However, the inclusion of the term in the academic jargon and official documents did not imply any effective transformations. According to Gigante (1995), the General Direction of Indigenous Education started using the words intercultural bilingual education with no explanations about the reasons or the policy implications for this change. Thus, intercultural education became a buzz word in the academic world before any specific actions were taken. Indeed, according to Nery (2004), the National Educational Program for the years 1995-2000 does not mention intercultural education. Instead, it still continues using the term "bilingual-bicultural" in the sections concerning the indigenous population.

In 1996, the DGEI developed a working paper which defined intercultural bilingual education and outlined its characteristics, goals and objectives; however, it is not until 1999, when the "Lineamientos Generales para la Educación Intercultural Bilingüe para las Niñas y los Niños Indígenas de México" (General outlines for intercultural bilingual education for the indigenous girls and boys in Mexico) was made official, and the "bilingual-bicultural" model was eliminated from official documents.

During the office of President Fox, Article 2 of the Mexican constitution was amended. This article mentions the multiethnic character of the country and acknowledges the foundational character of the indigenous peoples. In addition, the Article provides a definition of "indigenous populations," their rights and the actions needed to fight racism and improve their status (both social and economic) while preserving their cultural and linguistic heritage. Regarding education, the article incorporates intercultural education as a way to eradicate any "deprivations and delays;" therefore, authorities must "Guarantee and increase the schooling level, favoring intercultural bilingual education, literacy, the conclusion of elementary education, vocational training and higher education." (Cámara de Diputados del H. Congreso de la Unión, 2008, p. 3)

The new National Educational Program for the years 2001-2006 also reflected the incursion of intercultural education in the official discourse. Although the National Educational Program represented continuity with the old program (1995-2000) in terms of addressing educational quality, equality and suitability (both linguistic and cultural), it relies more heavily on intercultural education, affirming that it was one of the key factors to ensure that education functioned as a factor for national unity (SEP, 2001, p. 45). In order to achieve this goal, the National Educational Program acknowledged the bidirectional nature of intercultural education. That is, the involvement of the whole society was considered necessary, which implied the

transformation of mainstream schools to know and appreciate the cultural and linguistic diversity of the country. The adoption of three main pedagogical plans constituted the strategy by which a "counterculture" of respect and appreciation for diversity was to be implemented: 1) a curricular reform for elementary education; 2) teacher training on intercultural education; and 3) informal education on intercultural education. This was a radical departure from monocultural and multicultural programs, which always placed the burden for adaptation to the mestizo society on the shoulders of indigenous peoples.

It is interesting to notice that all these changes concerning interculturalism were formally institutionalized under the presidency of Vicente Fox, who declared that his government was one of entrepreneurs for entrepreneurs, rejecting all kinds of populism and openly embracing neoliberalism. A few months after President Fox's inauguration, the Coordinación General de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe (General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education or CGEIB) was created. The Coordination was charged with the purpose to design and promote intercultural educational policies at the national level, and to coordinate the actions of governmental institutions in the implementation of intercultural education. The action of the General Coordination extends beyond the institutional level to include the participation of indigenous communities and civil society in the development of intercultural education. The Coordination was appointed with the important task of curricular development for diverse contexts, teacher education and the development of didactic materials in indigenous tongues. Finally, the CGEIB was also appointed to help in the development and diffusion of indigenous tongues.

The objectives of the CGEIB are more concise than its purposes, but no less ambitious: 1) to improve the quality of education destined to the indigenous population; 2) to promote

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intercultural bilingual education destined to indigenous populations at all levels of schooling; and 3) to develop intercultural education for all Mexicans. Schmelkes summarizes how these objectives should be attained:

> The achievement of these objectives supposes a profound transformation of the elements that constitute the educational offer for indigenous populations. It supposes to improve the *actuality* and training of its teachers, as well as the instauration of initial professional systems for indigenous teachers… It supposes to establish and to extend intercultural bilingual secondary education. But before anything, it supposes to strengthen the participation of the indigenous peoples in the definition of its [curricular] contents, and of each community in the active vigilance of the compliance of its purposes. (2002, p. 13)

It is important to notice that even though at the discursive level intercultural education is bidirectional (i.e., aimed at both indigenous and mestizo groups); the indigenous component seems to have major relevance within CGEIB's institutional objectives. This emphasis on intercultural education has led some researchers (e.g., Nery, 2004) to say that intercultural education is still immersed in the old *indigenista* ideology and institutionalized multiculturalism, which will not allow the emergence of alternative points of view (i.e., those from indigenous communities) that could present a challenge to the hegemonic project (Muñoz Cruz, 1998).

According to the Schmelkes (2001b) the objective of intercultural education should be the elimination of asymmetry. She explains that education cannot directly address economic inequalities, but can offer solutions to two types of asymmetries:

1) Educational: ensuring access to schools to disadvantaged groups, as well as reducing failure and dropouts increase the likelihood of children achieving higher levels of schooling.

2) Values: this education addresses both the mestizo and indigenous populations. Because of the colonization process, the indigenous groups have internalized the negative images

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imbued in dominant ideologies. Therefore, it is necessary to work with indigenous populations to increase their self-esteem and value their own cultural heritage. For the mestizo group, education should fight racism. Education on values involves an epistemological change. First, education should help students to be aware of the ethnic and cultural diversity of Mexican society (and the world in general). Second, from this knowledge, the students will come to appreciate such diversity. And finally, students (and society) will recognize that diversity is actually an asset that enriches the human experience.

Although CGEIB acknowledges that intercultural education is bidirectional, it is constrained by three different demographic scenarios that determine the strategy of implementation of the intercultural model. Schmelkes (2001b) identifies these three scenarios:

1) Homogeneous minority: this refers to contexts where the population is mostly indigenous. The main goals for intercultural education for indigenous communities are: a) to achieve the national objectives established in the National Educational Program; b) bilingualism (both in oral and written forms); and c) foster in indigenous students (and communities) an appreciation for their own cultures. However, these goals are not very easy to attain. As Schmelkes (2001b) points out, many communities do not agree with the goals of intercultural education and continue considering Castilianization as the key for social mobility. In addition, there are not enough human resources to ensure that bilingualism will be achieved since many indigenous teachers are illiterate in their own native language.

2) Homogenous majority: this refers to contexts in which the population is mostly mestizo and Spanish-speaking. The main goals for this context are directed towards

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fighting racism and appreciating the ethnic and cultural diversity of the country. The pedagogic strategy for this context focuses on promoting a reflection about the cultural contributions made by both mestizo and indigenous populations to the national (and universal) cultural and scientific heritage.

3) Intercultural relations: this happens when there is actual interaction between indigenous and mestizo groups (the so-called zones of contact). For these contexts, the goal is to adopt diversity and difference as the principle of interaction. In the pedagogical context, linguistic diversity has to be incorporated to facilitate intercultural communication. For areas where there are indigenous populations of at least 30%, the National Coordination has proposed to implement courses focused on indigenous languages and literatures in schools.

The multiplicity of social and linguistic scenarios shows the obstacles to implement a uniform education policy. It is beyond the scope of this project to evaluate the results of intercultural education, since my main goal is to understand the ideological constructions underlying the intercultural model; however, an independent assessment of the CGEIB carried out by the Civilian Observatory of Education (Rodríguez, 2006) concluded that despite budgetary cuts and reformulations to initial goals,[37] the coordination has made notable advances. According to Rodríguez, the CGEIB has been able to introduce an intercultural perspective across the educational system. In the cases of preschool, it actually incorporated curricular content focused on developing knowledge and appreciation about diversity. In elementary education, the CGEIB has proposed changes based on the intercultural perspective to the curriculum of elementary and secondary education. To achieve this objective, the CGEIB has

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[37] Such changes have been the result in part of a heavy budgetary reduction of about 37% for the years 2004-2005. In addition, there was opposition to curricular reform in some areas, particularly in secondary education.

designed new subject matters (i.e., Language and Literature in Indigenous Languages) as well as didactic materials that help teachers introduce the intercultural perspective (e.g., textbooks, monographs, pedagogic guides, videos). Teacher education in the intercultural model has also been addressed through workshops, conferences, video materials, guides and other resources. In addition, students doing a *licenciatura* (roughly, a bachelor's degree) in elementary education will have to take two new courses: Introduction to Intercultural Bilingual Education and Language and Culture in the Teaching-Learning Processes. Materials and plans of studies for teacher education have been designed by teams of specialists in the area.

In the areas of secondary education and higher education, advances have been more limited, but CGEIB proposed to incorporate the intercultural perspective in plans and programs of study in the National Polytechnic Institute. Finally, eight intercultural universities have been founded in States that have a strong indigenous presence (i.e., Chiapas, Veracruz, Tabasco, Estado de México, Puebla, Oaxaca), and some other schools are expected to be certified to become intercultural universities.

Despite these achievements, Rodríguez also points out that an evaluation of the effects of intercultural education on reading and math skills showed no significant improvements. The researcher suggests that such outcomes may not be surprising because, "In its defense it is possible to argue that the objectives of the intercultural perspective are more directed to modify cultural patterns and cultural habits of teachers and students than to develop math competence or reading skills" (p. 9).

Most of the emphasis on intercultural education has been on pedagogic and curricular aspects, which can be explained as the official interests of the State. As I mentioned before, intercultural education has been criticized because of the strong interference of the State, which

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together with theoretical problems have contributed to the controversy surrounding the model. But perhaps the most important element that needs to be incorporated in the analysis of intercultural education in Mexico is the issue of ethnification in education. As Bertely and González (2003) point out, the new conditions of political, cultural and social participation of the indigenous communities are in conflict with traditional theoretical and policy frameworks for understanding the role of indigenous population. Since these are not passive recipients of the actions of the State, it is necessary to understand how indigenous populations receive, appropriate and transform educational programs. Therefore, to achieve a complete understanding of intercultural education in Mexico it is necessary to listen to the voices of indigenous actors, who are creating intercultural alternatives from the bottom up. This is one of the objectives of this project.

4.10 LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN MEXICO

Intercultural education in Mexico has been developed under two main formal frameworks: international and national legislation and agreements. Since I will analyze the most relevant parts of these legal materials in the analysis section of this project, I present here a brief list with the names of the main legislation pieces identified by the CGEIB (2004) as the formal framework for intercultural education in Mexico.

International laws and agreements
Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights (Barcelona, 1996)
UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001)
Agreement 169 of the International Labor Organization (1989)
International Declaration of Education For All (Jomtien, 1990)

Cochabamba Declaration (2001)

Latin American Declaration on Education For All (Dakar, 2000)

National laws, declarations and agreements

Mexican Constitution

National d\Development Plan (2001-2006)

National Educational Program (2001-2006)

National Population Program (2001-2006)

National Program For the Development of Indigenous Peoples (2001-2006)

Organic Law of the National Commission For the Development of Indigenous Peoples

General Law of Linguistic Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Reform to the Article 7 of the General Law of Education

Federal law to prevent and eliminate discrimination

Agreement for the creation of the General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education (Secretariat of Education).

Source: Coordinación General de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe, 2004.

4.11 CONCLUSIONS

In the last chapters I attempted to show the complex social, economic, political and cultural context that have surrounded the conception and implementation of policies, actions, projects and programs in indigenous education. A constant factor has been that changes in educational policies have been connected to State ideologies, economic and cultural policies. Intercultural education is the last example of these shifts.

Even though intercultural bilingual education may be considered as just one more change within many shifts, there are several elements that make intercultural education an interesting case within the history of indigenous education in Mexico. Indeed, during the last three presidential offices, neoliberal policies have prevailed in educational reforms with subsequent

changes in the role of the State in the funding and control of schools. In addition to economic measures, there is also a theoretical shift regarding the role of schools and education in the construction of citizen-workers (see Ginsburg et al., 2003), the official Discourse about the multiethnic character of the country and acceptance of diversity. Such Discourse creates spaces for action and discussion, but it also generates tension between the main theoretical tenets of intercultural education, the wishes of indigenous actors and the function of the State in a neoliberal system. The political rhetoric produces a "point of convergence" – at least in form – with the issues of ethnic identity, language rights and culturally determined ways of learning. Such ideals are shared by indigenous teachers and social activists. But as I described above, the very model of intercultural education is barely supported by law, and there is a national curriculum which undermines at its bases the possible benefits of an intercultural model.

Because of these reasons, there is an enormous skepticism in the academic community and grass-roots organizations regarding the capacity of intercultural education of being a catalytic factor for democratic action and the creation of an inclusive society. Nonetheless, the intercultural discourse has created spaces for discussion and educational action, as well as forms of social and school participation in indigenous communities. Certainly, such actions were not created solely by the introduction of the intercultural model in the school system. Rather, indigenous teachers and community activists have struggled for decades to have a word in the educational actions aimed at indigenous communities. What the intercultural discourse brought was a basis to justify the actions of the indigenous actors.

In this context, a diverse group of voices emerges that position themselves in different ways within the Discourse – or Discourses – of interculturality. As I showed above, intercultural education and interculturality have several dimensions, so it is important to tease out how

different actors position themselves with respect to these dimensions, and how different ideologies underlie the discourses that shaped them. In a historical moment where the country is convulsed by social and political upheaval,[38] it becomes even more relevant to understand how different social actors (i.e., policy brokers, academics, researchers, school officials, indigenous teachers and student teachers) understand and transform the official ideas about intercultural education. Therefore, it is important to uncover how discourse – together with other educational practices – works in implicit ways to transmit and recreate ideologies about the purposes, actions and roles of intercultural education in indigenous education and in the wider national context.

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[38] In July 2006, Mexico held presidential elections. It was the second election since the PRI – which governed the country for more than 70 years – was defeated by Vicente Fox. The government of Fox ended chaotically in the midst of struggles for power between the PAN (a conservative party) the PRD (a leftist party) and the PRI. During the presidential campaign, the leftist candidate (Andrés Manuel López Obrador) was the forerunner, but on election day, the conservative candidate won the election by a narrow margin of less than 250,000 votes. The refusal of both the conservative party, the conservative winner and the Federal Electoral Institute to do a recount of votes created strong suspicions of a fraudulent result. The Federal Electoral Institute took two months to study the elections and respond to the suits of López Obrador about fraud and irregularities during both the election and presidential campaigns. López Obrador and his party argued that the PAN, President Fox and several interest groups had manipulated the presidential campaigns through the use of TV spots in which wrong and malicious information regarding López Obrador was delivered. President Fox talked openly in favor of his party's candidate (i.e., Calderón), which is prohibited by law. In addition, extraordinary amounts of money were poured into the campaign of the conservative candidate, breaking any limits stipulated by electoral laws.

Several protests broke out in Mexico City against the "spurious" president elect. López Obrador declared himself as "legitimate" president, creating a parallel presidency. On December 1st, Calderón was sworn into office amidst an enormous protest in the congress. The ceremony lasted around five minutes and was heavily guarded by the army.

CHAPTER 5: METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapters, I have presented a historical view of indigenous education in Mexico and the theoretical and methodological foundations of intercultural education. If anything, this review has shown that indigenous education in Mexico is a heteroglossic field filled with tensions. Indeed, the State's educational policies for the indigenous population have always been applied in a top-down fashion without consulting the target population, or in the best of cases, the State has tried and co-opted the indigenous leaders and their proposals. All educational policies have been framed under the ideology of *mestizaje*, which both creates and reinforces the hegemony of the Mexican State.

Despite the attempts to legitimate and ultimately impose the values, beliefs and attitudes of the elites in power which have been incorporated into these educational policies, they have not been accepted without resistance. For instance, the linguistic shift to Spanish brought about in part by the indigenous education provided by the State has been quite successful; however, individuals have resisted as in the case of indigenous teachers, who have been able to negotiate with the State (Vargas, 1994) other programs favorable to their indigenous communities.

Intercultural education, as I argued in Chapter Four, appeared in the Mexican educational arena as yet one more proposal, with the aggravating elements of not being sufficiently legally founded and with theoretical and methodological shortcomings. These factors have led educational researchers to doubt the permanence and long-term effects of the intercultural model in the Mexican educational arena; however, I argue that intercultural education may have important outcomes because it is actually embedded within the cultural and ideological logic of globalization (Žižek, 1998), and the political and economic policies of the Mexican government. As Fairclough (2003) has pointed out, globalization is having effects on the commodification of education and in the restructuring of social relations with respect to the market and the role of the State as welfare provider to the people.

Intercultural education, despite its many problems, may be more than a temporary fashion. On May 21st 2007, Lourdes Alonso, representative of the Party of the Democratic Revolution presented a "project of decree" in which she proposed to amend the 3rd article of the Mexican constitution − which deals with education − to include intercultural education as the type of education that the State should deliver. The proposal reads:

> The education that the State delivers will be intercultural and bilingual, and [it] will be applied in a transversal fashion at all educational levels, at the levels of basic education, intermediate and superior, in order to favor the dialogue between cultures and peaceful coexistence with the indigenous peoples and communities that are part of the Mexican nation, in accordance with section B of the 2° article of this constitution. It will tend to harmonically develop all the faculties of the human being and will foster in him, together, love to the Motherland and the consciousness of international solidarity, independence, justice and the integral respect to the indigenous cultures and languages, and it will contribute to and strengthen the pride and the multicultural and multiethnic identity of the nation" (Gaceta del Senado de la República, 2007, my translation)

Thus, intercultural education seems to be a paradigm shift in the conceptualization of diversity and its management in schools. The need to have a type of education that is respectful

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to cultural difference and that addresses the needs of students has been stressed by the secretary of education in the current government (Avilés, 2007). Indigenous education has also taken a prevalent place within the National Plan of Education and the priorities of the Mexican government. Therefore, it becomes necessary to explore how different social actors involved in indigenous education (i.e., policy brokers, educational researchers, teacher educators, indigenous student-teachers, indigenous teachers and NGOs) understand, accept, reject or appropriate intercultural education as reflected by their discourse and classroom interaction. This project aims at exploring how language (together with other educational practices) works in implicit ways to (re)create *ideologies* about the purposes, actions, and roles of indigenous and intercultural education in Mexican society.

The research questions that I focus on tap into the cultural, political and pedagogic issues that a wide definition of intercultural education implies.

1) How is intercultural education defined in policy documents and textbooks?

2) What are the objectives of such education? How are they accomplished?
Particularly I focus on:
a) What are the purposes of intercultural education? (e.g., Is it for intercultural communication, for the democratization of society, for economic advancement of the indigenous communities, for the exercise of collective rights, etc.?).
b) What is the concept of culture that underlies the notion of interculturality?

3) The directionality of the intercultural relationship; that is, what are the roles and obligations of the Mexican mestizo and indigenous peoples in the construction of interculturality? Does this relationship reveal power imbalances between the mainstream mestizo and the indigenous communities? I will also determine who are the actors involved; that is do teachers, students, parents and communities participate in the implementation of intercultural education? How and to what extent do they

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participate?

4) How do the actors involved in intercultural education transform, appropriate or reject the model and the Discourse of intercultural education inherent in the policies? How do the different discourses on interculturality held by different people involved in intercultural education differ or connect to those established in official policy documents? How is this appropriation enacted in the classroom?

To explore these questions, I will analyze the Discourses that emerge during interviews, and in the analysis of written policy documents. By exploring how power and ideology operates to position the different actors involved in intercultural education, I expect to understand how individuals perceive themselves, organize and construct their practices at the institutional and community levels and the potential effects that those positionings have on policy consumers. Thus, I will attempt to explore how a community of practice (i.e., policy brokers, researchers, teachers, teacher educators, students teachers and organic leaders) in institutional settings (i.e., schools, universities, NGOs) use language to create ethnic, professional or other stances that emerge during interaction (on the microlevel), and which either conform to or challenge the official policies (macrolevel) of bilingual-intercultural education.

5.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The objective of this study is to analyze the way in which the discourse on intercultural education is negotiated in the texts and speech produced by different actors involved in the educational arena, and how this discourse in turn helps to shape identities, roles, and on a broader plane, to reproduce power imbalances and social inequalities. I already devoted Chapter

Two to explain some theoretical concepts of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA); however, I would like to briefly explain four categories proposed by van Dijk (1997) that will guide the actual analysis of the data: action, context, power and ideology.

According to van Dijk, discourse is a practical, social and cultural phenomenon (1997). Because of its "practical" nature, discourse involves action. Thus, discourse should be recognized as action, but also as purposive action; it aims to perform some objective (although the final result might not be the intended one). In addition, purpose may not be so obvious for all the people involved, so it is important to take perspective into consideration. To finalize the elements within the domain of action, van Dijk points out the importance of interaction, that is, the result of combined actions. The results of discourse can be analyzed at three different levels:

a) The components of discourse

b) The consequences of discourse (short-term results)

c) The implications of discourse (long-term results)

The second factor in van Dijk's framework is context. Both text and talk are situated, and Discourse takes place in social interaction. However, it is important to remember that discourse not only takes place in context, it *creates* the context itself because of its recursive properties: "context may itself be shaped and changed as a function of discourse structures" (van Dijk, 1997, p. 12). Context contains elements such as the way discourse is being accomplished: modality, genre, setting, actions, props and the background knowledge needed to understand the rules and norms governing discourse. However, there are some other factors that are contested in the field of discourse analysis. For example, contrary to approaches that consider that only the elements that speakers judge relevant during interaction (see Schegloff, 1999), van Dijk argues that factors such as SES, gender, race, and education among others are more consistently relevant than other

elements that depend on the immediate context. Thus, it is not possible to determine an *a priori* limit to what counts as relevant context during any interaction (1997, p. 14). However, it is necessary to consider the relationship between the local and the global context. In order to make sense of the relationship between localized discourse practices and society at large, it is important to consider the limits of context. However, considering contextual limits brings back van Dijk's point of not predetermining the relevant elements of context, which can be complicated because of subjective mental constructs that may not be identifiable as part of the discourse.

The third element that van Dijk includes in his framework is power. This notion is understood at three different levels. In the first level power is understood as force, which is in turn subdivided into actual coercive force (e.g., police repressing a demonstration) and mental power, which is more subtle and related to access to special speech acts and symbolic resources such as actual coercive force, economic position and political authority. The element of commands is the best example of this type of power, which limits the capacity for people to act as individuals, and therefore, limits their freedom.

A special type of power is hegemony, which I have described in Chapter Two. Hegemony refers to ideological control and the creation of consensus between social classes. Dominant ideologies that persuade subaltern groups about the fairness of the social and political conditions and create imaginary nexus between the ruling and dominated groups in which mutual needs and concerns are shared. In order to exercise hegemonic power, dominant groups control discourse through its generation and circulation, and control the means of discursive production, which brings up the problem of access to such means. Only specific groups have access to the media and the ability to control both the context and the structure of discourse (van Dijk, 1996).

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An example of this is the press, which has preferential access to public discourse and hence the power to disseminate biased opinions against certain groups through the control of structures of news texts (e.g., headlines, topic selection, lexical choices, metaphors used to describe actions or actors, etc.) This type of symbolic power is becoming more important than coercive power such as the military or political power. However, van Dijk argues that power should not be understood as monolithic, but distributed among the members of society, which given access to alternative discourses and even partial access to public discourse may indeed generate some sort of counter-discourse that creates counter-power. It is important to note that power is not always negative because it can actually generate positive changes. What concerns CDA is not power per se, but the *abuse* of power and its consequences.

The last factor that van Dijk includes in his framework is ideology. I have devoted a complete section in Chapter Two to ideology. To summarize here, discourse is the "means by which ideologies are persuasively communicated in society, and thereby help reproduce power and domination of special groups or classes" (1997, p. 25). Ideologies are socially shared representations and define social groups in relations to others. That is, they create an "us vs. them." Since they are socially shared representations, ideologies provide the members of social groups with the knowledge to deal with social problems stemming from conflict with other groups. For van Dijk, the important thing about ideology is to try to determine how ideology perform these functions; how it controls knowledge, attitudes and opinions about certain social issues; their structure and social effectiveness and finally the relationship of ideology to discourse and social structure.

I will use these elements to carry out the analysis of the data and draw final conclusions, but since one of the objectives of this study is to explore how trainers and teachers interact and

construct the notion of interculturality, I will also develop my analysis under the frame of interactional sociolinguistics. Schiffrin (1996) defines the latter as the study of linguistics and the social construction of interaction (p. 316). Interactional sociolinguistics combines sociolinguistic questions with the methodology of conversation analysis and the ethnographic emphasis of communication. Based on the works of Goffman (1981) and Gumperz (1982), interactional sociolinguistics attempts to discover how language structures create meaning in a situated interaction. Thus, one of the main precepts of this theory is the idea that meaning is negotiated in ongoing discourse and not through the application of rules, as speech act theory would propose. Therefore, the act of understanding language is always an interpreted action (Kottohoff, 2001) that depends on the context, the participants, their goals, social structures, institutions and other elements. Through interaction, individuals maintain and create their roles and statuses in society (i.e., their social identity), but also, their personalities (i.e., individual identities). These identities produce social order and stability that help to give social institutions their meaning and structure. These institutions, in turn, shape our interactions and discourse.

One of the main ideas of interactional sociolinguistics is that small differences in the way something is uttered can have important implications as to meaning depending on who said what, when, and how. Although people may share the same linguistic code, linguistic forms and discursive strategies are not meaningful per se, but their meaning varies according to contextual circumstances. A device that helps speakers understand meaning is contextualization cues (Gumperz, 1982). These can be understood as verbal and nonverbal signs that help convey information as interaction unfolds, such as the relationship of the people involved in the interaction and what they are doing. In other words, contextualization cues help interpret the social identities of the interactants and the type of activity that they are performing.

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Contextualization cues relate what is said to contextual presuppositions, or the background knowledge that is necessary to understand meaning at two levels: 1) the communicative activity type and 2) the illocutionary act that the speaker intends (Schiffrin, 1994, p. 100). Levinson (1992, p. 69) defines activity types as "any culturally recognized activity" that "frames" what the speakers think they are doing. These activities are not governed by a fixed set of rules, but are constituted by certain elements that recur. Activity types have their own settings, goals, and vary according to the social relationships between the interlocutors. Examples of activity types would include meetings, games, lectures and interviews. The activity type, contextualization cues and contextual presuppositions help interactants draw situated inferences about the meaning of the interaction in which they are engaged.

Contextualization cues can signal the meaning of the message but also changes in the status of the participation of the speakers. The changes in the alignment of the speakers in the participation framework are known as *footing* (Goffman, 1981). Individuals use language to reflect communicative goals, but language also provides situated indexes as to the identity of the speakers, their intentions and the way in which they could accomplish them. That is, in interaction, speakers present different identities of themselves (both social and individual) that can be altered through contextualization cues. Footing reflects how speakers conceive a communicative situation and the stances they take within it.

Changes in footing signal a change in how the speaker considers a situation. This change is created through linguistic forms or strategies. However, these forms per se do not have social meaning. Elinor Ochs (1992) uses the term indexing to explain the indirect relationship between linguistic forms and social meaning. Ochs argues that the relationship of language to social identities (e.g., ethnicity) is mediated by the relationship of language to social acts and activities.

The notion of indexicality is related to a class of signs known as indexes. The meaning of indexes is not determined by their linguistic properties, but by the context in which they appear. Indexes evoke the meaning that is conventionally associated with them. For instance, the image of indigenous peoples within Mexican society has traditionally been associated with the idea of backwardness and ignorance. These images have been socialized into the mestizo population through cultural models (i.e., representations) resulting from indigenous peoples being forced to take subordinated social positions. Thus, when a mestizo person uses linguistic structures (i.e., words, syntactic constructions, intonation patterns, etc.) associated with the so-called "indianized Spanish," the person is using these linguistic resources to help construct a stance connected with indigenous peoples (i.e., being backward or ignorant). This stance in turn indexes "being an Indian."[39]

Indexicals as sources of meaning-making in language are important not only because of the social and cultural dimensions implied by the use of certain language forms, but because of the power of indexicals to connect discourse practices with power and domination. Indeed, van Dijk (1997) identifies discourse practices not only as a vehicle for ideological transmission; they also play a key role in the reproduction and maintenance of dominant ideology.

In addition to signaling changes in footing and indexing, contextualization cues also function to signal the speakers' involvement in the conversation. Gumperz (1982) identifies involvement as the basis of linguistic understanding, which emerges in active participation in conversation. Tannen (1989) adds another dimension to this concept. Her idea goes beyond Gumperz' notion of involvement as an observable activity to include a relationship in which

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[39] For some other examples about indexing and social and ethnic identities see Kiesling (2001) in his study on whiteness discourse, and Hill's (1995) work on mock Spanish.

speakers connect with each other, sharing a world of words, ideas, and places. Since conversation cannot occur with only one person, it should be understood as a joint production in which the listener affects the speaker and vice versa. That is, conversation can be understood as intrinsically dialogic.[40] In order to create involvement, it is necessary that speakers understand conversational inferences that are based on shared knowledge. However, in order to create shared knowledge, the speakers must be engaged in the conversation.

Interactional sociolinguistics can be very helpful to identify the dynamics of interaction; however, it has been criticized on the grounds that it is not capable of accounting for the ideologies and societal forces that shape the interactions of the speakers (Cook-Gumperz & Gumperz, 2001; Heller, 2001). Therefore, it is necessary to complement this theoretical framework of analysis with an approach that views interaction (the micro-level) within a broader societal context. Hence, it is necessary to incorporate a critical perspective to carry out this study.

Because of the magnitude of the subject of study, the scope of the project and the type of data involved (i.e., talk and written documents), I am adopting an interdisciplinary perspective towards the study of the Discourse on intercultural education. My aim is to construct a methodological toolkit that allows me to address the research questions that I outlined above, and keep the analysis theoretically and methodologically sound.

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[40] Bakhtin (1981) argues that language is a dialogic reality. That is, language can be understood as a creative interaction resulting from sociolinguistic forces. Language is not a formal representation but a "dialogue" (hence the word dialogic), in which the listener not only interprets what the speaker is saying, but also influences him. Also, both the speaker and the listener are a product of history. Thus, language cannot be spoken without reflecting the ways they have been used by others in the past.

5.3 A WORD ON THE VALIDITY OF THE STUDY

In any discourse analysis study there is always a concern about the validity of the findings because of the likely interpretation excesses that the researcher may incur into and the limitations to generalize the results. I agree with Gee (1999) that validity is a matter of degree and that the results are always open to debate.

Wood and Kroger (2000) argue that in discourse analysis the reliability and validity of the projects are not established by any statistical measures, but through the depth of the analysis and the thoroughness of the descriptions. However, there are other means by which high levels of validity and reliability can be achieved. In order to make the results of my study reliable, I will triangulate the information by corroborating my hypothesis (grounded in the data) through several sources, including documents, interviews and observations. If I can find support for my assertions in these different sources, it is very likely that they will be valid.

In addition, in order to control and account for the variability of the participants' stances towards intercultural education, I will adopt Paulston's (2002) method of social mapping. This approach assumes the idea that discourse is dialogic: comprised by multiple voices that can debate and at the same time constitute the same entity. Therefore, it is necessary to "listen" to such voices. Social mapping allows the representation of these voices and brings them to a common space where they are allowed to inter-relate. This place is a two dimensional graphic representation (map) that extends along axes that constitute the main points in a debate (e.g., opinions in favor or against bilingual-intercultural education).[41] I am proposing to use social

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[41] Social Mapping has been used in some critical studies on comparative education. For instance, Ahmed (2002), in her study of women's adult education programs in Bangladesh, explored a groups of peasant women's attitudes, ideas and beliefs towards governmental and NGO's educational programs aimed at helping women acquire

mapping in this study because it allows me to see the different perspectives that constitute the discourse of intercultural-bilingual education. The identification of the axes that organize the discourse on interculturality will emerge from a close reading of the texts (i.e., official documents, textbooks, classroom observations, interviews, and students' essays). Once such axes are identified, I will draw heavily on the participants' discourse and accommodate their ideas around the organizing axes. These ideas will not only show how the participants relate to each other, the official view, and their particular stances, but it will also allow us to "listen" to the participants' voices and glimpse at their subjectivity.

Hopefully, in addition to the ethnographic work, thorough descriptions, extensive use of different sources and social mapping, the findings of this study − although still tapping on the participants' subjective opinions, beliefs, experiences, etc. − will help control reliability and variability concerns. Most importantly, it will help me understand the complexity of the discourse of intercultural education.

5.4 TYPES OF DATA AND DATA COLLECTION

Two main types of data were collected for this project:

1) Speech data

2) Written data

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literacy and basic work skills. Through interviews and ethnographic work, Ahmed compared how the objectives and educational offers of official programs differed from what the women thought they needed. Social mapping was used as a tool that allowed Ahmed to uncover the multiplicity of the women's voices and how they have been empowered, which in turn would help to modify the educational programs' objectives to meet the needs of their clients.

5.4.1 Speech data

I conducted semi-structured oral interviews with the participants of the study using the interview log on Appendix A.

The interview log covers the main topics that I wanted to explore, which in turn tap directly into the research questions I posed above. Questions 2 - 8 explore the teachers' knowledge about the intercultural model. Questions 9 - 10 look at the teachers' practice and his/her training in intercultural education. Questions 10 and 11 explore the role of the students' L1 and L2, while questions 13-15 investigate the problems of academic content selection and the participation of the community in this process. Questions 16-19 look at the teaching of values, diversity and the dialogue between cultures. Finally, questions 20 and 21 explore the teacher's opinions about the motivations for the implementation of the intercultural model and his/her expectations about the future of it in the Mexican educational field.

The above questionnaire was modified to interview the participants who were not indigenous in-service teachers (i.e., teachers who were actually working with children at the time of the data collection). In the case of in-service teachers, it was important to explore their opinions and knowledge about intercultural education as well as their teaching practices. For administrators, researchers, and teacher educators, the questionnaire not only emphasized policy, theoretical and curricular aspects, but also problems that teachers face in their everyday practice (see Appendix B).

The questions posed in the questionnaire also tap on the research questions that guide this study. These questions were meant to be flexible guidelines for the interview because the questionnaire was modified according to the interviewees' position within the educational field.

They were able to extend on any questions and even suggest alternative topics for discussion during the interview. However, the use of an interview guide allowed gathering reliable, comparable data.

5.4.2 Written data

The amount of written materials relevant for analysis is quite large because of national and international laws, agreements, decrees, etc., as it was shown on Chapter Four in the section, "The Legal foundations of Intercultural Education." Things get even more complex because despite the CGEIB's status as an educational institution that has influence over the national school system, the individual States of the federation have specific laws regarding their own systems; therefore, I selected the most important documents that are obligatory references in any study of intercultural education:

1) Programa Nacional de Educación (2001-2006). [National Program of Education, 2001-2006]

2) "Hacia un Modelo de Educación Inicial y Básica Intercultural Bilingüe para Niños y Niñas Indígenas" (SEP, 1996). [Towards a Model of Elementary and Basic Intercultural Education for Indigenous Boys and Girls]. This document established the guidelines for intercultural education in the indigenous context. It also is one of the first official texts to address intercultural education in the country.

3) "Lineamientos Generales para la Educación Intercultural Bilingüe para las Niñas y los Niños Indígenas." (General Guidelines for Intercultural Bilingual Education for Indigenous Girls and Boys) (DGEI, 1999).

4) "El Enfoque Intercultural en Educación. Orientaciones para Maestros de Primaria" (CGEIB, 2006). [The Intercultural Approach in Education. General Orientations for Elementary School Teachers]. Although this text is not strictly a policy document, it is included in the analysis because it presents the theoretical principles and official views on intercultural education. This document was provided to me by personnel of the CGEIB as "the" document to which to refer in any analysis.

I also studied other documents produced by the DGEI that are related to issues such as teacher training and didactic materials use and development. Such works are cited directly in the analysis. The CGEIB's website (http://eib.sep.gob.mx) also provided complementary information.

Non-official documents were obtained directly from the indigenous actors. Because of the difficulty of acquiring texts produced by indigenous teachers or indigenous associations, most of the analysis will be based on the participants' interviews. The non-official documents presented in this project were generated by in-service indigenous teachers whose educational project was analyzed here as an example of how indigenous actors have related to intercultural education. Such documents are:

1) La lecto-escritura de la lengua P'ruhépecha en el ámbito escolar. Proyecto San Isidro-Uringuitiro (2001). [Literacy in the P'urépecha language in the school context. San Isidro-Uringuitiro Project]. This is the actual curricular analysis and proposal developed by the San Isidro-Uringuitiro schools.

2) La educación intercultural desde la lengua y la cultura P'urhépecha (2007). [Intercultural education from the Púrhépcha language and culture]. This is a conference paper presented at the VII Latin American Congress on Intercultural

Bilingual Education (2007, Cochabamba). It was included in the analysis because it also was identified by the teachers as representative of their work and opinions in the area.

Gathering data involved both ethnographic work and bibliographical research. I "hung out," observed, conversed with and interviewed my participants during the course of two research periods stretching from the months of February through March and June through August of 2004 for a total of six weeks spread out in five months. During these periods, I observed class sessions carried out by indigenous teachers at two indigenous bilingual schools, and classes taught by teacher educators at the National Pedagogic University. I also participated as a guest in a research project conducted by Enrique Hamel (UAM Iztapalapa.). The project "*Comunidad indígena y educación intercultural bilingüe*" (Indigenous community and intercultural bilingual education) was aimed at developing a bilingual curriculum at two indigenous schools in Michoacán. I collaborated in the data collection, observations, materials design and curriculum design, as well as taught a workshop on lesson planning to the indigenous teachers. The teachers knew that I was temporarily collaborating in the project, but they were also aware that I was collecting data for this study, so they agreed to be interviewed and observed as part of my own project. Finally I also contacted other informants from different governmental, academic and grass roots organizations (I describe the settings and participants below).

During that time, I requested my informants to point to different policy documents or other relevant texts on intercultural education and educational policy. I also carried out traditional bibliographic research at libraries, the internet and other sources.

5.5 PARTICIPANTS AND SETTINGS

Because of the scope of the research questions, I focused on including informants from five different areas that reflect different approaches to intercultural education. These interviewees also show the different tensions and voices that make intercultural education a heteroglossic field. I am using pseudonyms to protect their identity.

    1. <u>Institutional settings</u>: I interviewed policy brokers and researchers who are in charge of designing institutional actions and research projects related to the intercultural bilingual model in Mexican schools. The participants in this category were contacted at the General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education (CGEIB), which is the main institution in charge of designing and advising educational institutions in the implementation of the intercultural model, and the General Direction of Indigenous Education (DGEI). The latter is not an institution working directly with intercultural education, but has been in charge of indigenous instruction since the late 1970s, so it was necessary to explore its point of view. The following informants belong to the institutional setting:

- Jorge was the director of training of "educational agents" and *"capacitación"* (training) at the CGEIB.

- Professor Lucía B. was the director of DGEI in Michoacán. Professor B. is known in indigenous education as a teacher, researcher, and administrator. She is well respected by the community of indigenous teachers because she is perceived as a committed individual in the field of indigenous education.

- Rodrigo M. has been involved in diverse areas of indigenous education (from teacher training to materials design). His work experience at DGEI has allowed him to witness the evolution of the intercultural concept in indigenous education from its very beginning.

- Elsa was a researcher in curricular development and later in teacher education at CGEIB. She had had ample experience working in intercultural education issues in her native country (Chile) and in Mexico.

2. Academics. The informants in this category are individuals working in academia, in the area of indigenous education. These interviewees were of special importance because much of the criticism towards intercultural education stems from researchers and professors who have field experience working in higher education, indigenous schools and with indigenous teachers. I interviewed professors from the National Pedagogic University who actually work in the *Licenciatura* (roughly a bachelor's degree) in Indigenous Education (campuses Mexico City and Uruapan), and the director of the Normal school of Cherán, a small town in the State of Michoacán. This normal school is of special importance because it has been partly funded by the community and because it has struggled to maintain a curriculum that has a certain independence from the official one.

- Alberto is a professor in the *Licenciatura* in indigenous education at the National Pedagogic University in Mexico City. He has ample experience working in indigenous teacher education programs and he actually teaches a course on interculturality in education.

- Silverio is a professor and director of the area of indigenous education at the National Pedagogic University in Uruapan Michoacán. Silverio is a respected member of the teaching community, where he is known as a "teacher of teachers" because of his long experience as a teacher educator.

- Lolita was the director of the indigenous normal school in Cherán.

- José is a professor in indigenous education at the indigenous normal school at Cherán. He was one of the main promoters of introducing classes in the students' native language in the curriculum.

3. <u>Indigenous in-service teachers</u>. Although strictly speaking, teachers are part of the academia, I decided to situate them in a different group because they form part of a distinctive cluster due both to their academic rank and in the perception of the people working at other levels. In addition, there is a sense of solidarity and self-identification as a distinctive group among them. These informants were in-service teachers from two indigenous intercultural schools in the western State of Michoacán, Mexico. I decided to focus on this area because of the relevance of the indigenous population in the cultural life of the State, personal connections and family history. I contacted the indigenous teachers during my participation in a research project conducted by E. Hamel in which the main objective was the development of a bilingual curriculum.

The schools are located in two mostly monolingual P'urhépecha rural communities called San Isidro and Uringuitiro. The elementary schools of the communities suffered for many years from the problems faced by indigenous schools: teacher absences, poor academic achievement, high dropout rates and a declining student population. A small group of young teachers decided to turn around the tide by dropping the state mandated bilingual bicultural program (which was neither of these elements) in favor of a bilingual curriculum that established P'urhépecha as the language of instruction, and introduced Spanish as a foreign language. The introduction of the children's native language in the learning process has had positive effects in literacy rates (Hamel and Schmelkes, 2002), which makes the schools of San Isidro and Uringuitiro unique

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since they represent a community's effort to establish an independent educational program that uses an indigenous language as the basis for instruction. Although the project is still evolving and facing opposition from school administrators, parents and teachers themselves, these schools are precisely a site in which the intercultural model may have some incidence. Hence, I believe this is an optimal scenario to research. I interviewed five teachers from this school. These teachers were selected because they were deeply committed to the project of implementing a bilingual curriculum. They also were acknowledged by their colleagues and the students' parents to be good teachers. That is, they were good pedagogically speaking, strict and concerned about their students' well being. This group of teachers is highly educated. At the time of the data collection three of the participants were doing their master's degree in indigenous education. In addition, although the teachers' native language is P'urhépecha, their proficiency level in Spanish was native-like, which ensured communication between the participants and me.

- Gilberto is the principal of the San Isidro's intercultural elementary school. He is part of a core group of teachers who designed the new bilingual curriculum of the school and works towards its implementation. Gilberto has the difficult task to work both with the teachers who are in favor of instruction in the native language, and with teachers who prefer to use Spanish as the language of instruction. Also, he has had to work with school administrators and supervisors that are skeptical about the project or plainly opposed. However, because of the support of the teachers who are interested in the project and some community leaders, the school has managed to keep its innovative curriculum.
- Pedro is a teacher at the San Isidro's elementary school. He is a supporter of the bilingual curriculum and he is constantly participating in the development of the curriculum and plan of

studies. Pedro is also the techie of the group, in charge of managing the small computer lab of the school.

- Carlos is a teacher at the San Isidro's elementary school. Just as in the case of Gilberto and Pedro, he is part of the core group of teachers who support the bilingual curriculum.

- Salvador is a teacher at the San Isidro's elementary school. Salvador has 15 years of experience teaching at this school and is a member of the group interested in implementing a bilingual curriculum.

- Alvaro is a teacher at the Benito Juárez school in Uringuitiro. He was especially concerned with the area of teaching Spanish as a second language.

    4. <u>Indigenous student-teachers</u>. I applied a questionnaire to a group of student-teachers who were enrolled in the sixth semester of the *Licenciatura* in indigenous education at the National Pedagogic University in Mexico City. These student-teachers were from different ethnic groups and had different native languages. All of them had previous experience teaching at indigenous elementary schools. Despite the students' experience working at indigenous schools, many of them underwent only a short training before being in charge of a classroom. The *Licenciatura en educación indígena* (roughly a Bachelor's degree in indigenous education) is aimed at training indigenous teachers to be administrators and carry out research in indigenous education. Therefore, the methodological and theoretical formation of the students is emphasized in the *Licenciatura*. For these reasons, these student teachers represent the elite of indigenous teachers, since they are probably the group with the most academic preparation and access to other resources (e.g., money, connections). Because of time constraints, I was not able to get oral interviews from the student-teachers. Instead, they answered a questionnaire that addressed the same questions that were asked to the other participants.

5. <u>Indigenous organizations</u>. I contacted two indigenous organizations in Mexico City: Ce-Acatl and the Asamblea de Migrantes Indígenas de la Ciudad de México (Assembly of Indigenous Migrants of Mexico City). These are two very active indigenous organizations. Ce-Acatl publishes journals and books related to indigenous matters and carries out work with the indigenous civil society. One of the main objectives of Ce-Acatl is the recovery and maintenance of indigenous cultures and languages, and a reflection about the elements that affect their preservation. For these reasons, Ce-Acatl focuses on fostering cultural expressions of the indigenous identities, such as traditions, oral history, medicine, and the preservation of indigenous languages through educational projects created by grass roots organizations. Ce-Acatl is also interested in the legal defense of the indigenous rights as a way to achieve social justice and sustainable development under a frame of a plural society. Thus, Ce-Acatl is both a cultural and a political organization (they participated in the San Andrés treaties proposed by the Zapatista National Liberation Army). I interviewed Julio A. who was the editor of the journal Ce-Acatl.

The *Asamblea de Migrantes Indígenas* organizes indigenous immigrants in Mexico city – particularly from the State of Oaxaca. The objective is to actively create an intercultural space in which indigenous immigrants are recognized. Mexico City is indeed a pluricultural space in which different ethnic groups converge; however, minority groups are effectively silenced in all public spaces. The *Asamblea* strives to create a truly intercultural city in which the indigenous minorities can relate with the majority groups through respect to their indigenous identities (see http://www.indigenasdf.org.mx/ for more information). Two indigenous leaders from the *Asamblea* were interviewed for this project: Pablo G. and Benito A. These interviewees were, at that time of the data collection, the main representatives from this organization.

5.6 PROCEDURE

The interviews were transcribed (see Appendix C for transcription conventions), and then they were subjected to a thematic analysis. As Gee (1999) suggests, I looked for key words, recurrent patterns and what situated meaning they took during the interviews. These recurrent patterns formed themes that in turn delineated a comprehensive picture of how certain ideas, experiences, opinions positionings, etc., fitted together or showed discontinuities. Admittedly, some themes emerged because of the questions that guided the interview, but the interviewees had the opportunities to express themselves and contribute to the conversation as much or as little as they wanted. The information they provided formed the major themes of the analysis, but also subthemes that emerged spontaneously that the interview's outline did not explore. Finding themes was the first step in the analysis, but as Kress and Hodge (1979) point out, linguistic forms and practices not only reflect but construct ideologies, which in turn intersect with discourses that (re)produce social inequities. Therefore, it was necessary to find out what linguistic mechanisms were used by the participants to position themselves within the Discourse on interculturality. Following, de Cilia, Reisigl andWodak (1999), in addition to the themes that emerged in the talk of the subjects, I looked at:

1) The discursive strategies (Gumperz, 1982) used by the subjects. That is, the way individuals use their linguistic and discursive resources (e.g., lexical choice, topics, shifts in register, footing, metaphors, modes of representation, etc.) to achieve certain goals (e.g., to create solidarity, opposition or resistance) in discourse.

2) The linguistic devices that constituted such strategies: those constructions that may help unveil how subjects represent themselves or certain groups. Constructions include syntactic and lexical choices, modality, pronoun use, nominalizations, passivizations and transitivity.

This approach allowed me to focus not only on what the subjects believed was important (themes) in what emerged during interaction, but it also allowed me to see how the subjects, out of all possible linguistic forms, used specific themes to communicate what they wanted. Finally, the emergent themes were mapped using Paulston's (2002) social cartography technique in order to better understand the multiple voices that comprised the Discourse(s) on indigenous intercultural education. The data was finally analyzed using the research questions posed above, and on the relevant social and historical events that framed this project.

The analysis of the data is divided into three chapters. Chapter Six focuses on research question number one. It explores the participants' perceptions about the definition of intercultural education and compares them with official policy documents. Chapter Seven explores the definition and purposes of intercultural education based on the analysis of policy documents, educational texts and the oral interviews of policy brokers, academics, indigenous teachers and representatives from indigenous NGOs. Chapter Eight addresses the directionality of intercultural education and concentrates on determining power imbalances perceived by the participants.

Finally, Chapter Nine focuses on exploring how the indigenous teachers of the study have approached and ultimately appropriated the Discourse of intercultural education and interculturality to develop their own educational projects. It also analyzes classroom interaction to find out how (if any) intercultural goals or content appear during the interaction between students and teachers.

CHAPTER 6: HOW IS INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION DEFINED?

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The first research question focuses on the definition of intercultural education. This question is important because the very definition establishes the foundation for the educational policy to implement. Therefore, it is important to understand how the different actors involved in this project understand what intercultural education is and how it is actually defined in official policy documents. As I showed in the previous chapters, the definition of intercultural education is something that, at best, is still under construction due to the theoretical and methodological debates that exist in the educational arena in Mexico and Latin America. This debate, as I will show, was evident in the discourse of the participants of this project, who showed inconsistent knowledge about the intercultural model. Nonetheless, such knowledge was strategically used to critically evaluate and to position them towards intercultural education.

The analysis of interviews and policy documents yielded two main themes:

1) The emergence of intercultural education in the Mexican educational context.

2) The definition of intercultural education and its components.

I will address each theme separately, and I will conclude this chapter by reflecting on the competing discourses that surround intercultural education.

6.2 A SPECIAL NOTE ON PRONOMINAL CHOICE AND DISCOURSE

Throughout this chapter I will be making constant reference to the speaker's pronoun choice and the discursive strategies such choice accomplishes within his or her discourse. Pragmatically, the use of a pronoun over another has special importance because it reflects the speakers' orientation in discourse. Pronominal choice signals a change in the alignment of the speakers in the participation framework or footing. In turn, changes in footing signal a change in how the speakers consider a situation (Goffman, 1981). In addition to encoding participants in interaction, pronominal choices encode social meanings that position speakers with respect to each other, the topic of discourse and other relevant meanings. However, these forms per se do not have social meaning because their interpretation depends on contextual factors. Pronouns are part of a class of signs known as deictics – or sometimes indexicals. Ochs (1992) uses the term indexing to explain the indirect relationship between linguistic forms and social meaning. Ochs argues that the relationship of language to social identities (e.g., ethnicity) is mediated by the relationship of language to social acts and activities. The meaning of indexes is not determined by their linguistic properties, but by the context in which they appear because they evoke the meaning that is conventionally associated with them.

Benveniste (1971, p. 219) has defined pronouns as empty signs. Nonetheless, in discourse, pronouns carry enormous meaning. Brown and Gilman (1972, [1960]) have studied the use of pronouns in languages (e.g., French and Spanish) that have a *Vous/Tu* (V/T) distinction. "V" is the "powerful" form because it establishes respect and distance between the interlocutors; whereas the "T" from implies symmetry in the relationship and solidarity.

Speakers manipulate the use of pronouns to signal their social alignment. For instance, switching from the "V" to a "T" form may signal a change in closeness and formality as speakers redefine their roles in a relationship. Although dimensions of power and solidarity are mapped onto language, any linguistic structure or strategy per se is not powerful (or solidary for that matter). They become powerful depending on the people who use them and the circumstances under which they are used. Tannen (1984) argues that it is not possible to posit a one-to-one relationship between linguistic forms or strategies and the intentions of the speakers. Therefore, it is necessary to understand how patterns of linguistic behaviors are related to meaning. Tannen mentions:

- The speaker and the hearer (who they are, what their roles are)
- Cultural background
- Context (how the speaker perceives the situation and the relationships between the speakers)
- Paralinguistic information (e.g., gaze, proxemics)
- Prosodic information
- The conversational style of the interactants

Research on pronominal choice has focused on how speakers accomplish discursive strategies by its use. For instance, the "straightforward" inclusive Spanish pronoun "nosotros" (i.e., we) may be used in an excluding way according to the intentions of the speaker. For instance, it could refer to the speaker and the hearer, or the speaker and some other undetermined referent but not the hearer (Stewart, 2001). Martín Rojo (1997) analyzed how Spanish speaking women use pronouns to construct their collective identity. "Nosotras" (we, feminine) was used by women not only to express solidarity, but also collective responsibility, which downplayed individual agency. In another study, de Fina (1999) analyzed how undocumented Mexican immigrants used pronominal choices (among other factors) in narratives to position themselves

with respect to a larger collective of immigrants, in which ethnicity played a major role in the construction of self-identity.

In this chapter, pronominal choice is a pervasive discourse strategy that the interviewees used to accomplish different goals (e.g., expressing solidarity, power, agency), but since the focus of the study is to analyze different aspects of intercultural education, I will explore those and explain how the participants of this project use pronouns and other linguistic devices to position themselves with regard to intercultural education.

6.3 THE EMERGENCE OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN THE MEXICAN EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

In order to understand the production, circulation and reception of intercultural education, it is necessary to analyze the context in which it appeared. As I explained in Chapter Three, intercultural education emerged in the Mexican educational field not as an evolution of previous educational models and policies, but as something imposed by the Secretariat of Education. Although the move towards interculturality was justified at the institutional level, the indigenous teachers of this project received the news of the adoption of intercultural education as a mere change of name, just as Salvador (San Isidro school) reports it:

(1)

01 R: When did you first hear about intercultural education?/
02 S: Well, what was it?/
03 one or two periods ago/
04 around two thousand /
05 more less [people] began to talk about that it was not bilingual-bicultural anymore but that it was intercultural/
06 just the mere name, [they] never told us what it was about/
07 R: and who told you that?

08 S: the principal/
09 when we wrote a document/
10 [They] told us "now we have to change the name, we will put on any official writing 'intercultural school,' it is not bicultural anymore"/

01 R: cuándo escuchó usted por primera vez del a educación intercultural?/
02 S: pues qué será?/
03 unos dos o tres períodos atrás /
04 por ahí anda, como en el dos mil/
05 más o menos se empezó a hablar eso de que ya no era bilingüe bicultural sino que era intercultural/
06 nada más el puro nombre nunca nos dijeron de qué se trataba/
07 R: Y quién les dijo eso?/
08 S: El director/
09 Cuando este hacíamos un documento/
10 Ya nos decían "ahora le vamos a cambiar el nombre, ya vamos a ponerle en algún oficio escuela intercultural, ya no es bicultural"/

What Salvador reports reflect the imposition of intercultural education, where teachers "are told" that there is a change in the name of the educational model, and even of their own school. Indeed, the school was labeled "elementary intercultural school" without regard of the actual status of intercultural education in the classrooms. Salvador uses expressions in which the subject is implicit to talk about the change towards intercultural education. Salvador does not openly mention who did this change, but by using third person singular (mapped on the verb morphology), the protagonists of the enunciation are effectively erased. He also uses the impersonal expression, "[people] began to talk that it was not bilingual-bicultural anymore." Impersonal expressions in Spanish are used to deflect away attention from the agent because it is unknown to the listener or the speaker, because it is known to both or because it is not convenient for the speaker to unveil it (Llorente Maldonado de Guevara, 1982). The question is then, why Salvador chooses these discursive resources to talk about the introduction of intercultural education. In his discourse, Salvador presupposes that it is not necessary to talk

about who has the faculties to impose changes; however, Salvador marks the teachers' lack of agency through utterances in which they appear as simple objects, undergoing instructions or processes (see Kress and Hodge, 1979): "we were told," or denying them any explanations, "[they] never told us what it was about." Even though the principal of their school appears as the actor who gives instructions (line 08) he does not have any more decision power than the other teachers.

The same idea of imposition is manifested in the discourse of other interviewees. For instance, Rodrigo (DGEI) considered the incursion of intercultural education in the indigenous field as a fashionable trend within the educational system. Because Mexico has a government that likes to copy "trends" or just because a small group of intellectuals who control the destiny of indigenous education thought that it was the line that it should follow, the adoption of the model was decided without further explanations:

(2)

01 R: well, the truth is that I do not know why the country adopted the intercultural policy/
02 whether it was because it was fashionable, and Mexico is Mexico and the government likes to copy fashions/
03 or because some group of intellectuals said "well, indigenous education should follow this road"/
04 I don't know the truth/
05 that's my big doubt/

01 R: bueno, la verdad no sé por qué el país adoptó la política intercultural/
02 si era porque es moda y México pues es México y le gusta copiar las modas al gobierno/
03 o por algún grupo de intelectuales que decía "bueno, es que la educación indígena debe de seguir este camino"/
04 no lo sé la verdad/
05 esa es mi gran duda//

Rodrigo works for the governmental agency in charge of indigenous education, but even to him the motives that caused a paradigmatic shift towards intercultural education are unclear; however, the idea of intercultural education as a "fashion" in indigenous education in Latin America also shows up in other interviews as well. For instance, Alberto (National Pedagogic University) refers to a conference held at the university where he works that reunited several experts in the field. In this conference, the attendants noted the similar sociolinguistic situations between Mexico and other Latin American countries that also have indigenous populations. This established the grounds for the incorporation of the intercultural terminology (although not the approach per se) in the plan of studies of the *licenciatura* in indigenous education offered by that institution.

(3)

01 T: well/
02 I always believed that there was an important phenomenon/
03 an important event in the time of this (inaudible)/
04 then, all experts were invited/
05 it was when Christina came/
06 R: Christina Paulston?/
07 T: yes/
08 I even can give you an account about how the event went/
09 I feel that it was an important event/
10 Ruth Moya also came/
11 this: Luis Enrique López/
12 so that a great quantity of experts was concentrated/
13 ((coughs)) and that gave the cue so that the plan of studies of the licenciatura was modified/
14 if you check it/
15almost a big part of the subject matters/
16 all include interculturality/

01 T: bueno/
02 yo siempre creí: que hubo un fenómeno importante/
03 un evento importante que en la época de esta (inaudible)/
04 entonces se invitó a casi todos los expertos/
05 que fue cuando vino esta Cristina/

06 R: Christina Paulston?/
07 T: <u>sí</u>/
08 inclusive te puedo dar cuenta de cómo fue el evento/
09 yo siento que fue un evento importante/
10 que también vino Ruth Moya/
11 este: Luis Enrique López/
12 o sea que se concentró una gran cantidad de expertos/
13 ((coughs)) y eso dio la pauta para que se modificara el plan de estudios de la
   licenciatura/
14 si tú lo revisas /
15 casi gran parte de las materias /
16 todas incluyen la interculturalidad//

In the case referred to by Alberto, the authority of the experts in education, as well as the

appearance of the concept of intercultural education in the Latin American educational field

established the setting for a change in indigenous education, which at that time was stuck in

bilingualism-biculturalism. The adoption of the model seems a response to the influence of

experts and a theoretical current adopted by the vanguard of indigenous education in the

continent. Alberto also mentions that such change was at the discursive level, with no real

foundations and without a reflection about how to understand intercultural education.

(4)

01 T: because even in the discourse of: DGEI, still there was talk about intercultural
   education/
02 I mean of bilingual-bicultural education/
03 then (inaudible) uh:/
04 of course the discourse was not uniform, no?/
05 but it did give the cue to begin to work/
06 but at the level of talk/
07 and not as much as a foundation, no?/
08 to say" how it is understood?"/

01 T: porque inclusive en el discurso de la: DGEI todavía se venía hablando de la
   educación intercultural/
02 digo de la educación bilingüe bicultural/
03 entonces (inaudible) este:/
04 claro el discurso no era uniforme, no?/
05 pero sí dio la pauta para que se comenzara a trabajar/

06 pero al nivel de: de dicho/
07 y no tanto como un sustento, no?/
08 de decir cómo se entiende?/

As opposed to the indigenous teachers, Rodrigo and Alberto do not report the adoption of intercultural education as an imposition perhaps because they actually have a higher rank within the educational system. Rather, the change is a product of the actions of authorities who design policies. These actions may be seen as impositions, but it was not manifested grammatically in the discourse of the interviewees. However, Alberto and Rodrigo's opinion is not shared by other interviewees who work for the institution that actually is in charge of implementing these policies. Jorge, who works for the General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education (CGEIB), locates the adoption of intercultural education on the struggles of the indigenous peoples, and on the governmental acknowledgement of the multicultural situation of the country, which is established in the constitution:

(5)

01 J: where does it emerge from?/
02 <u>well </u>as you know, surely in the case, just as a brief antecedent, in the case of Europe,it is talked about the intercultural question because of the polarity of (unintelligible) /
03 and concretely in the case of Mexico, and we would say, of Latin America, it is precisely because of the strong presence of the indigenous peoples/
04 and, well, uh, and it is not just like that, that it comes in an spontaneous way or good taste, let's say, but it has been also due to the struggle of the Indian peoples years ago, of vindication, and everything, no?/
05 then, as you know, also in the fourth article, in nineteen ninety two, <u>for the first time,</u> it is clearly acknowledged a little of the pluricultural and multicultural composition of the country, there in the fourth article, no?/

01 J: de dónde surge?/
 02 <u>bueno </u>como tu sabes, seguramente en el caso, solamente como un breve antecedente, en el caso de Europa, se habla de cuestión intercultural por la polaridad de los (ininteligible)/
03 y en el caso concretamente de México, y diríamos, que América latina, es justamente por la presencia fuerte de los pueblos indígenas /
04 y, que bueno, este , y no es solamente así que se da de manera espontánea o de buen

gusto digamos, sino que ha sido también gracias a la lucha de los pueblos indios de
años atrás, de reivindicación y todo, no?/
05 entonces, como tu sabes, también en el artículo cuarto en mil novecientos noventa y dos,
 por primera vez, se reconoce claramente un poco de la composición pluricultural y
multicultural del país, hasta ahí en el artículo cuarto, no?

In this excerpt, Jorge identifies the adoption of the intercultural concept in Mexico and
Latin America due to the "strong" presence of the indigenous peoples. It is not clear whether
"strong" is being used in numerical or political terms; however, the second interpretation seems
more likely. Jorge argues that the acknowledgement of interculturality does not emerge
spontaneously because of "good taste;" that is to say, as a nicety or concession from the
dominant majority to the indigenous peoples. On the contrary, it was won by the indigenous
groups. However, the adverb "also" in the utterance "but it has been also due to the struggle of
the Indian peoples years ago" (line 04) triggers a lexical presupposition[42]that entails that
effectively "good taste" plays a role in the adoption of interculturality in the Mexican political
context. Presuppositions are categories of inferential meaning that depend on the grammatical
meaning of the words, and that are assumed as true. Thus, the struggle of the indigenous peoples
is reduced to a contribution in the past, "from years" ago, not an active process in which
indigenous actors demand their rights and the establishment of interculturality. Finally, Jorge
mentions the amendment of the fourth constitutional article as one of the foundations of
intercultural education, in which the multiethnic and multicultural character of the country is
acknowledged. However, it is important to point out that that article was a unilateral presidential
initiative under Salinas de Gortari's office. These actions render intercultural education a policy

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[42] Kartunnen (n.d.) has written the most extensive list of presuppositional expressions. Levinson (1983, p. 181-184)
analyses them in depth.

implemented from the top-down. It is precisely the imposed character of intercultural education that constitutes one of the major weaknesses of the project, as Julio (Ce-Acatl) argues:

(6)

01 J: what I feel is that [they] try, try/
02 effectively, perhaps thinking with the best of intentions/
03 to fulfill their duty in their own way/
04 but what I believe is that the original sin is that/
05 trying from the top/
06 the decision is going to be made/
07 like the presidential office for the direct attention from the president to the indigenous peoples/
08 which is good for nothing/

01 J: pero yo lo que siento es que tratan, tratan/
02 efectivamente quizás pensando con la mejor intención/
03 pues de cumplir a su manera/
04 pero yo lo que creo que el pecado original es ese/
05 pretender que desde arriba/
06 se va a tomar la decisión/
07 como la oficina presidencial para la atención directa del presidente para los pueblos indígenas/
08 que no sirve absolutamente para nada//

The "original sin" of intercultural education is precisely what has been thought out and implemented from the top, from the governmental offices, which seem not to have an idea about the concrete needs of the indigenous peoples. Doing their duty in their own way implies the exclusion of the recipients of the educational policies, and the imposition of what the dominant groups think is best for the minorities. Thus, from its inception, the intercultural model was not co-constructed, which violates the very principles of intercultural education. In other words, the participation of communities in policy making was ignored.

Summarizing this section, all the interviewees except for Jorge (who represents CGEIB) agree on the fact that intercultural education appeared as a formal change of policy (with no pedagogic or institutional changes) implemented by the educational authorities. The motives for

such changes are diverse, but again, only Jorge cites the demands and needs of the indigenous populations, which interestingly, the indigenous participants did not mention. In addition to creating a lack of knowledge about the reasons for its implementation, the adoption of intercultural education also has produced competing discourses about the very definition of intercultural education. I will address this issue in the next section.

6.4 THE DEFINITION OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

In this project I have not adopted a definition of intercultural education. Rather, I have let the voices of the participants characterize it; but I agree with the dimensions that López (1997) has proposed: a) An educational policy; 2) a pedagogical approach; and 3) a methodological strategy. In addition to pedagogical and methodological aspects, an extensive definition of intercultural education should include a critical attitude towards the political and economic aspects that structure Mexican society. Such reflection is necessary if one of the main goals of intercultural education – the change of relations in society – is to be achieved.

The CGEIB defines intercultural education as:

> …the group of intended pedagogical process oriented to the formation of persons [who are] able to comprehend reality from diverse cultural views and to intervene in the process of social transformation that respect and that benefit from cultural diversity. (CGEIB, 2006, p. 25, my translation)

This definition, although having a resemblance with the one proposed by the General Direction of Indigenous Education (DGEI), is not the same. The DGEI is the institution that has been in charge of indigenous education since the late seventies, and the first one to introduce the term "intercultural" in the educational field. However, it was the CGEIB, the institution appointed by the government, which actually implemented the intercultural agenda across the educational system.

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Unlike CGEIB's definition, which focuses on cultural dimensions, DGEI's emphasizes cultural and linguistic factors as well as the formation of an individual whose identity reinforces national unity and pursues "liberty and justice for all." These are some of the unfulfilled promises that the "revolutionary" governments (embodied by the PRI) offered to the population:

> Intercultural education will be understood as that which acknowledges and tends to cultural and linguistic diversity; [that] promotes respect to difference; [that] procures the formation of national identity from favoring the strengthening of the local identity, regional and national, as well as the development of attitudes and practices that are conductive to the search for liberty and justice for all. (DGEI, 1999 p. 11)

The imposition of the model, without specifying its characteristics, together with the lack of theoretical and methodological agreements has created misunderstandings or ignorance among the indigenous teachers, which is reflected in their answers to my first question. It is the frequent use of hedges that justifies their lack of knowledge and mitigates their loss of face because of such ignorance. According to Caffi (1999), mitigation reduces risks for the participants in an interaction, for instance, of contradiction, loss of face, and conflict. By offering their personal opinions and definitions of intercultural education ("for me it would be"), they lower their obligation to truth (i.e., whatever the actual definition may be). For instance, José (Cherán normal school) defines intercultural education as:

(7)

01 J: well, ah: intercultural education for me would be ah:/
02 studies on … s: studies with content, when contents come from the mestizo, indigenous culture, so the students can be formed in that aspect, both in the indigenous and the mestizo culture/

01 J: bueno este: pues la educación intercultural pues para mí sería pues este:/
02 pues estudios sobre: .. e: estudios con contenidos, cuando vienen contenidos de la cultura mestiza, indígena, que los estudiantes puedan formarse en ese aspecto tanto con la cultura indígena como con la cultura mestiza/

The interviewees also resort to the authority of experts to justify their opinions about the intercultural model. This strategy works not only to save face, but also situates the speakers within a group of people who have the academic authority and the symbolic capital to give foundation to their own concepts. Resorting to expert opinions is a common strategy (van Dijk, 1993), as Carlos (Uringuitiro school) shows. After an opening that may indicate that he actually does not know, he suddenly turns to the "many authors that define intercultural in different ways."

(8)

01 C: well, see: <u>sincerely</u>, I am going to be sincere with you/
02 that it has, well it has many authors that define the intercultural in different ways/

01 C: Pues mire:, <u>sinceramente</u>, voy a serle sincero/
02 que tiene, ora si que tiene muchos autores los que definen lo intercultural en diferente manera/

In general, during the interviews the teachers seemed to have incomplete knowledge of the intercultural model. This is also the case with indigenous student-teachers. In a group of questionnaires answered by indigenous students teachers (N=14), there are some recurrent keywords that reflect a certain degree of understanding or knowledge of the concepts furthered by CGEI and DGEI. The most mentioned characteristics of intercultural education are: mutual respect between cultures (50%); the acknowledgement of cultural diversity (28%) and a type of egalitarian education (28%). Only 14% of the subjects identified intercultural education as an educational approach and 21% mentioned the use of the native tongues in the educational process. The same trend is found in the definition of intercultural education provided by in-service teachers.

The most common characteristic mentioned by in-service teachers was respect to diversity, particularly diversity within the classroom, and the need to address the different

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learning styles of the students. For instance, Carlos (Uringuitiro school) defines intercultural education in the following terms:

(9)

01 C: what is intercultural is, a: to respect diversity, no?/
02 that exists within the social group/
03 without regard the:/
04 without regard (unintelligible) [that they] are living within the same group/
05 that is to say: … ah…/
06 for example here in the ethnic group, the P'urhépecha have their own identity/
07 but there is also a great diversity within the same group/
08 to the interior/
09 of course/
10 different styles/
11 that is, different learning styles, different forms of/
12 in the same group in the classroom, there are different ways of learning/
13 different ways to coexist/
14 of identifying [themselves], that is/

01 C: que lo intercultural es, este: pues, respetar la diversida, no?/
02 que existe dentro de un grupo social/
03 sin importar la:/
04 sin importar que (ininteligible) se está viviendo dentro de un mismo grupo/
05 es decir que:..este... /
06 por ejemplo aquí en el grupo étnico, los purhépechas tienen su propia identidá/
07 pero hay también una gran diversidad también adentro del mismo grupo/
08 en el interior/
09 claro/
10 diferentes estilos/
11 o sea, diferentes estilos de aprendizaje, diferentes formas de/
12 en el mismo grupo del aula, hay diferentes formas de aprender/
13 diferentes formas de convivir/
14 de identificarse, o sea que /

A second element that appears in the interviews with the teachers is the importance of contextualizing knowledge (i.e., academic contents) for children, in such a way that it is easier for them to learn. Since a lot of the information presented in the official textbooks is aimed at urban students, teachers need to use the children's immediate experience to anchor and explain what is presented to them:

(10)

01 P: But plainly it is to begin education within what the child already knows, no?/
02 within the cultural environment in which [he] lives/
03 not from example, like the textbooks which are decontextualized/
04 but from the environment in order to understand the other/
05 I would define it like this/
Pedro (San Isidro school)

01 P: Pero así de lleno es partir de la educación dentro de lo que el niño ya conoce, no?/
02 dentro del entorno cultural donde vive/
03 no partir por ejemplo como vienen los libros de texto que están descontextualizados/
04 sino a partir del medio para llegar a entender lo otro/
05 así lo definiría/
Pedro (San Isidro school)

The third element that according to the teachers constitutes intercultural education is the use of the students' mother tongue in the educational process. As I will show in Chapter Seven, the mother tongue constitutes the core of the P'urhépecha educational project. It is from their native language that children not only will be able to learn more actively and better, but also will learn to relate to their mestizo counterparts. That is to say, to begin with what children already know to later incorporate the foreign, or more specifically, the mestizo or "universal" culture:

(11)
01 R: So at the San Isidro school is the intercultural approach utilized?
02 P: Well, we think/
03 as I tell you, we have yet a lot to know/
04 but we think that we do because we are overlapping the two tongues/
05 that is, we are not just focusing on what is ours/
06 in the P'urhépecha [language] and ethnic knowledge/
07 but we are also focusing in the more universal knowledge/
08 the immediate one that/
09 what is it called? the mestizo or Spanish/
10 we know it as Spanish/

01 R: entonces en la escuela de San Isidro se utiliza el enfoque intercultural?/
02 P: pues pensamos/
03 como le digo pues nos falta mucho que conocer/
04 pero pensamos nosotros que sí porque estamos intercalando las dos lenguas/
05 o sea no no más nos estamos centrando en lo nuestro/
06 en el P'urhépecha y los conocimientos étnicos/

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07 sino también nos estamos centrando en el conocimiento más universal/
08 el inmediato que ese/
09 cómo se llama? el mestizo o español/
10 nosotros casi lo conocemos como español/

It is interesting to observe that the characteristics mentioned by the in-service teachers are not far from the official definition; however, there is a key difference: while the teachers emphasize the language and ethnic knowledge, the official definitions focuses on the teaching of values and the acknowledgement of cultural diversity. Although a great part of the intercultural discourse focuses on the cultural and linguistics suitability of education, it also stresses values and attitudes. In the following excerpt, Jorge (CGEIB) answers my question about the definition of intercultural education by pointing out that it should be an "experiential" process that leads to the knowledge and appreciation of others:

(12)

01 J: <u>exactly</u>, if it is not like that, we talk about interculturality at a theoretical and
conceptual level, for that reason, for us it is experiential, it is an experiential process,
is a process, as I told you about the other?/
02 Uh: experiential, uh:, of values, pragmatic and it has to be an intentional process, if
There is no intention, it is not, it is an intentional process, then it is a process as the
view that we have about intercultural education, but well, for us, that is like a first
level, a second level of us is how do we achieve intercultural education?/
03 This implies what I told you before, no? that in schools knowledge and
acknowledgment of diversity is promoted, right?... and well when we say that
knowledge is (unintelligible) and that today's children, both indigenous and non-
indigenous acknowledge their diversity in their locality in their state, in their
municipality, in their nation, that really indigenous and non-indigenous children
acknowledge diversity, but that today's girls, regarding values, uh:, it should not be
limited to diversity, we have to promote from schools, from the teaching work, the
acknowledgement that implies to promote among the students, to comprehend, to
respect and to value diversity, that is, to value the other, that would be in more or less
general terms how we conceptualize intercultural education, and that from schools it is
understood that there are different cultural logics, that there is, in the case of
indigenous and non-indigenous children different learning rhythms and that it
deserves differential attention, once again, it is not so easy, not so simple, because it is
necessary a baggage of knowledge, and practices to bring them to the classroom, no?/

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01 J: <u>exacto</u>, si no es así, si hablamos de interculturalidad a un nivel teórico y conceptual, por eso para nosotros es vivencial , es un proceso vivencial , es un proceso ¿cómo te dije el otro?/

02 este, vivencial, este, de valores, práctico y tiene que ser un proceso intencionado, si no hay la intención, pues entonces no , es un proceso intencionado , entonces es un proceso como la visión que tenemos de la educación intercultural, pero bueno, ese es como un primer nivel, un segundo nivel de nosotros es cómo conseguimos nosotros la educación intercultural? /

03 es que implica lo que ya te decía un poco no? que en las escuelas se promueva el conocimiento y el reconocimiento de la diversidad sí? … y bueno cuando decimos que el conocimiento es (inteligible) y que los niños de hoy , pues indígenas y no indígenas reconozcan su diversidad en su localidad en su estado, en su municipio, en su nación, que realmente niños indígenas y no indígenas reconozcan su diversidad, pero que las niñas de hoy en tanto lo de valores, este, no deben quedar en que solo hay diversidad, tenemos que pasar a promover desde las escuelas, desde el trabajo docente el reconocimiento que implica promover a los alumnos, comprender, respetar y valorar a la diversidad, o sea, valorar al otro, eso sería en términos más o menos generales como concebimos la educación intercultural y que desde las escuelas se comprendan que hay lógicas culturales diferentes, que hay en el caso de los niños indígenas y no indígenas hay ritmos de aprendizaje diferentes y que eso merecen atenciones diferenciadas que también, otra vez, no es nada fácil , nada sencillo porque hay que tener un bagaje de conocimientos un bagaje de prácticas para llevarlos justamente al salón de clases, ¿no?/

Certainly, from his institutional position, Jorge is aware that intercultural education is a pedagogical intervention that attempts to contextualize the teaching-learning process in the children's immediate cultural and linguistic context. He himself has been in charge of writing official documents that are used in teacher-training and that explain in depth how intercultural education should be understood; however, in his interview, what appeared first – the theme – in his definition was the idea of a value- guided, intentional process, whose final goal was the acknowledgement and valuing of diversity in the classroom. Interestingly, the only mention of the indigenous languages that appears in his definition refers to the role of indigenous individuals – including himself ("we ourselves the indigenous") – in the disappearance of their own languages, and the shift, not even to Spanish, but English. Such shift seems to be related with personal responsibility and decisions. Jorge's assertions about the indigenous' responsibility in

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the disappearance of their languages are very serious (and indeed such move downplays other social, cultural, economic and political factors), so he mitigates the accusation by including himself in the shared responsibility and employing the first person plural "we." According to Llorente Maldonado (1982), the creation of a collective subject using the third person singular is in fact a way to express impersonality, but also to show solidarity with and affection to a group. The theme of personal responsibility will appear in under several guises, as I will show in the following chapter.

(13)

01 J: we ourselves the indigenous have contributed that our tongue [is] not anymore, right?/
02 and this idea has permeated the parents about their own tongue "Well, my own tongue doesn't serve me, English serves me because with it I go to the United States, no?/

01 J: nosotros mismos los indígenas hemos contribuido a que nuestra lengua ya no ¿verdad? /
02 y esto ha traspasado a la idea de los padres de familia sobre su propia lengua: "Pues no, no me sirve mi propia lengua, me sirve el inglés porque con eso voy a Estados Unidos" ¿verdad?/

Although the idea of intercultural education as a type of values education appears in the discourse of the indigenous educators, this is related to the goal of reinforcing indigenous identity and the community. The acknowledgement and appreciation of diversity outside of the classroom, and especially, of the mestizo culture is not one of the main goals. Appreciating one's own culture by becoming aware of it is an idea held by grass-roots indigenous associations as well; however, such a consciousness making process is not carried out at the individual level. On the contrary, such process has to be anchored in the foundational element of the indigenous culture: the community. Julio (Ce-Acatl indigenous organization) sees intercultural education as a process that undergoes reflection about the elements that constitute the community. Certainly, his view is somewhat holistic, and coincides with the definition provided by Jorge (CGEIB) in

the sense that intercultural education should include the person, the community and society; but

ultimately, intercultural education goes back to the community:

(14)

01 J: so what I think is that e: intercultural education has different elements that go
through life as an integral part of people, of communities and society as a whole/
02 intercultural education goes through a consciousness making process in order to re-
appreciate, to strengthen, and to implement the mechanisms, the tools [that] for m:, I
would not like to say to acquire/
03 but to value, [aquilatar], to recover all these elements that are characteristic of the
community e: to give them their rightful place/

01 J: entonces yo lo que pienso es que e: la educación intercultural tiene diferentes
elementos que atraviesan la vida como un todo integral de las personas, de las
comunidades y de la sociedad en su conjunto/
02 la educación intercultural pasa por esa toma de conciencia, por revalorar, por
fortalecer, por implementar los mecanismos, los instrumentos para m: yo no quisiera
decir adquirir/
03 sino para valorar, aquilatar, recuperar todos esos elementos que son propios de la
comunidad e: darles el lugar que les corresponde/

The idea of community as a foundational part of society is a recurrent theme that appears

in the discourse of the indigenous actors, and from it is understood the definition of intercultural

education, its goals and actors. That is to say, it is considered a type of education rooted in the

indigenous community that addresses the needs of it itself (including the knowledge of the

mestizo culture and the Spanish language as I will show in the next chapter). However, it is not

exactly a type of education whose main goal is the establishment of harmonic relations with the

dominant majority.

Figure 1 shows the components of intercultural education that appeared both in official

documents and the discourse of the interviewees. The name of the participant or institution

appears on the component that they emphasize in their definitions. As it can be seen, the

indigenous participants' ideas on intercultural education cluster on pedagogical and linguistics

aspects, while CGEIB concentrates on cultural issues. Interestingly the definitions provided by

CGEIB and DGEI focus on opposite sides: while CGEIB emphasizes the individual, DGEI sees

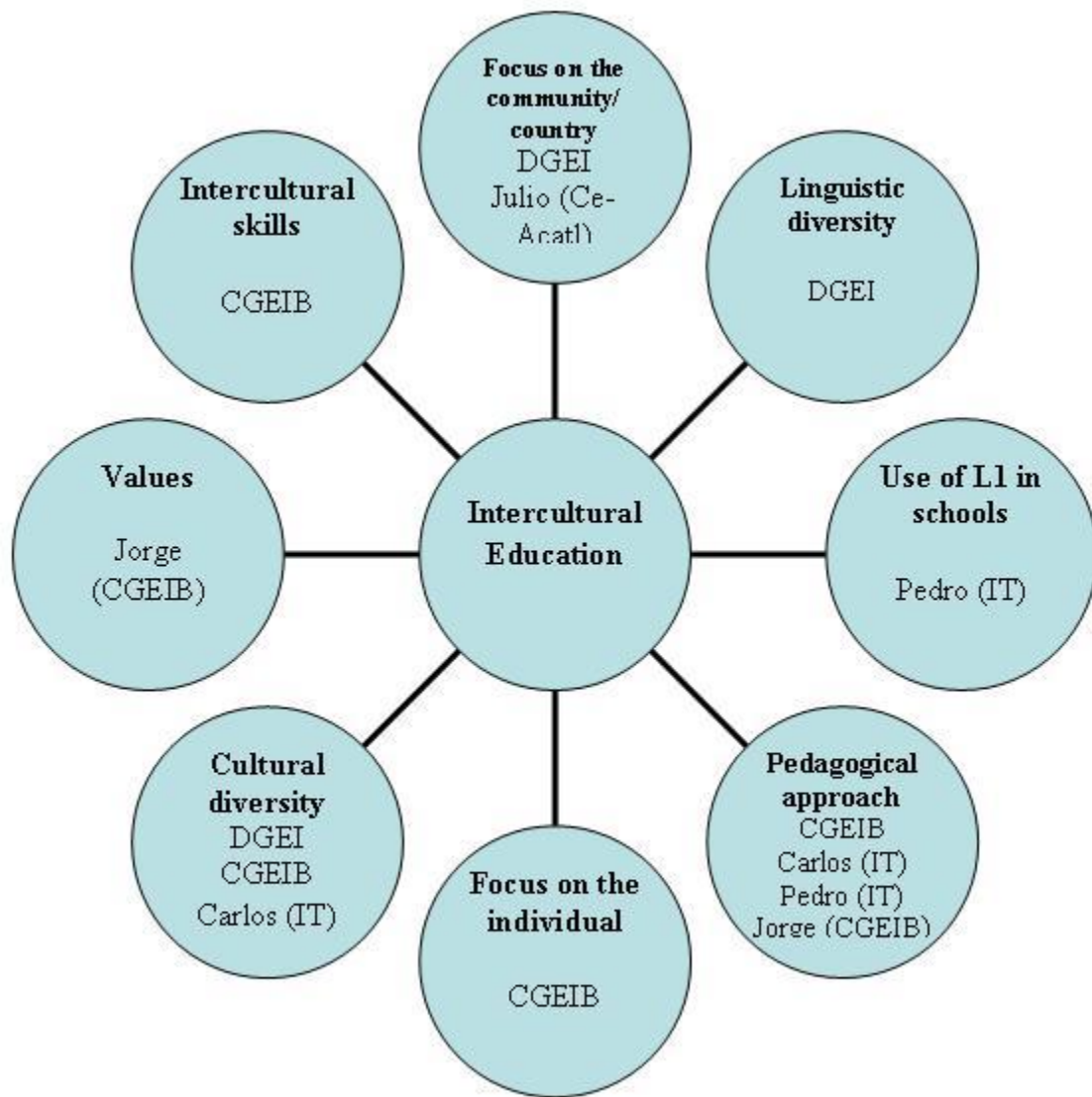as the ultimate goal the greater community and ultimately, the country.

Figure 1. The definition of intercultural education

CGEIB: Coordinación General de Educación intercultural Bilingüe.
DGEI: Dirección General de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe.
IT: Indigenous teacher

6.5 CONCLUSIONS OF THIS CHAPTER

There is disagreement about the definition of intercultural education. This problem is due in part to the way in which the model was introduced and assumed by the teachers. In Mexico's case it was an imposition from various levels of government (i.e., Secretariat of Education). Undoubtedly, indigenous people demand a type of education that is linguistically and culturally appropriate; however, even though such demands appear as part of the intercultural model, the model per se is not the result of indigenous demands, thus raising suspicions about the ultimate purpose of intercultural education (as I will show later).

According to the CGEIB, intercultural education is still under construction; however, there seems to be at least some degree of consensus regarding two key elements: acknowledgement of diversity and respect to difference and values. Despite the teachers' lack of knowledge or even skepticism about intercultural education, it is interesting to see that indigenous teachers believe that they are practicing it under their own definition, and such definition focuses on the children's native language and immediate experience. The type of education proposed by the indigenous interviewees not only has pedagogical objectives to facilitate the cognitive development of children, but also contains the strengthening of the students' ethnic identity, language being a fundamental part, as I will discuss in the following sections. Certainly, it is a shared goal with the official definition, at least at the discursive level, but the long story of indigenous education in Mexico has shown that bilingual education has never existed (Hidalgo, 1994) even though educational policies have been in place. Rather, indigenous education has encouraged acculturation and a linguistic shift to Spanish under the

ideology of *mestizaje, indigenismo* and cultural homogenization. Therefore, intercultural education should be analyzed under the light of the history of indigenous education even though it may seem to address indigenous demands.

Certainly, I believe that there is a shift in the way indigenous actors are relating to the concept of intercultural education (if not the model itself, at least to some of the principles involved). Gilberto's opinion (principal, San Isidro school) about how to understand intercultural education, and his conviction that in fact teachers from this school are working towards achieving it, shows an appropriation of the term. In the following excerpt, Gilberto describes how they (i.e., San Isidro and Uringuitiro schools) conceptualize intercultural education:

(15)

01 G: In this sense I would say that we go towards that way of interculturality/
02 in the sense of how we are conceptualizing e: [it] with the development firstly of the
    language and culture of the child/
03 so [he] can have better access to the second language and culture/
04 without it representing a shift/

01 G: así es ese sentido yo diría pues que vamos hacia ese camino de la interculturalidad/
02 en el sentido de cómo nosotros estamos concibiendo e: con el desarrollo primeramente
    de la lengua y la cultura del niño/
03 para que pueda tener un acceso mejor a una segunda lengua y cultura/
04 sin que esto represente un desplazamiento//

Gilberto's description and the other definitions provided by indigenous actors are not in opposition to what has been promoted by the educational system. However, the difference is what elements are being emphasized (i.e., language and culture) in the teachers' approach to intercultural education and the potential pedagogical effects it has in the classroom.

CHAPTER 7: THE PURPOSES OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, I analyzed the way in which intercultural education is defined in official policy documents, and the different forms in which it is interpreted by the actors involved in the field. The picture that emerged is one of divergent voices, each one speaking from its particular place of enunciation (i.e., the position from which his or her discourse emanates).

In this chapter, I will address the purposes of intercultural education. Certainly, some of its purposes appeared interwoven with its very definition, as it can be seen in the previous chapter. In this section I will explore in depth the objectives of intercultural education while emphasizing the discontinuities between the official discourse and that of the indigenous and academic actors.

As any educational policy implemented in Mexico (and the world for that matter), the objectives of intercultural education have a broader scope than just pedagogical ones.[43] Indeed, such "alternative objectives" appear in the discourse of my interviewees and the analysis of policy documents, which allows researchers to explore not only the ways in which the actors interpret these objectives, but also the ideologies that underlie their discursive stances. Biber and

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[43] See Ginsburg, Cooper, Raghu and Zegarra (1991) for a review about educational reforms, the State and ideology.

Finegan (1989) describe these ideologies as the expressions of affective or epistemological disposition of individuals towards the truth of their arguments.

According to CGEIB (2004, p. 58), the main purposes of intercultural education are focused on students:

1) Achieving complete mastery of the learning objectives [defined] for all [the population] with suitability, relevance and equality.

2) Developing their capacity to understand reality from diverse cultural perspectives that facilitate the comprehension of proper and foreign cultural practices, in a critical and contextualized fashion.

3) Strengthening knowledge and pride about their own language as an element to solidify their identity.

4) Developing their communicative competence, both oral and written, in their native and second languages.

5) Knowing the multicultural and multilingual reality of the country, and value the contributions of the peoples that inhabit it as richness of the Mexican nation.

In the discourse of my interviewees, the official objectives of intercultural education are either interpreted in alternative ways or partially ignored. Just as in the case of the definition or intercultural education, there are competing discourses about its purposes and the way they are accomplished. The thematic analysis of policy documents and the participants' interviews yielded four main themes:

1) The acknowledgement of diversity.

2) Diversity and indigenous rights.

3) The elimination of discrimination.

4) Fostering the indigenous identity through values.

The themes that emerged in the analysis are not unrelated; instead, they are connected by the overarching notions of diversity and culture. Indeed, it is only under the framework of diversity and culture that rights, discrimination, cultural identity and values may be understood within intercultural education. I will explore in depth each theme in the following paragraphs, but first, I will discuss how culture is conceptualized both in the official documents and the discourse of the participants.

7.2 A BRIEF DISCUSSION ON CULTURE IN INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

The notion of culture is both one of the theoretical pillars of the educational model and the backdrop of all interviews and official documents. Since the objective of this chapter is not to enter into a theoretical discussion about the definition of culture, I will concentrate on how it is represented by official texts and the informants. Comprehending how culture is defined will help understand why certain purposes of intercultural education have been defined in some ways and not others. Liddicoat (2004) has pointed out, depending on the conceptualization of culture that is adopted, the actions within the educational system will follow. As I explained in Chapter Four, the concept of culture that underlies intercultural education is quite fuzzy, due on one hand to the theoretical debates in the field, and on the other because of having an imprecise concept of culture, giving the educational authority leeway to deal with the minorities' cultural rights.

CGEIB (2006, p. 17) officially defines culture as "a social and historical construction that responds to the particular project that a people establishes as its own." It also describes culture as a web of meaning that regulates relations between human beings in the social, material, natural

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and spiritual world, and is manifested through: 1) how knowledge is created and transmitted; 2) values and social organization; 3) language; and 4) the material goods and objects that are produced by a group of people (p. 18). The way culture is defined by the CGEIB addresses areas (i.e., material, linguistic, cognitive, social and moral) that are traditional in the debate on culture (see Kessing, 1974 for a discussion about different approaches to culture). In this sense, the notion of culture adopted by the educational system is rather traditional. However, the definition does acknowledge the dynamic nature of culture, subject to continuous transformation because of exchanges between groups and the socio-historical conditions surrounding such contact. For the CGEIB, cultural contact should be understood in terms of the "strategies" that cultures use to recreate themselves as a result of interaction:

> This constant cultural contact is tinged by different strategies that cultures utilize to maintain this game of construction-recreation: loan, mestizaje, adaptation, etcetera. (CGEIB, 2006, p. 17, my translation)

Under this definition of cultural contact, cultures seem to have a will of their own. By describing cultures as agents with capacity of action ("cultures utilize"), identity is conferred to the group and not to the individuals who conform such groups. Furthermore, the quote effectively transforms into "strategies" very conflictive processes (i.e., *mestizaje*) that have meant in many cases the disappearance or domination of minority groups. The semantic reclassification of *mestizaje* into a strategy downplays its significance both as a State ideology and as a cultural/racial process. Certainly, *mestizaje* can be seen as a strategic ideology that was aimed at cultural homogenization. Then again, it was not culture but power groups that implemented it as a State ideology. The quote above presents processes of cultural transformation as conscious strategies in which cultures engage and deflect away power

imbalances and blunt oppression. Interestingly, the text addresses directly the issue of subordination based on the assumption of cultural superiority:

> For this it is inadmissible that a determined culture is taken as a universal referent and even less that other different cultures subordinate to that one. However, it is a reality that relationships between cultures have been established, historically, from this supposition of superiority, which has been conducted in diverse moments and places – such as the case of Mexico – to the disappearance of the cultures of minority groups with the purpose of culturally homogenizing the population. (CGEIB, 2006, p. 17, my translation)

According to the text, cultures engage in strategies that allow them to be transformed. Such constant evolution is taken as a reason to reject the idea of cultural superiority. Although the relationship is not clear, it seems that the idea of "superiority" is rejected because change prevents a culture from being fixed as a referent. However, the existence of domination is acknowledged as a historical fact, Mexico being just one more example. By declaring the domination of minorities in Mexico as an instance of generalized phenomena, the situation becomes naturalized and responsibilities are deflected away. This is further accomplished by deleting the agents of domination and omitting the minority groups (the indigenous peoples) subject to homogenization. The problem of domination as a result of cultural contact is hence effectively stripped of any potential conflicts.

Both the definition of culture and cultural contact adopted by the CGEIB are essentially non-conflictive points of view on the two topics, even though "historic" domination is acknowledged. As I indicated above, the definition of culture depends on the actions of educational policies (Liddicoat, 2004); therefore, it is not surprising that a non-conflictive definition of culture has been adopted, since intercultural education aims at creating equilibrium across cultures despite claims about the potential to create a new distribution of power between social actors (see Walsh, 2002).

The official discourse has furthered a definition of culture that functions as a framework to understand intercultural education. Unfortunately, the discourse of the other actors is not clear about what culture means. This fact is not surprising since even anthropologists have been arguing about what culture is for generations and no agreement has been reached to date. In the oral data, the meaning of culture ranges from cognitive or ideational conceptions to social norms and values to very superficial aspects of culture, like dances or music. For instance, in the discourse of Alberto (professor at UPN) culture is equivalent to the particular world view of the indigenous peoples. In the following excerpt, he discusses the function that culture should have as a sort of organizer of intercultural education in the *licenciatura* program at the National Pedagogic University. Previously in the interview, Alberto had addressed the problem of indigenous knowledge being segmented (he refers to this fact again in line 09) and the need to use the indigenous world view as a guide, which is further explained here as culture. In this excerpt, he introduces the theme of culture by commenting on the student-teachers' conceptions of culture that are limited to superficial aspects such as food or music (line 01), and the need to adopt a conceptualization that would give coherence (sense) to (educational) practices (line 06). Knowledge has been fragmented, which in turn is reflected in the plan of studies of the *licenciatura*. Thus, knowledge should be systematized in reference to the world views of the indigenous peoples, which can be found in their day to day practices (line 22).

(16)

01 when they talk about da:nces, of fo:od, of mu:sic/
02 but not really about a concept of culture/
03 well [that is] neither historic nor comprehensive, no/
04 clear/
05 no and uh: integral, no?/
06 that would bestow such practices with sense/
07 and that is what I notice that happens a lot in the licenciatura/
08 that is there is a: uh:/

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09 and I repeat, talking about ethnomathematics, history [and] that shows such
   fragmentation, no?
10 R: of course/
11 then what levels should such intercultural education have?
12 T: I feel that the:/
13 to me this is something that is needed/
14: that is needed and in some way it has not been constructed/
15 because there are fragments/
16 but what I note is that:/
17 there is no consciousness about how to build it/
   that is, there are glimpses/
18 that is, there is like:/
19 glimpses, no?/
20 and I repeat the example is the plan of studies, no?/
21 the plan of studies does not help to integration/
22 to say well "all these practices that are reflected in the everyday [life] of the
   indigenous groups correspond to particular world views"//

01 cuando hablan de cultura hablan de los bai:les, de la comi:da, de la mú:sica/
02 pero no realmente no de un concepto de cultura/
03 bueno histórico ni amplio, no/
04 claro/
05 no y este: integral no?/
06 que le diera sentido a esas practicas/
07 y eso es lo que yo noto que pasa mucho en la licenciatura/
08 o sea hay un una: este:/
09 y repito, hablar de etnomatemáticas, de historia y eso da muestra de esa fragmentación
   no?/
10 R: claro/
11 entonces que niveles tendría que tener esta educación intercultural?
12 T: yo siento que el:/
13 para mí: como que es algo que se requiere/
14 que se necesita y que de alguna forma no se ha construído/
15 o sea porque hay fragmentos/
16 pero lo que yo noto es que:/
17 es que no hay tampoco esa conciencia de cómo construirla/
18 o sea hay como que:./
19 destellos, no?/
20 y repito el ejemplo es el plan de estudios, no?/
21 el plan de estudios no ayuda a la integración/
22 de decir bueno "es que todas esas practicas que se ven reflejadas en la cotidianidad de
   los grupos indígenas corresponden a cosmovisiones particulares/

Although Alberto does not describe such world view, it is supposed to go beyond superficial aspects such as music, food or dancing. On the contrary, the indigenous world view is like a global scaffold that organizes the indigenous life. In this sense, Alberto's approach to culture agrees with that of CGEIB that considers culture an entity, which is both ideational and practical, and constructs different aspects of life of social groups.

The search for elements that give coherence to the indigenous culture also appears in the discourse of the indigenous actors. The unifying themes are community and communal life. Pablo (National Assembly of Indigenous Immigrants) describes belonging to a community as the defining element of being indigenous. In the following excerpt, we were discussing the components of interculturality, particularly the linguistic and cultural ones. Pablo argued against including superficial cultural elements such as "the folkloric" costumes or dances:

(17)

01 P: one of the strong components of the indigenous peoples is communality/
02 all these elements that are immaterial that were developed in our mind/
03 in our thought to be communitarian/
04 to be indigenous/
05 to have such identity/
06 to have that thought/
07 these are the strong axis that define us as an identity/
08 some authors said, in this case the late Floriberto Díaz/
09 in which ah:/
10 that dress is not what defines us as indigenous/
11 it is not our huarache/
12 it is not/
13 it is rather a mental construction/
14 that collective construction that those communitarian responsibilities/
15 those forms we have to assume in life/
16 that is the essence of the indigenous peoples/

01 P: uno de los componentes fuertes de los pueblos indígenas es la comunalidad/
02 todos estos elementos que son inmateriales que se desarrollan en nuestra mente/
03 en nuestro pensamiento a ser comunitarios/
04 a ser indígenas/
05 a tener esa identidad/

06 a tener ese pensamiento/
07 esos son los ejes fuertes que nos definen como identidad/
08 decía algunos autores, en este caso Floriberto Díaz ya fallecido/
09 en el cual este:/
10 que la vestimenta no es lo que nos define como indígena/
11 no es este nuestro huarache/
12 no es/
13 es más bien esa construcción mental/
14 esa construcción colectiva de cuales son esas responsabilidades comunitarias/
15 de cuales son esas este formas que tenemos que ir asumiendo en la vida/
16 eso es la esencia de los pueblos indígenas/

Culture is seen both as "mental" processes and practices that determine the communal thoughts of indigenous individuals, which in turn are translated into actions that sustain the community and its members. The community functions as the anchor for the indigenous identity, and in fact, Pablo goes beyond to say that the "essence" (lines 02 -03) of the indigenous peoples is precisely the mental constructions that determine their will to the community, so to speak. In this sense, there is a reduction in which identity is equivalent to culture. Pablo's answer is quite repetitive. In lines 3-6 he enumerates the elements that make them indigenous, while in lines 10-12 mentions the ones that do not. By repeating the same structures he marks a contrast between these elements, which has the effect of intensifying and unifying his message. Repetition also gives his speech a prosodic pattern that may increase the hearer's attention and increase involvement and comprehension (Tannen, 1989). The discursive mechanisms that Pablo uses have the objective to stress and make clear the importance of the community in the indigenous culture while downplaying other elements that traditionally have been used to define it.

Since there is a scarcity of unofficial written documents on intercultural education, the indigenous Discourse on culture is very difficult to piece together. However, culture is a theme that oozes through the interviews, but unfortunately, it is also very fuzzy. This fact reflects a lack of agreement between the participants about what culture is, but not necessarily about what role

it should take, as I showed in the case of Pablo and Alberto. Because the community has allowed the reproduction of the indigenous groups, and ensured its survival through the centuries, it should be preserved through education and a deep reflection about what it means to be indigenous as I will show in Chapter Nine. For the CGEIB, the way in which cultural diversity – and hence culture – is to be encouraged is through a type of education that fosters in students values that reinforce their identities. This is the role of intercultural education.

In the following sections, I will address the purposes of intercultural education as they appeared in policy documents and the discourse of the interviewees.

7.3 THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY

The main objective of intercultural education that appears in the discourse of the indigenous actors, teacher educators and administrators is the acknowledgement of diversity. Although cultural difference is the main focus of intercultural educational policies, there are other kinds of differences that are not constitutive per se of ethnic groups or nations. Nonetheless, they are acknowledged (although not as a part of cultural difference) as a relevant part of the individual's identity (CGEIB, 2004, p. 35). These factors are gender, sex, religion, sexual preferences, social class, and physical abilities among others. Defined in this way, diversity becomes an umbrella term that subsumes into one every type of difference. As I discussed in Chapter Four, when talking about minorities, such differences create further problems as to which kinds of rights and attentions they are entitled to based on their differences and the social, political and historical conditions in which they live (see Kymlicka, 1995; 2002). As a policy aimed at accepting cultural differences, intercultural education faces the problem of first defining diversity, and

second how to manage it. In this section, I will discuss how the official discourse addresses the purposes of intercultural education regarding diversity and how academics and indigenous actors interpret such approaches.

The official definition of CGEIB establishes as one of the objectives of intercultural education that students get to know the multicultural and multilingual diversity of Mexico. The goal of attention to diversity is also related to providing culturally and linguistically appropriate education to minorities. That is, the acknowledgement that one type of education does not fit everyone. However, the idea of addressing the students' linguistic and cultural needs is not new in the educational field. In fact, it has been part of the official discourse and pedagogy long before the arrival of the intercultural model, as Alberto (professor at UPN) points out:

(18)

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01 T: because everybody is talking about the idea of gender/
02 [they] began to talk about the idea of what's its name?/
03 of children who have physical limitations/
04 and [they] begin to think about difference/
05 and I tell them "but that is the official discourse"/
06 I am not telling them anything, no?
07 but that is the official discourse, but I have not understood it in that way/
08 and e: it is worrying for them because I tell them, how long ago has been that
   discourse around?/
09 R: Of course, of course/
10 T: ninety three/
11 from ninety tree to the present, from the [educational] reform, no?/
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01 T: porque todo mundo comienza a hablar la idea del género/
02 se comienza a hablar la idea de cómo se llama?/
03 de los niños que tienen ciertas limitaciones físicas/
04 y comienzan a pensar ya en la diferencia/
05 y les digo pero "es que eso es el discurso oficial"/
06 o sea no les estoy diciendo nada, no/
07 pero es que ese es el discurso oficial, pero yo no lo he entendido de esa manera/
08 y eh este para ellos les resulta preocupante porque les digo, qué tiempo tienen que se
   viene manejando ese discurso?/
09 R: Claro, claro/
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10 T: noventa y tres/
11 noventa y tres para acá, de la reforma, no?/

The acknowledgement of diversity had long ago been included in the educational reform of 1993, so why did it become so relevant for the intercultural discourse? First, because that is one of its theoretical pillars, and second, because of the pressure of indigenous communities to be acknowledged as a vital – albeit different – part of the country. According to Rodrigo (researcher, DGEI), it was in fact the Zapatista uprising that prevented the DGEI from disappearing when the intercultural model first made its appearance in the educational field. Thus, instead of working with bilingualism, the focus shifted accepting cultural differences within the intercultural model. The Zapatista uprising brought back to the table the "indigenous problem" and their educational needs, including bilingualism, which ensured the existence of the DGEI as the institution in charge of indigenous education; however, the relationship with CGEIB and the stance of DGEI towards the intercultural model proposed by the former is not clear.

Certainly, one of the demands of the indigenous movements has been to address the cultural and linguistic diversity of the country, and the CGEIB has made a point towards providing linguistically and culturally suitable education to the indigenous groups. But what is at the core of the intercultural model, as its official objectives propose, is the formation of individuals who are able to understand reality from different cultural points of view, and participate in processes that transform society while respecting cultural diversity and benefiting from it (see CGEIB, 2006, p. 25). According to CGEIB, reality is a historic and cultural construction that is experienced by individuals and groups in different ways. Cultural diversity then is defined in terms of diversity of realities:

> Thus, it is advised that cultural diversity is the diversity of realities, that is, the variety of the conditions of existence of peoples through the

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acknowledgement of multiple crossings and contacts among them, and above all, knowing that of the need to build what is common as patrimony of the human kind. (2004, p. 35)

The definition of cultural diversity adopted by the CGEIB is based on the assumption that it is a result of the interaction between history and the relationship between peoples. This definition does not adopt a conflictive point of view since it assumes that interaction among people are aimed at constructing "what is common" as part of the common good of the human kind. It is ignored that in fact, most human interaction is not conflict free, and in the specific context of the indigenous peoples of Mexico, such interaction has been one of domination.

CGEIB has focused on conceptualizing diversity in terms of those factors that affect the individuals' identity, such as gender, sexual preference, physical abilities, religion or social status. It is precisely the inclusion of these elements in the conceptualization of diversity that has caused the rejection of intercultural education by indigenous teachers and teacher educators. Lucía (DGEI, Michoacán) narrates how the indigenous teachers attending a course-workshop delivered by the CGEIB (in which the basics of intercultural education were introduced) felt offended by the idea of lumping together different kinds of diversities, which made indigenous peoples "just one more minority":

(19)

01 L: well this was a comment from the ones that attended the courses/
02 because [they] invited us to send personnel to/
03 they delivered some courses of regional character/
04 that is, they looked for states/
05 places and several states that were nearby e: were invited/
06 among them we were invited/
07 the state of Michoacán was invited, not only the personnel of indigenous education/ but also of general elementary schools/
08 and then [they] tell me that the first impression that they had was that interculturality like considered those that/
09 e: considered e: let's say for instance the handi[capped]/

10 lumping, or how do I tell you?/
11 ay I forgot the word/
12 well considered handicapped [people]/
13 women, men, ah: elderly, youth/
14 R: homosexuals?
15 L: homosexuals/
16 exactly/
17 well then/
18 and then they in some way said "no, if they are going to put [us] indigenous education
  in that role no"/
19 and from the beginning/
20 as if the fellow teachers would have said "ay we are going to work in this way"/
21 but when they come back from the course they come back like disappointed/
22 why?
23 because now they are not seeing us/
24 they are not even giving us our proper place/
25 yes, they are not not telling us "well we are just one more"/
26 like just/
27 minorities, no?/

01 L: bueno este fue un comentario de los que asistieron a los cursos/
02 porque nos invitaron a que enviáramos este personal a/
03 ellos dieron unos cursos de carácter regional/
04 o sea, buscaron estados/
05 sedes y varios estados que estaban cercanos e: fueron invitados/
06 entre ellos nosotros fuimos invitados/
07 el estado de Michoacán fue invitado, no solamente el personal de educación indígena/
08 sino también el personal de primarias generales/
09 y entonces aquí me dicen que la primera impresión que tuvieron ellos fue que la
  interculturalidad asi consideraban a todos aquellos que/
10 e: considerando e: digamos por ejemplo los incapa/
11 aglutinando, o cómo le diré?/
12 ay se me fue la palabra/
13 bueno considerando los discapacitados/
14 mujeres, hombres, este: ancianos jóvenes/
15 R: homosexuales?/
16 L: homosexuales/
17 exactamente/
18 entonces así como que/
19 pues ellos de alguna manera así como que dijeron "no pues si nos van a meter en ese
  rol a educación indígena pues no"/
20 y de principio así como que lejos de que/
21 los compañeros maestros hubieran dicho "ay sí lo vamos a trabajar de esta manera"/
22 de hecho cuando regresan de este curso regresan así como desilusionados, no?/
23 por qué?/
24 pues porque ahora nos están viendo/

25 ya ni siquiera nos están dando nuestro lugar como/
26 si, no nos están diciendo "pues no somos más de que uno más"/
27 como sólo/
28 minorías, no?/

In fact, the rejection to intercultural education on the grounds of lumping together indigenous peoples with other minorities was very common during informal interviews that I held with other teachers. Specially, the idea of being put in the same category as other minorities was offensive since this denied them "their proper place," as Lucía points out. *"Darse su lugar"* roughly means having self-respect, while other people giving them "their place" means to be respected, to acknowledge their rights and privileges. In a highly hierarchical society such as Mexico, having "one's place" is important as a way to demand rights, respect and special treatment. Certainly, as Lucía's report shows, indigenous teachers do not think of themselves a just one more minority. Indigenous teachers are aware of the indigenous' peoples potential as national actors, and their status derived from a long history of colonialism and domination[44]. The report of Lucía is a complaint that shows the point of view of the teachers, but also their emotional stance to being considered one more minority. Lucía states that teachers were "disappointed" (line 22), because they were not "given their place," but also shifts the tense of her narration from past tense to present as a way to show the immediacy of the experience (Günther, 2000). These elements show a modality that expresses the point of view of the speaker

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[44] The indigenous teachers reject the idea of ethnic diversity being conflated with other types of diversity because of their unique cultural and linguistic characteristics. Such rejection can also be seen as an attempt to create an overarching indigenous identity that combines several ethnic groups into one; however, this movement is problematic since it can potentially homogenize ethnic diversity, which is the problem that the indigenous teachers seem to oppose in the first place.

with respect to what she said, and at the same time, reveals her – or rather the teachers' – stance to what was considered disrespectful.

Because of the indigenous rejection to the idea of being included with other minorities, I asked Jorge (CGEIB) about the teachers' ideas on the "lumping" of diversity:

(20)

01 J: To begin with I think that they are right, what happens is that, to begin with I do not know if [they] had been teachers that have worked with us and everything, no? but had they worked with us or not they are absolutely right/

02 I tell you: had they taken these courses or not, they are right, it has been confused here at the DF tending to an indigenous child with special education no?, what we are working with at the DF, is that these boys and girls have learning problems, and it is necessary to send them to special education, yes?, then, it's good that you ask me that because (unintelligible) we at the coordination are aiming at the level of diversity, which is the level of cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity, because that [they] have the idea of…intercultural education in Mexico, we conceive it like this at the coordination, it is the presence of indigenous groups, so the first level we aim is: diversity; to acknowledge cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity/

03 but there is a variety of diversities and we should not be exclusionary, we also do not ignore that there are other diversities such as gender, diversity what would be? age or whatever, different capacities or handicaps, anyway, what we tell the teacher is: it is not the same Mayan Tzetzal deaf-mute as a mestizo one, because the cultural logic is different, they are common because they are deaf-mute, but perception and the acquisition of the mother tongue are different of formation of that indigenous child is not like that of a mestizo one, then I don't know whether you realize that there are two levels that we have at the coordination/

04 first we aim at all subjects, that is, all Mexicans at least in the educational part we aim at the knowledge, the acknowledgement of cultural, ethnic, linguistic diversity /

01 J: Para empezar creo que tienen toda la razón, lo que pasa es que, para empezar no sé si hayan sido maestros que han trabajado con nosotros y todo ¿no? pero hayan trabajado con nosotros o no tienen toda la razón/

02 te digo: Hayan tomado o no estos cursos, para empezar, tienen razón, se ha confundido aquí en el D.F. de atender a un niño indígena con la cuestión de la educación especial ¿no?, con lo que estamos trabajando en el D.F., es que estos niños y niñas tienen problemas de aprendizaje, hay que mandarlos a educación especial, ¿Sí?, entonces, qué bueno que me preguntas eso, porque digo de tantos (Inteligible) nosotros en la coordinación estamos apuntándole a un nivel de diversidad, que es el nivel de la diversidad cultural, étnica y   lingüística, por eso tienen esta idea de ...la educación intercultural en México, nosotros así lo concebimos en la coordinación: es la presencia de los grupos indígenas, entonces el primer nivel que le apostamos es: la diversidad;

reconocer la diversidad cultural, étnica y lingüística /

03 pero en tanto que hay una gama de diversidades más y tanto que no debemos ser excluyentes, tampoco desconocemos que hay otras diversidades como cuales: Género, diversidad ¿Qué será? de edades o lo que salga; capacidades diferentes, o discapacidad, en fin, pero, lo que le decimos a los maestros es: No es lo mismo un sordo mudo maya tzetzal, que un sordo mudo mestizo, porque hay una lógica cultural diferente , son comunes entre los dos sordomudos , pero la percepción y la adquisición de la lengua materna de formación de ese sujeto indígena,

no es lo mismo que de ese otro niño mestizo, entonces si te das cuenta son como dos niveles que tenemos en la coordinación/

04 primero; le apostamos a, a que todos los sujetos, o sea, todos los mexicanos, por lo menos en la parte educativa, le apostamos, al conocimiento, al reconocimiento de la diversidad cultural, étnica y lingüística. /

Jorge begins his explanation with a strategy of positive politeness ("to begin with, I think they are absolutely right") by accepting the teachers' rejection to the idea of lumping together ethnic difference with other types of differences. In fact, he acknowledges that teachers are right twice in the same utterance to intensify his message. As Briz Gómez (1998, p. 127) argues, such pragmatic emphasis allows the speaker to manipulate what is said (at the propositional level) and the illocutionary force of the act. These discursive strategies show that Jorge is aware of the importance of the teachers' complaint and redresses it by establishing the correctness of the teachers' grievance. He also clarifies that the CGEIB's work is concentrated on addressing the cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity of the country without ignoring other differences that are presented in the classroom. He appears to be sympathetic to the teachers' criticism and creates solidarity between the CGEIB and the indigenous teachers ("…and we coincide there with the teachers, and there is where a lot of work is necessary"). Nonetheless, he also points out that perhaps the teachers had not taken any courses with them (i.e., CGEIB) – which they did – or the teachers had this perception because of the practice of providing indigenous children who live in Mexico city with special education classes. I have been witness to this practice in elementary schools that have students who are not Spanish speakers. Usually, such children are sent to

special education classes because of their low participation level, poor achievement and because they are withdrawn in the classroom. Teachers very often assume that these students have learning or communication problems, as opposed to linguistic ones. Children also end up seeing the special education specialist because teachers are ill-prepared to deal with children who do not speak Spanish, so the teachers send them to special education in the hopes of getting some kind of recommendation about what to do with them.

Figure 2 shows the different approaches to cultural diversity held by the DGEI and the indigenous teachers. For the educational authority, cultural/ethnic difference is one type of difference under the umbrella term "Diversity". For the indigenous teachers, ethnic diversity is unique and product of historical processes, which confers indigenous groups a special status in Mexican society.
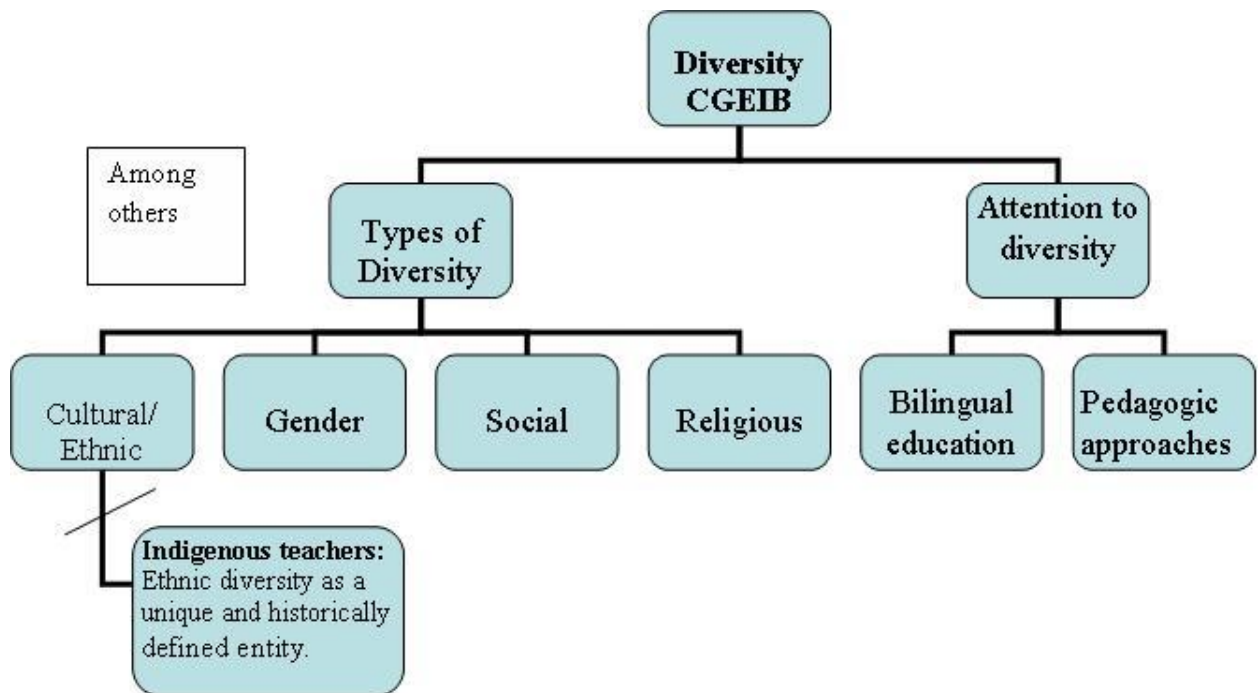

Figure 2. Cultural diversity

To conclude this section is necessary to ask why teachers think that they are being grouped with other minorities. Certainly, it is difficult to hypothesize why this happened because there are no data regarding the workshop where these ideas were discussed; however, I believe that analyzing the materials used during such workshops may explain how intercultural education deals with diversity and the main theoretical and practical aspects of intercultural education.

7.3.1 Analysis of teacher training materials.

The material I will analyze is called "Educating in and for diversity" (*Educar en y para la diversidad,* CGEIB 2004c*).* According to its preface, it was used during the academic cycle 2003-2004[45] and was supposed to be used during the "Cursos Generales de Actualización" (roughly "up-dating courses"), which according to Jorge (CGEIB) are part of a "bank of courses" that are offered to the teacher corps by the CGEIB. Because of CEGIB's capacity to summon both indigenous and mainstream teachers, the courses gathered a mixed audience with the purpose of getting in touch with the two sectors of teachers and introduce them to the objectives of intercultural education. Traditionally, indigenous teachers have little contact with mainstream teachers because each group is managed by a different administrative office of the Secretariat of Public Education. According to Jorge (CGEIB), the introductory courses are quite successful in creating collegiate work since indigenous and mainstream teachers are paired up during the course to discuss their personal experiences and design pedagogic activities. My interviewees

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[45] This is the newest course available at the CGEIB's website as of July 29, 2007.

attended an introductory course such as this from where they drew almost all their knowledge about intercultural education.

The objectives of the introductory course are three and focus on the teachers analyzing and reflecting on different areas:

[The teachers should be able to]

- Reflect, from their experience and with the support of diverse texts, on the importance of knowing and acknowledging diversity as a fundamental element that orients the teaching work.
- Analyze and understand the basic fundamentals of intercultural education with the result of seeing it as a form of educational intervention on and for diversity.
- Analyze their teaching practices and acquire some basic elements for the construction of didactics for interculturality, with the result that [they] elaborate pedagogic strategies in accordance with the diversity of the students.
  (CGEIB, 2004c, p. 3, my translation)

At the end of the course, the teachers are supposed to present a 'final product" that consists of lesson plans that:

- Address the diversity of the students (culture, language, identity, specific capabilities, attitudes (sic), etc.

- Promote the acknowledgment and appreciation of such diversity.

- Use didactic techniques from textbooks, activity files and/or support materials directed at teachers of indigenous elementary education.

  (CGEIB, 2004c, p. 5, my translation).

The course is designed to be carried out over a period of 5 days in sessions of six hours each. The following topics are covered during the sessions: 1) Acknowledgment of diversity; 2) Responses to diversity; 3) Elements for the construction of a didactic approach with intercultural

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focus; 4) Planning workshops; and 5) A review of the achievements and products of the workshop.

Thus, the course has both theoretical and practical objectives. I will concentrate on topics 1 and 2 since they explain the concept of diversity and why this is important in the educational field. The introductory section of the course materials explains why diversity should be taken into account in education. First, diversity is important because of the multicultural situation of the country, and second, because of the "asymmetries" that permeate the relationships in a multicultural society:

> The map of Mexico is a clear sample of our cultural and linguistic diversity. In this country, we coexist approximately 100 million Mexicans, with different cultures, languages, genders, religion, etcetera, furthermore, where children, youth, elders, women and men [we] interact permanently. However, in this permanent interaction, sociocultural and linguistic asymmetries have permeated our society up to now. Inequality, marginalization, discrimination, etc. are factors that with no doubt make it difficult our harmonic coexistence as Mexicans, because of this, it is necessary that [we] all Mexicans walk towards the acknowledgement and encounter of our diversity. (CGEIB, 2004c, p. 1, my translation)

The author, speaking from an institutional position, creates solidarity with the readers (i.e., indigenous and mainstream teachers) through the pronominal choice of the inclusive third person plural: We all are Mexicans. In this homogeneity, diversity can exist. Indeed, a population of 100 million is bound to be diverse, as any "map" can show. This diversity takes different forms: cultural, linguistic, gender, religious, age, sex, etc.; however, no ethnic difference is mentioned (probably because it is subsumed under cultural differences). The multicultural situation of the country causes permanent interaction between different groups, but this interaction has not been egalitarian since sociocultural (not economic) and linguistic asymmetries have "permeated" society. It is not that these asymmetries rule or structure society,

but in some way have just leaked in to the interaction among groups. Certainly, this is a lexical choice that does not describe how interactions between minorities and the majority are carried out. The choice of the word "asymmetry" is another euphemism to describe relationships that have been marked by strong power imbalances or plain injustices. Asymmetry implies imbalances (for instance, as asymmetric figure) but not necessarily injustices. In the following paragraph the author does mention the words inequality, marginalization and discrimination as factors that make a "harmonic coexistence as Mexicans" more difficult; however these appear as concepts that are not tied to specific groups. That is, there is no mention about who is doing or suffering under the marginalization or the discrimination. Rather, through nominalization they are depicted as events that are devoid of agents (i.e., who does the action) and patients (i.e., who receives the action) − therefore, deflecting away any type of responsibility or conflict (Hodge and Kress, 1979). Following the idea of "harmony" the author uses the metaphor of "walking" towards, acknowledging and encountering "our" diversity. This is the first text that teachers see when reading the materials: a paragraph that attempts to explain the diversity that characterizes the country as diverse, but omits perhaps the most important type of diversity to the country because of its history, or, ethnic diversity. The text also accepts the existence of conflict in the relationships between different groups, but avoids mentioning who are the involved parts in the "asymmetries" that exist as the result of interaction.

The introductory paragraph has the function of describing the diversity of the country and posing a problem that can be solved by intercultural education, which is described as "an education for diversity" which has a scope of action in three main dimensions: culture, language and identity. The final objective of educating for diversity is to contribute to the creation of a new national project that aims at eradicating discrimination based on difference:

In Mexico a new project of nation that attempts to overcome exclusion is gestating; where there should not be place for cultural, ethnic, language, gender, or ideology discrimination, nor for discrimination of socioeconomic order, political or that has to do with different capabilities, or sexual preference or skin color. (CGEIB, 2004c, p. 1, my translation)

Thus, teachers are presented with an educational model that has a broad scope: to address diversity and use it as a pedagogic resource, and to help in the creation of a national project that is not homogenizing. The important role of the teachers in this model is defined as a messenger of ethical values that consider diversity as an enrichment factor in life:

Now, to speak of education is to refer just to the important role of the teacher to promote and to transmit to the pupils, those ethical contents that are required to build a society that sees in diversity a richness of life. (CGEIB, 2004c, p. 2, my translation).

The manual "sets the stage" for intercultural education, explaining diversity as an enriching factor in education and the need to eliminate negative responses (i.e., discrimination) as a way to build a new country. The first session of the workshop begins with a discussion about appreciating diversity. It is interesting that the authors chose to present the idea of diversity as an enriching element of life in a short paragraph extracted from a textbook aimed at first graders. As expected, the text is structurally very simple. It uses sentences joined by conjunctions or commas and vocabulary that refers to the immediate experience of the student, many of them state verbs:

Diversity enriches us:
[We] people are different. [We] have diverse customs, stature and skin color.
[We] act, feel and think in different ways.
When there are different opinions conversations are enriched, new ideas are discovered and new solutions for all are found (SEP, 2001, p. 167; cited in CGEIB, 2004c, p. 7).

Since the objectives of the course are aimed at constructing didactic materials, it makes sense to use one of the textbooks as an example of how diversity is presented there; however,

this text hardly explains why diversity should be considered as an enrichment factor. Indeed, as Sartori (2001) has pointed out, pluralism neither necessarily considers that a diversified world is the best option, nor does it attempt to multiply diversity (see Chapter Four). Teachers are invited to reflect on their personal experiences, and based on such experience to conclude that diversity is positive.

The manual continues with a series of exercises and readings that focus the teachers' attention on discovering and sensitizing them to the types of diversity that exist in their classrooms and in the country. To help teachers think about how they react to diversity, there are some examples that use stereotypes (which are defined as negative responses to diversity). The manual provides a list of "stereotypical" opinions that the teachers may have regarding their students. These stereotypes are presented as descriptions of hypothetical students who are criticized because of factors such as their intelligence, appearance, personal cleanliness, physical characteristics, socioeconomic status, industriousness, and ethnic origin. Out of ten examples, only one refers to stereotypes affecting indigenous children. This example appears in position eight:

> In my classroom, there is a weird child, he almost does not speak, he seems to be "out to lunch," in fact, he is indigenous, I think it is because of that. (CGEIB, 2004c, p. 13, my translation)

The word "weird" is used only to describe the hypothetical indigenous child. Interestingly, the last example reads, "Ah! these little gringos are very smart" (CGEIB, 2004c, p. 13). The word smart, however, is used only to refer to the "little gringos," while in the case of the other children the word "sharp" ("vivos" in Spanish) is used.

The exercise ends with the teachers being asked to reflect about how stereotypes influence the children's academic achievement, motivation and self-esteem. Then, the manual

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continues with the presentation of exercises that focus on providing the teachers with strategies to recognize the characteristics of their students. Session 1 ends with a reflection of what the teachers learned during the day.

The second objective of the manual concentrates on analyzing different ways to address diversity, focusing on negative stereotypes. To direct the teachers' attention to discrimination based on stereotypes, the manual presents a textbook example of a situation in the classroom; however, out of the many choices that the authors may have had, they chose to present an example of discrimination in an indigenous school, exerted by an indigenous teacher. Certainly, discrimination can occur anywhere, but here it is presented as an emblematic case for the rest of the teachers. So, the question may be: why use an indigenous school and an indigenous teacher? The exercises designed for this objective focus on the teachers reflecting on the cases and exploring their feelings to create empathy. A further role-play asks the teachers to conclude the exercise by proposing actions to prevent discrimination from happening.

Finally, the manual introduces the differences between multiculturalism and interculturalism, and the idea of education for interculturality. This is the section in the whole text that focuses on the indigenous population to a greater extent (about two pages). It addresses the poor results of indigenous education (i.e., illiteracy, high drop-out and failure rates and low achievement overall), and why intercultural education should work to solve two important types of asymmetries: educational and values. Regarding educational asymmetries, the text clarifies that the causes of it are "complex, historical" (p. 23) and are materialized in the indigenous teachers lack of formation and responsibilities (although it does not explain what kind of responsibilities), and in the poor results of the schools (p. 23).

Regarding the asymmetry of values, the author does not focus on the mainstream society's rejection and racism against the indigenous population; rather, the goal appears to be that the indigenous people actually appreciate their own cultures because internalized racism is in fact an impediment for interculturality (p. 23). The remaining of the reading focuses on pointing out that intercultural education should be for everybody (not only for indigenous communities), and that educational interventions should be applied depending on the sociolinguistic situation of the schools and communities (i.e., homogeneous minority, homogeneous majority and multicultural realities. See Chapter Three for an extensive description). The follow-up exercise for this section on asymmetries is quite vague; in fact, it only consists of an instruction: "In groups express comments about the text [that you] read." (p. 28). The rest of the manual focuses on explaining the elements of an intercultural didactic approach and helping the teachers to design the expected final product (i.e., a series of lesson plans that incorporate the principles of intercultural education in the context provided by the didactic materials used in the classroom).

The brief analysis of the training manual confirms the teachers' perception of ethnic diversity being conflated with other types of diversity. Certainly, the authors allocated the most space to talk about indigenous education, but it is diluted within the rest of the examples on other kinds of diversity and the structure of the text itself. In addition, the text that directly addresses the indigenous population fails to explain why indigenous communities are different and deserve special treatment (beyond attention due to the effects of poverty and discrimination). Rather, the existence of different cultures (roughly described as ways of life, celebrations and ways of perceiving and interacting with reality) is emphasized as part of the multicultural mosaic of the country: "In this sense, we can say that Mexico is a multicultural country inhabited by diverse

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cultures, many of which have existed for millennia" (p. 23, my translation). Therefore, diversity is in a sense "homogenized" in the text, rendering ethnic difference into one more type of minority.

7.4 DIVERSITY AND INDIGENOUS RIGHTS

Another theme that emerged during the interviews and analysis of policy documents is related to intercultural education and political issues. Schmelkes (2005), who was the former director of CGEIB, mentions other areas (in addition to the official objectives of intercultural education) that would be influenced, such as the elimination of racism, strengthening democracy and ensuring governance, the last two being open political goals. That intercultural education has political implications is not a surprise, because as Westheimer and Kahne (2004) have pointed out, even educational programs with allegedly democratic goals are in fact political choices with political consequences on the type of citizen that is intended to be constructed. Following this idea, López (1997), Gasché (1997), and even the indigenous participants of this project have advocated for the inclusion of a political and economic dimension in intercultural education. Interestingly, Schmelkes (2001b; 2005), who has asserted that intercultural education may have effects on democracy and governance, has also claimed that "it does not correspond to education to address the combat of all these asymmetries" (2001b, p. 5); that is, political, economic and social asymmetries − which incidentally are the causes of most of the problems regarding democracy and governance. For Schmelkes, and in general for the official Discourse, the objectives of intercultural education are mainly educational, cultural and value oriented.

The acknowledgement of diversity in educational policy – and not just as a pedagogic matter − is the result of political pressures exerted by the indigenous peoples. After the Zapatista uprising, the presence and demands of the indigenous peoples became more evident in the national life. The Accords of San Andrés (1996) stated the need to modify the Mexican constitution in order to establish a new relationship with the Mexican State. In the Accords, the EZLN and the government agreed to suggest to the legislative power a series of modifications, the most important being the acknowledgment of the "indigenous peoples" as subjects of laws and rights. That is, through changes in the constitution, the free determination of indigenous peoples would be guaranteed without undermining "national sovereignty" [46]

The San Andrés Accords were rejected by the government, which caused the rupture of the peace talks between the EZLN and the government. Later, they were modified and presented in a bill proposal by the COCOPA (Comisión de Concordia y Pacificación). The EZLN agreed to such modifications, and the proposal was picked up by Vicente Fox when he first took office in December 2000. The new constitutional amendments were approved on April 15th, 2001. In summary, the new constitutional amendments acknowledged the pluricultural nature of the country, and granted autonomy to the indigenous peoples as a self-determination under the framework of "national unity." However, the law was later rejected by the EZLN because the so-called political autonomy was understood as the capacity of the indigenous peoples to solve their internal conflicts according to their traditions and way of life, at the level of local or traditional governments. In concrete terms, the autonomy of the indigenous peoples was subordinated to the State, which would only "take into account" their opinions without granting them the right to make their own decisions. By effectively defining the terms of the

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[46] For an analysis of the constitutional reform and its limitations see Espinoza (2002).

constitutional law and limiting access to discourse and mass media to indigenous actors, the State was able to maintain its hegemony and power and at the same time, to appear as if it actually had solved the problems of the indigenous peoples and the social strife that caused the Zapatista uprising.

In the educational field, the amendment to the second article is especially relevant because the acknowledgment of the pluricultural character of the nation is what gives foundation to the intercultural model. It reads:

> Second Article:
>
> The Mexican Nation is one and indivisible:
>
> The Nation has a pluricultural composition founded originally in its indigenous peoples that are those that descend from the populations that inhabited in the current territory of the country at the moment of the colonization and that conserve their own social, economic, cultural and politic institutions, or part of them. (Cámara de Diputados, 1998).

Halliday (1994, p. 55) has noted that a speaker (or in this case, an author) will "choose the Theme from within what is Given and locate the focus, the climax of the New, somewhere within the Rheme." Theme can be understood as the first part of a clause, while the Rheme is what follows. Speakers (or writers) will provide the most familiar information initially to set the stage and declare what is common sense. In the information structure of the text above, what comes first is a statement about the nature of the Mexican nation as a monolithic entity: being one and indivisible connotes not only a strong relationship between its parts, but also their homogeneous character. This lexical choice is in conflict with the idea presented in the second paragraph, or the Rheme, which is the acknowledgement of the pluricultural composition of the nation. This pluriculturalism is due "originally" to the indigenous peoples that lived in the current territories at the time of the colonization. The word "originally" in this context is

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ambiguous because it means that indigenous peoples were the origin of the pluricultural nature of the nation, which follows the official discourse of posing the indigenous peoples as the founders of the nation. However, "originally" also indicates that it is not current anymore. Also, note that although this constitutional article describes the characteristics of indigenous peoples, it does not provide a clear definition of who can be considered indigenous. Indigenous peoples are described as those who inhabit the national territory at the time of the colonization, potentially excluding those peoples that did not live in the territory before the colonization (say for instance, at the time of the delimitation of the current territorial boundaries, as the San Andrés Accords suggested). Finally, no linguistic criteria are mentioned in the classification of the indigenous peoples.[47]

In Chapter Four I reviewed the debates regarding the State, its relationship with minorities and the types of rights that can be granted to these minorities (See Kymlicka, 1995). I think the Discourse of the indigenous actors is located within what Taylor (1994) has called "The politics of recognition." According to Taylor, there are two ways in which the State can manage citizenship. The first one is a universalist view that grants the same rights to the citizens without regard to their cultural (or other) characteristics. On the contrary, in the politics of difference there is a demand to acknowledge the needs of individuals as members of specific cultural groups. Such groups have distinctive identities that have been denied or assimilated into the dominant group. Therefore, it is necessary to acknowledge not only the rights of the individual, as the universalist point of view suggests, but the collective rights of the cultural group in question.

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[47] The issue of the preservation of the indigenous languages is addressed later in Fraction B.

I think that the discourse of the indigenous actors is located within the field of the "politics of difference." As I showed in the previous section, indigenous teachers claim a cultural distinction that is different from that of other minorities, which confers them uniqueness in the educational political spheres, as I will discuss below. The teachers' discourse refusing to be part of other minorities reflect even a step further, in which diversity should be further fragmented, constituting in this way a sort of "heterogeneous diversity" in which indigenous populations are a kind on their own because of the historic and systemic factors that have shaped their dominated position in Mexican society.

The indigenous Discourse on diversity is not devoid of political content – even though most of the interviews revolved around educational issues – which shows the interviewees' politicized point of view in stark contrast with the official Discourse. For instance, in the following excerpt, Julio (representative from Ce-Acatl) commented on the "original sin" of intercultural education, and followed with a remark on the need to found the new official education – which as a concession he calls intercultural – on the rights to participation and consultation established in the San Andrés Accords. Interestingly, he also proposes to co-build this new education through his choice of third person plural ("let's rebuilt or recreate or create something new in terms of official education"), which creates a collective or communal subject. However, this community is not restricted to the indigenous communities, but extended to all the population ("let's everybody do it"):

(21)

01 J: what is fundamental is the spirit of the San Andrés Accords/
02 is that there is the right to consultation and participation/
03 fundamentally/
04 then there was going to be this type of initiatives in which [we] were going to say
   "well, let's rebuild or create something new in terms of official education"/
05 let's call it/

06 e: intercultural/
07 aimed specifically at such and such peoples and communities/
08 let's everybody do it/
09 that communities participate/
10 that graduates participate/
11 that teachers participate who ultimately are the tip/
12 the key to everything/

01 J: lo fundamental y es el espíritu de los acuerdos de San Andrés/
02 es que haya el derecho a la consulta y el derecho a la participación/
03 fundamentalmente /
04 entonces si iba a haber ese tipo de iniciativas en las que se iba a decir "bueno vamos a
     reconstruir o a recrear o a crear algo nuevo en términos de educación oficial"/
05 vamos a llamarle/
06 e: intercultural/
07 dirigida específicamente a tales y tales pueblos y comunidades/
08 vamos haciéndolo entre todos/
09 que participen las comunidades
10 que participen los egresados
11 que participen los maestros que son los que finalmente son la punta/
12 la clave de todo esto/

Contrary to Julio's discourse that mentions the San Andrés Accords as the political basis for the construction of intercultural education, Jorge (CGEIB) does not touch political matters and focuses on ethical and cultural aspects. Indeed, the struggles of the indigenous peoples are mentioned as historical background in the evolution of intercultural education in the Mexican educational system (see excerpt 5; Chapter Six.) Jorge's discourse revolves around acknowledging and appreciating diversity in schools, and sensitizing both teachers and students about diversity. Through both classroom and discussion exercises, teachers and students are supposed to reflect on their individual cultural experiences to achieve an "ethical" change in which the Other is appreciated by what (s)he is. In the following excerpt, I questioned Jorge about how to include problematic contents that deal with discrimination or political issues like exclusion or domination at the curricular level. His answer emphasizes the need to know the Others in order to "value" them:

(22)

01 J: the idea is exactly that, to value the other, ah: to value the other taking as a referent what I am…we do not allow ourselves to decenter, we do not allow ourselves the opportunity to say: we get out for a little, and [see] how the other sees the matter, no? this other person, no?/

02 then as I told you, in the case of children, ah, the example that I already gave you, about Paco el chato, yes? exactly it allows us to bring about discussion with the students about, how would you feel?, how would you feel in the place of [that person]?/

03 they are reflections that are given to the children so they reflect about the situation that is, to put themselves in the place of the other, to put themselves in the shoes of the other, no?/

04 that is only one of the examples that we have, and that we lived with the teachers, we have practical exercises that we give to them for example, with newspaper clippings, with the case that you say at the metro…how do you see it?, what is your opinion in that respect? How would you feel if you would be in their place?, have you felt some marginalization, or discrimination or something? "Well yes", and at the workshops it comes out "I am not indigenous, but in such place [they] did such and such to me.."/

05 and the question is how did you feel?, how does one feel?, well bad, definitely bad, then, put oneself in the place of the other/

01 J: la idea es justamente eso, valorar al otro, este: valorar al otro y tomando como referente lo que yo soy..... no nos permitimos descentrarnos, no nos permitimos darnos el chance de decir: me salgo tantito aquí, y como es que ve el otro asunto no? esta otra persona no?/

02 Entonces te decía, en el caso de los niños, este, el ejemplo que te puse, ya, el paco el chato sí?, justamente ahí permite llevar a la discusión con los alumnos de que bueno, cómo te sentirías?, cómo tú te sentirías en lugar de?/

03 Son reflexiones que se les dan a los niños para que vayan reflexionando sobre la situación o sea, ponerse en el lugar del otro, ponerse en el zapato del otro no? /

04 ese es solo uno de los ejemplos que nosotros tenemos, y con los maestros lo vivimos, tenemos ejercicios prácticos que les ponemos por ejemplo, con recortes de periódico, con el caso que tú dices en el metro.. Cómo lo ven?, Qué opinan al respecto?, Cómo se sentirían si estuvieran en su lugar,? Ustedes han sentido alguna discriminación, marginación o algo?, "no pues que sí", y en los talleres sale: "Yo no soy indígena, pero en tal lugar me hicieron esto, esto y esto.."/

05 Y la pregunta es: Cómo te sentiste?, Cómo se siente uno? , pues mal, definitivamente mal, entonces, ponerse en el lugar del otro /

Jorge's discourse shows the activities they (i.e., CGEIB trainers) use to generate empathy among students, and teachers rely on hypothetical situations that explore their feelings in discrimination cases ("how would you feel in his/her place"). Such reflection may change their

points of view ("to be in the shoes of the Other"). Indeed, empathy is seen as a key to create a type of Mexican identity that is based on the values that create solidarity and comprehension. Interestingly, this new identity is not based on allegiance to the nation as it was before:

> The life experience of each person is what shapes his identity, knowledge about the others implies achieving empathy, that is, to place oneself in the place of the other and understand him in relation to his reasons and values. Empathy allows subjects to increase their appreciation of the rest [of the people] and internalize values such as cooperation and solidarity. Hence the acknowledgement of otherness is considered as the first step for the construction of identity for all Mexicans. (CGEIB, 2004, p. 46)

The official approximation to diversity goes in the direction of creating harmony in society through changing the perception of the people. Furthermore, it assumes that knowledge by itself will create empathy ("Knowledge about the other *implies* achieving empathy"), which is not supported by research, as I showed in Chapter Four. In fact, Grinter (1992) has pointed out that approaches based on understanding and appreciation does not warrant the eradication of racism or other social problems for that matter, because such problems are not the result of cultural misunderstanding, but of structural problems. It is not that Jorge and the CGEIB do not acknowledge that discrimination and the dominated position of indigenous peoples in society are due to "historical, structural and systemic factors" as Jorge describes them at some point (see below); rather, they are glossed over and emphasis is instead placed on creating a change in ethical values and personal responsibility.

Just as in the previous theme, the voices of the indigenous actors emerge in opposition to the educational authorities. There are areas of overlap between the two discourses. Indeed, although there is an acknowledgement of the need to create a type of education that fosters diversity and changes society, one is based on political foundations (i.e., the San Andrés Accords) and the other one is based on ethical personal change. Intercultural education and

political issues are themes that will repeatedly appear in the analysis. From the interviews and written data, it seems that intercultural education – despite official efforts – cannot be understood in a political and social vacuum.

Figure 3 shows the official and indigenous points of view regarding intercultural education and its scope of action in the educational, moral (values), political, social and economic spheres. The CGEIB focuses on educational and value oriented asymmetries to produce personal and social change while acknowledging its limitations in other areas. On the other hand, the indigenous groups emphasize the participation of the community in political and social action as a way to achieve personal and political changes.
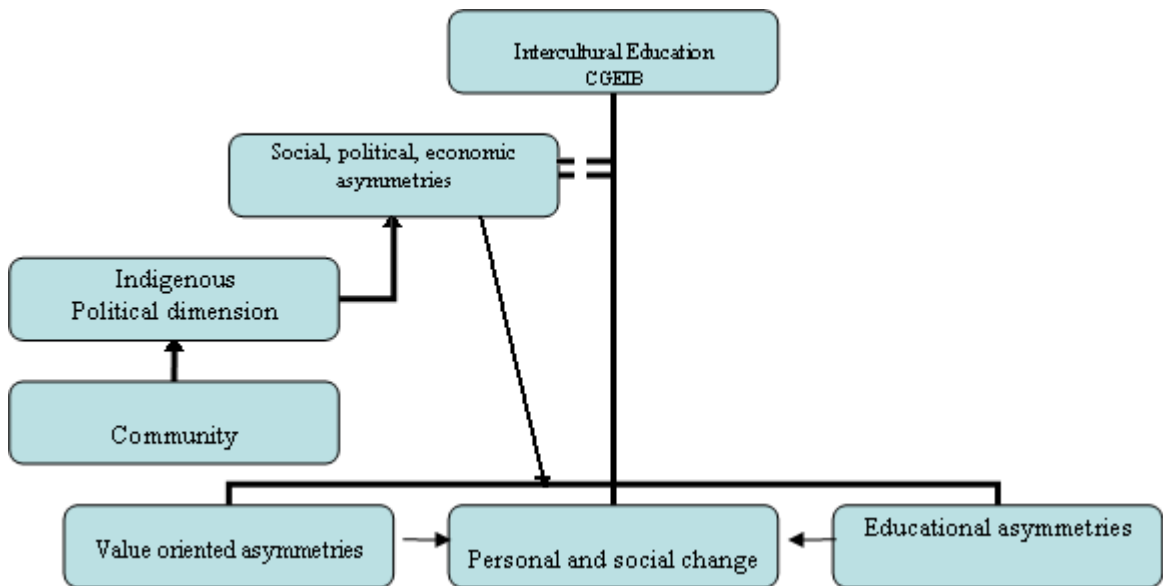

Figure 3. Intercultural education and political participation.

7.5 THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION

Another objective of intercultural education that appears in the interviews of teachers, researchers, students and teacher educators is the elimination of discrimination. According to the National Plan of Education, one purpose of the educational system is to

> Take the step from multiculturalism to interculturalism through the elimination of all form[s] of discrimination, prejudice and racism against the members of different and minority cultures that share the territory. [It] implies the egalitarian participation of all ethnic groups in the economic, social, cultural and political processes of the nation. (SEP, 2001, p. 45, my translation)

The elimination of discrimination in education is a reflection of the constitutional amendment that prohibited discrimination. This amendment was also carried out in 2001, when other constitutional articles were reformed as a result of the "Laws of indigenous rights and cultures." The first constitutional article (fraction 2) was modified to read:

> [It] is prohibited all discrimination motivated by ethnic or national origin, gender, age, different capabilities, social condition [status], health condition, religion, opinions, preferences, marital status or any other that go against human dignity and that has the objective to nullify or diminish the rights and freedoms of the people. (Mexican Constitution, article 1 fraction 2. my translation)

Although the amendment of the constitution prohibits discrimination for the first time in history, it is quite vague. First, the constitutional article does not explain what constitutes discrimination. Second, any discriminatory acts should be judged by the very subjective intention of the perpetrator to "nullify or diminish the rights and freedoms of the people," which would make it difficult to prove. Furthermore, ethnic discrimination is not addressed here as a special type of action aimed at indigenous individuals; rather, discrimination is broadly defined to

include all the population (indeed, even non-Mexicans visiting/residing in the country are protected by this legislation).[48]

The eradication of discrimination is a leitmotif in the Discourse of intercultural education, although it is not included in the official list of purposes of intercultural education. Rather, it is assumed that the epistemological (i.e., knowledge of other cultures and acknowledgment of their legitimacy) and ethical (i.e., acquisition of democratic values, autonomy of judgment and critical thinking) changes induced by intercultural education will gradually combat racism, prejudice and discrimination. Intercultural pedagogy should be aimed at creating in the students both the values and skills that allow them to critically (in the sense of appreciating the multiple factors involved) evaluate cultural realities and develop close communication and contact with other communities. In Chapter Four I have discussed the dangers of pedagogical approaches that focus on changing moral values and attitudes regarding discrimination, so I will not go over them again. Perhaps the most interesting element about the issue of discrimination is the central place that it takes in the discourse of teachers and the relative recurrence of the topic in the official documents of the CGEIB.

According to the CGEIB, the multicultural situation of the country has caused several asymmetries between the mainstream and the indigenous populations because of the power imbalances that a multicultural (not intercultural) relationship implies. It identifies four main ones:

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[48] The Federal Law to Prevent Discrimination (2003) spells out what is meant by the term "discrimination." That is "…all distinction, exclusion or restriction that, based on the ethnic origin or national, sex, age, handicap, social or economic condition, health condition, pregnancy, language, religion, opinions, sexual preferences, marital status or any other, that has as an objective to prevent or to nullify the recognition or exercise of the rights and the real equality of opportunities for people" (Federal Law to Prevent Discrimination, Fourth Article, my translation). However, its First article also establishes that "The objective of it is to prevent and eliminate all forms of discrimination that are exerted against any person in terms of Article 1 of the Political Constitution of the Mexican United States…" (Federal Law to Prevent Discrimination, Fist Article, my translation). Thus, the first constitutional article functions as the framework to which all anti-discrimination laws are subjected.

The more visible and wounding are the *economic* [ones] understood as the lack of opportunities for productive development; the *political* [one], as the lack of voice; the *social* [one], as the absence of options; the *value related* [one] that implies discrimination and racism, and, of course, the *educational* [one] that means lack of opportunities to access a type of education pertinent and congruent with the sociocultural and linguistic characteristics specific to each group. (Schmelkes, 2001; cited in CGEIB, 2006, p. 21, my translation. Emphasis in the original).

Just as in the cases mentioned above, this definition presents an incomplete picture. Through repeating euphemisms (i.e., lack of voice, lack of options), it mitigates the seriousness of the problems of the indigenous population. Describing economic asymmetries as the "lack of opportunities for productive development" does not describe the problems that indigenous communities face everyday surviving on an average of two dollars a day. In the same way, "the lack of voice" in the political arena does not say who is suppressing the voice of the indigenous people. By failing to identify who are the actors that caused such asymmetries, the author portrays a situation that exists naturally out there, which implies that it is not a product of economic, social or ideological structures that favor the majority. Through mitigating the so-called asymmetries and avoiding to mention which actors are involved in this dominant relationship, conflicts are deflected away.

Asymmetrical values are considered the product of racism and discrimination, attitudes that prevail in multicultural relationships. However, racism and discrimination are neither defined nor are their functions explained. At no moment in the document are racism or discrimination explained as ideologies that help sustain the privileged position of dominant groups (van Dijk, 1992); rather, they are seen as attitudinal problems that prevent "cultures" and individuals from coexisting in egalitarian ways:

In Mexico there exist grave asymmetrical values as a consequence of the relationships of subordination, discrimination and racism. The asymmetrical

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values are the manifestation of internalized racism, both on the one who discriminates and the discriminated one, and it is a fundamental impediment to achieve equitable relationships between the cultures and individuals that conform them (CGEIB, 2006, p. 21, my translation).

As I will show below, personal responsibility is stressed in the manifestation of racism, both in the person discriminated against and the perpetrator. In any case, the internalization of racism and its concrete manifestation − asymmetrical values− can be subjected to change through a type of education that focuses on strengthening the individual's cultural identity. On the other hand, for the indigenous teachers and teacher educators, discrimination is an all too common experience in their lives. It struck me that it was a theme that would emerge very frequently not only in the interviews but also in informal, non-academically oriented conversations. Their life experiences as indigenous individuals in Spanish-speaking schools or the discrimination suffered as indigenous academics function as what Leyva (2005, p. 281), has called "moral grammar." In other words, the stories of the indigenous teachers situate the listener in an emotional and subjective plane that shows the humiliation and injustices suffered by them. But more than just eliciting empathy from their audience, such narratives legitimize their demands. Thus, according to Leyva, this moral is anchored on an ethical locus that leads to the revision of the social arrangements. In the following excerpt, Pedro (San Isidro school) narrates an encounter with a mestizo teacher during one of the workshops conducted by the CGEIB, which tried to mix indigenous and "general" teachers in order to introduce them to the intercultural model:

(23)

01 P: well, all intercultural education
02 the courses were aimed at all the teachers/
03 now I liked Querétaro very much because because here we realized that:/

04 that many teachers from general elementary schools/ |
05 R: uhu/ |
06 P: P's they say that indigenismo does not exist in México anymore/
07 that there are no ethnic groups anymore/
08 like they were surprised when "well we are P'urhépechas, we speak P'urhépecha"/
09 R: in Querétaro? That's weird, isn't it?
10 because in Querétaro there are/ |
11 P: No, they were/ |
12 it was a [female] teacher from Guanajuato the one who surprised us with "how is it possible that ethnic groups exist?"/
13 R: In Guanajuato there are as well/ ((chuckles))
14 P: yes but what happens is that [they] are radicals, no?/
15 to the extermination of the ethnic groups/|
16 R: mh/ |
17 P: I understood it like that because [she] got surprised/
18 when a [female] teacher:/
19 I don't remember, from San Luis Potosí/
20 from: ah: from the. Chichimeca ethnic group/
21 no, Chichimeca or something like this is their name/
22 [she] told us that they tended a group/
23 to a group of what is it called? multi./
24 R: multigrade?/
25 P: multigrade but also multiethnic/
26 [where] there are P'urhépechas that there are I don't know/ |
27 R: uhu from different groups |
28 P: uhu from different indigenous groups/
29 and the teacher started "where is that school?" and she started to take out her notebook/
30 "where is it?" "to take the children"/
31 and she imagined that the indigenous [person] walks around with his little feathers and his../
32 well she surprised us/
33 well then we began to show our claws no?/
34 how is it possible? we are not talking about the pre-Hispanic epoch, no?/
35 where people are semi-naked and everything, no?/
36 the thing is that language persists/
37 cultures persist/
38 above all, traditions/
39 but we are not going to see people very different from the other/
40 indigenous people already dress like the others/
41 they are already incorporating themselves regarding dress/
42 to the other culture/
43 then we are not going to see that/
44 but simply what distinguishes us is language/
45 and traditions and costumes/
46 and then the [female] teacher got surprised and tell us "no because.."/
47 well what it pained me is that she said "where so [I] can take the children, so they find out how indigenous are"/

48 as if there were an enor:mous difference no?/ ((chuckles))
49 then it <u>did</u> surprise us what she said because almost fifty percent were indigenous and fifty
   percent were of the other system/

01 P: O sea todo la educación intercultural/
02 o sea los cursos talleres fueron dirigidos a todos los docentes/
03 'ora a mi me gustó mucho en Querétaro porque porque ahí bueno nos dimos cuenta de
   que:/
04 de que muchos docentes de primarias generales/ |
05 R: uhu/ |
06 P: p's dicen que ya no existe el indigenismo en México/
07 que ya no hay grupos étnicos/
08 como que se sorprendieron cuando "bueno nosotros somos P'urhépechas", nosotros
   hablamos el P'urhépecha/
09 R: en Querétaro? Que raro no?/
10 porque en Querétaro hay./ |
11 P: no es que eran / |
12 era una maestra de Guanajuato que nos sorprendió con eso de que "como es posible de que
   existan grupos étnicos?/
13 R: en Guanajuato también hay ((chuckles))/
14 P: pues si pero lo que pasa es que son los radicales no?/
15 al exterminio de de los grupos étnicos (chuckles)/ |
16 R: mh/ |
17 P: así lo entendí yo porque se sorprendió/
18 cuando una maestra:/
19 no me acuerdo, de San Luis Potosí/
20 de los: o sea del grupo étnico de los. Chichimeca/
21 no, chichimeca o algo así se llama/
22 nos dijo que ellos atendían a un grupo/
23 a un grupo de cómo le llaman? Multi./
24 R: multigrado?/
25 P: multigrado pero también multietnico/
26 Que hay P'urhépechas que hay no se:/ |
27 R: uhu de distintos grupos/ |
28 P: uhu de distintos grupos indígenas/
29 y que la maestra empezó "en dónde está esa escuela" y empezó a sacar su libreta/
30 "en qué parte está? Para llevar a los niños"/
31 y ella se imaginaba que todavía el indígena anda con sus plumitas y su../
32 bueno pues nos sorprendió/
33 bueno ahí nosotros empezamos a sacar garras no?/
34 como va a ser posible? o sea no estamos hablando de la época prehispánica no?/
35 o sea de que todavía la gente está semidesnuda y todo, no?/
36 la cosa es que persiste la lengua/
37 persisten las culturas/
38 sobre todo las normas, las tradiciones/
39 pero <u>no</u> vamos a ver una gente de que va a ser muy diferente a otra/

40 ya la gente indígena se viste igual/
41 ya se están incorporando al a cultura en cuanto a la vestimenta/
42 a la otra cultura/
43 entonces no vamos a ver eso/
44 sino simplemente aquí lo que nos distingue es el lenguaje./
45 y los usos y costumbres/
46 y entonces la maestra se sorprendió y dice "no por que:."/
47 o sea a mi lo que me dolió mucho es que ella decía "donde para llevar a los niños, para que se enteren cómo son los indígenas"/
48 como si hubiera una diferencia eno:rme no? ((chuckles))/
49 entonces si nos sorprendió con lo que dijo porque bueno porque casi el 50% eran indígenas y el 50% eran del otro sistema/

Pedro's narrative illustrates "the moral grammar" of the encounter. In fact, it is a complaint that recounts the mestizo teacher's blunder and Pedro's reaction. According to Günthner (2001, p. 3) the participation framework for complaints involves the following elements:

1) The narrator: In this case Pedro, who retells the story and portrays himself (and the other teachers) as victims.

2) The recipient of the complaint of the story: The listener – me in this case.

3) The antagonist: or the person who has offended or victimized the narrator – the mestizo teacher in this story.

By narrating his experience, Pedro represents himself subjectively; his social identity emerges in the report of his individual experience, and positions himself in relation to social and cultural aspects (Schiffrin, 1996). He relies on reported speech to show the ignorance and lack of tact of the mestiza teacher, but this is possible because the speech of the teacher also bestows him with the authority to talk about it (see Shuman, 1993) and to vindicate his point of view. Pedro opens his story by providing background information and what the mestizo teacher said, but then in line 34 Pedro breaks the frame of his narrative to change his footing (Goffman, 1981)

from the narrator to an expert that explains the indigenous culture and its character. Interestingly, the part of the story where he recounts the mestiza teacher's questions is narrated in the past tense. Generally, narrations are told using narrative present, which according to Schiffrin (1981, p. 59) has pragmatic functions since its use allows the narrator to present the events as if they were just happening. The audience can then be involved and interpret the significance of these events in the story. Pedro switches to the present tense not in the crucial part of the complaint, but where he explains indigenous culture. This switch could be understood as a strategy to show the contemporaneity of the indigenous peoples and their adaptations to modern life. His narration functions to reject stereotypes about indigenous peoples as being backward or static in time ("we are not talking about the pre-Hispanic time, no? where people are still semi-naked and everything, no?). The story also affirms the similarities between indigenous and mestizo people ("but we are not going to see people very different from the other"), and the incorporation of indigenous individuals to modernity through the adoption of contemporary dress (line 41). The repetition of structures in lines 40 and 41 reinforces his meaning about such incorporation. He states that "simply what distinguishes us here is the language"; the adverb "simply" lessens the differences between indigenous individuals and mestizos. However, Pedro's story reinforces the idea of a differentiated indigenous identity that is based on the existence of their native languages, cultures and traditions. In this sense, Pedro's story not only is an example of discrimination even in a context where the goal is the suppression of it (i.e., a workshop on intercultural education), but it is also evidence that reinforces the moral grammar of the indigenous peoples.

Pedro also expressed his emotions to the words of the mestiza teacher about seeing indigenous communities as a kind of curiosity for children to see (line 47). Although he tries to

mitigate the strength of his feelings by downplaying his emotions from pain or anger to surprise (i.e., "well it surprised us"), he ultimately uses the expression "to show our claws" to show his – or rather the teachers' – anger. He also used the expression as a strategy to defend himself and the indigenous group to which he belongs. Indeed, Pedro does not report an individual experience, but a collective one. His pronominal choice not only creates solidarity between the ones experiencing the discriminating incident but also strengthens the moral point of his story: indigenous individuals are discriminated against even in academic circles, where knowledge of indigenous communities should be common, especially in groups whose composition is mixed, as it was the case of the workshop participants (line 49).

Interestingly, two of my non-indigenous interviewees reported incidents of "reversed" discrimination, which according to Jones (1999) is a common experience in mixed groups. Individuals from the majority often feel rejected or disappointed when despite their democratic attempts to listen to the Other, they are ignored.

One of the stories narrated informally referred to an incident that happened during a seminar on intercultural education directed both at "general" and indigenous teachers. According to my source, the indigenous teachers insisted on being "segregated," sitting at the end of the table and working in a closed group. When the moderator asked them to incorporate themselves into the rest of the group, the indigenous teachers replied that they did not want to work with the others, which made my source feel discriminated against. I did not see the incident, but it got my attention because it was not the first incident of perceived reverse discrimination that I heard. In fact, in my interview with Jorge (CGEIB), he narrated a similar story in which an indigenous teacher was isolated because she felt awkward working with a mestiza teacher since she perceived her Spanish proficiency to be low. Plus, the mestiza

teacher's way of dressing marked some social differences. However, contrary to Pedro's story, there is a positive ending. The indigenous teacher "crossed over" and changed her attitude towards the other teacher, who on the other hand, was so approachable that the indigenous teacher "ha[d] the confidence" (roughly, feels comfortable) to chat with her.

(24)

01 J: I believe that it was like the rich part in the sense of sensibility because let me tell you that from the first hours of work, it is very <u>evident</u>, is like very natural sometimes how indigenous teachers take a row [of seats] and sit down, just as indigenous teachers sit down, yes? Then with the idea of conforming groups we began to do work teams, exchange, it was a very interesting experience, for instance with a [female] teacher from Chiapas…e: she teamed up with a [female] teacher, with a teacher I believe from Zacatecas or something like that, no?...<u>excuse me,</u> I believe she was from Guerrero/
02 then she said "to tell the truth the first time I felt as I wasn't able to speak, because I saw the teacher was here and her way of dressing and everything, no? and her way of talking, and I don't speak Spanish very well, but as we worked little by little, [she] says, I was realizing the attitude, then I saw a very important thing: a change of attitude, a positive attitude towards the other"/
03 Because the teacher was very (unintelligible) "I realized that the attitude, then it allowed me to have confidence to chat with her", she said, no?/

01 J: yo creo que eso fue como la parte rica en el sentido de la sensibilización porque también déjame decirte que desde las primeras horas de trabajo, es que es como muy <u>evidente</u>, es como muy natural a veces cómo los maestros indígenas agarran una fila y ahí se sientan, como los maestros indígenas se sientan ¿sí? entonces ya con la idea de la conformación de los grupos empezamos a hacer equipos de trabajo, intercambio, fue una experiencia muy interesante, por ejemplo, con una maestra de Chiapas .. maestra indígena ...e: ..le tocó hacer equipo con una maestra , con una maestra creo que de Zacatecas, algo así ¿no?,...<u>perdón</u>, creo que era de Guerrero/
02 entonces decía: "pues la verdad yo la primera hora me sentía así como que no podía hablar, porque veía que la maestra estaba aquí como que su forma de vestir, y todo ¿no? y su forma de hablar, y yo no hablo bien el español, pero en tanto fuimos trabajando poco a poquito, dice, fui dándome cuenta de la actitud, entonces ví una cosa importante justamente: un cambio de actitud, una actitud positiva al otro/ actitud, entonces me permitió como tener confianza y platicar con ella", decía, ¿no? /

Jorge's story is inscribed within the framework of conflict resolution and convergence. The conflict is overcome through the cooperation of the subjects, but it is the indigenous teacher

who opens up to the experience of working with the mestiza teacher. This narrative appears in Jorge's interview as an example of how both indigenous and mestizo teachers are sensitized to cultural differences and the way they can be worked out productively. However, it is interesting that even within a conflict-resolution story, it is the indigenous teachers who are portrayed as naturally isolated ("it is very evident, is like very natural sometimes how indigenous teachers take a row [of seats] and sit down, just as indigenous teachers sit down, yes?"). Jorge's epistemic remarks show the way in which he perceives the behavior of the indigenous teachers. Modality in discourse refers to the way in which the speaker establishes his or her view on the propositional content of the utterance (Calsamiglia and Tusón, 1999). The words "evident" (prosodically stressed) and "very natural" reinforce Jorge's stance: that indigenous teachers isolate themselves, and not that they may be isolated by the others.

In Pedro's story, there is also a positive resolution, but it is derived from a conflictive starting point. Therefore, the indigenous teachers are forced to show the value of their language and culture to counteract the ignorance of the mestiza teacher. Furthermore, it is actually the indigenous teachers who open up to show the other teachers how their native language can be used in the classroom, and how they are just like any other person. In the end, it is the mestizo teachers who are sensitized to cultural differences. Both stories reflect the subjective experience of the interviewees, but Jorge's story is interesting because even an episode that is chosen as an example to show a productive encounter between indigenous and general teachers reflects an attitude that is discriminating in a very subtle way. In this case, indigenous teachers are portrayed as naturally isolated, while the mestizo teacher has the right attitude to allow her indigenous peer to feel comfortable. This is further validated because it is in fact the narrative voice of the indigenous teacher (presented by the reported speech of the interviewee) who describes the

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change and the positive attitude of the mestiza teacher ("I realized the attitude, and then it allowed me like having confidence and chat with her," she said, no?")

The theme of this section is a "telling case" of the subtle ways in which discrimination manifests itself. Paradoxically, the very descriptions of the educational policies and laws, as well as the discourse of representatives from CGEIB – despite their best intentions – show signs of subtle discrimination. Through discursive and linguistic mechanisms such as using impersonal expressions, euphemisms and epistemic remarks, discriminating agents are erased and the state of affairs is naturalized. On the other hand, for the indigenous teachers, discrimination cases are used to show their "moral grammar" and to reinforce both their collective and individual agency against discrimination. Despite these contradicting points of view, the indigenous actors share the hope that intercultural education could eliminate discrimination. In the following excerpt, Pedro (San Isidro school) comments on the purposes of intercultural education. He identifies the elimination of discrimination as one of the goals; however, the responsibility for ending such discrimination falls on the shoulders of the majority (mestizo) people who should understand that everyone is Mexican. Pedro extends a "solidarity net" in which both indigenous and mestizo peoples could see each other as human beings (lines 09-11). By stressing the collective noun Mexican, using reciprocals pronouns ("we see each other like that") and inclusive "we" Pedro reduces distance with the mestizo people, but he also increases the power of the indigenous because they are placed at the same "level" as the historically powerful majority, showing in this sense, the "double blind" of power and solidarity, as Tannen (1993) calls it. But Pedro is also prompt to claim that indigenous peoples have understood and accepted the fact that all are human beings, but not the other "culture" (euphemism to refer to the mestizo people). Although Pedro acknowledges the elimination of discrimination as one of the goals of intercultural

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education, he also shows his skepticism (line 14: "thing that <u>in the other culture</u> is hardly going to be accepted"). In Spanish, the verbal periphrasis *ir + a* has a future value. By placing the acceptance of indigenous peoples in a future, Pedro creates a pragmatic distance that situates it in the realm of possibility, but mitigating the feasibility of its occurrence, which is further emphasized by the adverb "hardly":

(25)

01 P: well, in my way of seeing it/
02 it would be about non-indigenous people understanding/
03 as we understand them/
04 that there was understanding/
05 R: that the mestizo people understood?
06 P: exactly/
07 because for example one of the lines that I read about that, what is it called?/
08 concept of interculturality/
09 is that well we see each other like that/
10 like <u>Mexicans</u>/
11 like the human beings we are/
12 but somewhere we saw that always the indigenous people have understood that/
13 and it has been respected/
14 thing that <u>in the other culture</u> is hardly going to be accepted/

01 P: pues bueno, en mi forma de ver /
02 sería de que la gente no indígena entendiera/
03 como nosotros entendemos a ellos/
04 o sea que hubiera un entendimiento/
05 R: o sea que la gente mestiza entendiera?/
06 P: exactamente/
07 porque por ejemplo una de las líneas que leí de ese, como se llama?/
08 concepto de interculturalidad/
09 es de que bueno todos nos veamos como tal/
10 como <u>mexicanos</u>/
11 como seres humanos que somos/
12 por ahí veíamos una parte de que bueno, siempre la gente indígena ha entendido eso/
13 y se ha respetado/
14 cosa que en la <u>otra cultura</u> difícilmente se van a aceptar/

Figure 4 shows the stance of both CGEIB and Pedro (as representative of the indigenous point of view) regarding intercultural education and the elimination of discrimination. CGEIB

proposes that discrimination should be addressed through an attitudinal and epistemological change created by intercultural education. Such change should include both mestizo and indigenous peoples. On the other hand, Pedro agrees on the need to eradicate discrimination, but focuses on changing the mestizo people's attitude since indigenous groups have always understood that all of us are Mexicans and human beings (lines 10-12).

Because of the long history of domination and discrimination against the indigenous minorities, it is surprising that it is not in fact one of the explicit and official goals of intercultural education. Rather, it is considered an effect of objectives that deal with children's identities. In the following section, I will analyze this theme.
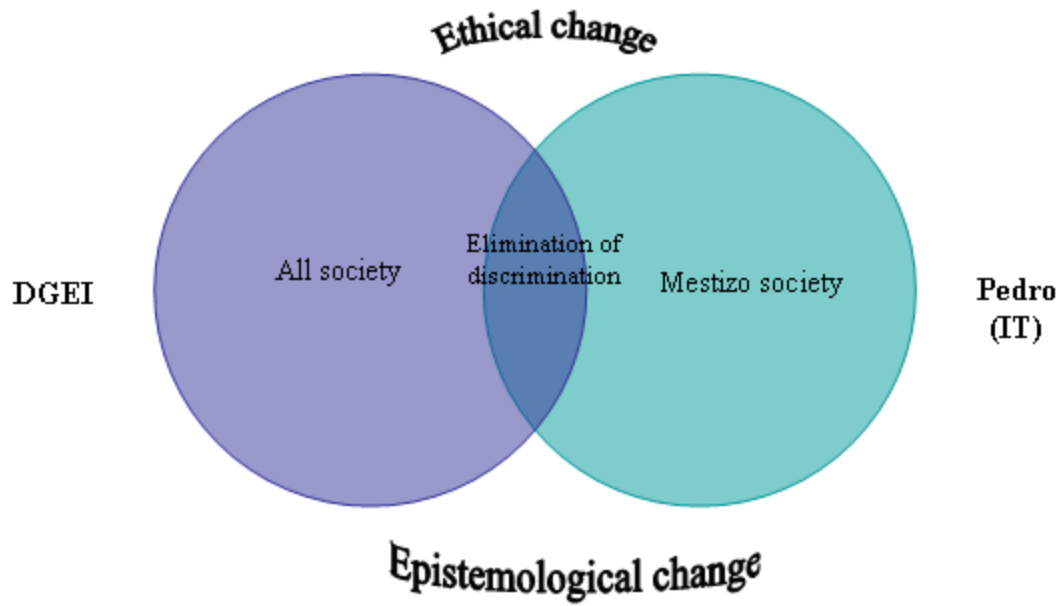
Figure 4. Intercultural education and the elimination of discrimination.

7.6 IDENTITY AND VALUES

Despite the discontinuities between the indigenous and official discourse, it seems that these actors agree on the objective of addressing discrimination and racism through education. The question then becomes, how should it proceed? According to the CGEIB (2006, p. 21):

> In order to counteract the [asymmetrical] values it is necessary to foster the esteem of [one's] own culture; with regards to the cultural self-esteem, it is fundamental to believe in what [one] is and to recognize [oneself as] creator of culture from that space.

Thus, the road to balancing the so-called asymmetrical "values" should be fostering in the students an appreciation for their native culture and to strengthen their cultural identity. The latter is one of the key concepts that underlie intercultural education, and it is in fact an objective that appears in the thematic analysis and the official description of the purposes of intercultural education (although it is understood in relation to the students' native language). I will address the language issue in Chapter Nine.

CGEIB (2006, p. 19) distinguishes between personal identity (awareness about oneself) and collective identity. Such collective identity anchors the personal identity of the individual and gives him/her a sense of place and belonging (e.g. family, religion, school, etc.). Ethnicity is defined as a collective identity that is developed as opposition to other groups, usually with different degrees of power, which in turn creates a privileged position for the majority and subordination for the minority.

Both personal and collective identities are thought to be complex processes that depend on individual, social and historical factors; however, these identities are subject to transformation depending on cultural referents. The notion of identity adopted by the CGEIB is rather historical

and cultural, not functional, subject to change depending on the goals and strategies of the individual during interaction (see Bucholtz and Hall, 2005). Since cultural identity shapes individuals, it is necessary to strengthen the students' cultural identities, which is one of the purposes of intercultural education:

> [EIB attempts that all the subjects of education] strengthen the knowledge and pride for [one's] own culture as elements to reinforce identity. (CGEIB, 2006, p. 30, my translation)

The issue of strengthening the indigenous' identity is a thorny problem in indigenous education. As I will show below, my indigenous interviewees agree with their mestizo counterparts on the need to foster a positive ethnic identity on the children. The problem becomes the form that this identity should take. Another problem is to decide who helps children strengthen their knowledge and pride of their culture. Indeed, the need to address the identity of indigenous teachers and students is a common theme in both my formal and informal interviews. Particularly in informal conversations with mestizo educators of indigenous teachers, the need to "reindianize" teachers (i.e., reinforce the teacher's ethnic identity) appeared as a pre-condition for any successful educational program. Specially in the linguistic area, where the teachers' refusal to use their language as a medium of instruction in the classroom is taken as an indication of an identity crisis, product of the influence of linguistic ideologies. Certainly, the literature reports (e.g., Vargas, 1994) cases in which indigenous teachers have reinforced their self-identification as members of an ethnic group after they went through school. Bertely (2005) has pointed out the importance of the re-ethnification or reindianization processes in the indigenous political movements of Latin America, particularly that of indigenous teachers, who after being subjected to acculturation processes, should use the community as the basis of their indigenous identity.

However, the idea of reindianizing indigenous teachers may be a paradoxical one because the decision of "returning" the indigenous identity to the teachers seems to be determined by the mestizo educators. Furthermore, the reindianization places indigenous teachers as recipients of the actions of the dominant majority. In any case, what is at the core of the discussion of identity and reindianization is the kind of individual that should be constructed through intercultural education. For my indigenous interviewees, the goal is to create individuals who can identify themselves as indigenous and be an active part of their community (the basis of their identity), and at the same time, be participants in the dynamics of Mexican society and the globalized world. In this sense, they are proposing an intercultural individual. Pablo (National Assembly of Indigenous Immigrants) described what the organization to which he belongs does to help immigrants to keep and strengthen their sense of community. Technology is playing a big role not only in facilitating communication, but also in shaping an indigenous identity that is both modern and collective. In the following excerpt, he talks about a computer lab at their institution, and how technology is being used to keep their identity.

(26)

01 P: ah this is where the indigenous brothers can, [we] can utilize this modern technology to appropriate it and strengthen our community life/
02 but also to utilize it as a tool through the internet to launch our life, our thoughts to the whole world/
03 towards globalization/
04 then ah: the question is to see ah: this polarity let's say/
05 or these extremes, in terms of the indigenous [people] it is a need to strengthen it, it is a need to position in/
06 we define ourselves as indigenous of the twenty first century/
07 not any more that idea of the isolated, cornered indigene/
08 like anthropologists defined it/
09 but we are living the good and the inequalities of this twenty first century/
10 we are suffering or seeing everything that happens in political, social, economic, etcetera, etcetera terms/
11 R: just like the rest of the world/
12 P: just like the rest of the world/

13 exactly/
14 just like the rest of the world/
15 and where we are also utilizing this technology that is utilized/
16 that is let's say universal and in this sense we ah: we utilize the internet page as an appropriation/
17 that contributes to us, we are even seeing that/
18 it strengthens our identity/
19 that's an important element
20 but then there are these two extremes/
21 we want or we are in this need that our collective existence is a need/
22 it is possible, is real and [we] offer it to the world as well/

01 P: que es para este: pues donde los hermanos indígenas puedan, podamos utilizar esta tecnología moderna para apropiárnosla y para fortalecer nuestra vida comunitaria/
02 pero también utilizarlo como herramienta a través del internet para lanzar nuestra vida, nuestro pensamiento hacia el mundo entero/
03 hacia la globalización/
04 entonces este: la cuestión es ver este: esta polaridad digamos/
05 o estos extremos en términos de los propios indígenas que es una necesidad de fortalecerla, que es una necesidad de posicionarla/
06 nosotros nos definimos que somos indígenas del siglo veintiuno/
07 ya no aquella idea del indígena aislado, arrinconado/
08 como lo definían los antropólogos/
09 sino que estamos viviendo los las bondades y las desigualdades de este siglo veintinuno/
10 estamos sufriendo o viendo todo lo que pasa en términos políticos, sociales, económicos, etcétera, etcétera/
11 R: como el resto del mundo/
12 P: como el resto del mundo/
13 exactamente/
14 como el resto del mundo/
15 y donde también estamos utilizando esta tecnología que que está utilizada/
16 que es digamos universal y en ese sentido la la este: utilizamos la página de internet como una apropiación/
17 y que nos contribuye inclusive eso lo estamos viendo/
18 para fortalecer nuestra identidad/
19 ese es un elemento importante/
20 pero entonces hay estos dos extremos/
21 nosotros queremos o estamos en esta en esta necesidad de que nuestra vida colectiva es una necesidad/
22 es posible, es real y ofrecerlo también al mundo/

Pablo describes an indigenous collective in which he includes himself ("so that the indigenous brothers can, [we] can utilize this modern technology…"). This collective is modern

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in that it is able to deal with technological advances and make them part of their culture, which in turn strengthens their community life. Technology also empowers them to interact with the rest of the world and to "launch our life, our thought to the whole world." Pablo rejects the traditional idea about the indigenous individual as someone "isolated and cornered" (adjectives ascribed to them by anthropologists) and positions the new indigenous identity as part of the 21st century, suffering the same vicissitudes that the rest of the world suffers. This is in stark contrast with Jorge's assertion in (29) about the indigenous being naturally isolated; however, Pablo also recognizes that there is an inherent tension between trying to preserve their collective way of life and at the same time being part of modernity. Pablo's discourse represents indigenous people as individuals who are part of the world, but are maintaining their cultural specificity. In addition, Pablo gives agency to the indigenous people. They appear as actors ("we define ourselves that we are indigenous of the 21st century"), empowering themselves through the use of technology and offering their view to the world. The only time they appear as patients of the actions of other agents is when Pablo describes the "idea of the indigenous individual as someone isolated and cornered, as the anthropologists used to define us."

I think that there is some level of consensus between the indigenous actors and the CGEIB. During my interview with Jorge (CGEIB) he discussed the need to sensitize teachers to discrimination and to strengthen the teachers' identity:

(27)

01 J: if one is not strengthened in his primitive identity…everything may come, we are like a fragile tree and we fall down, but if we are strengthened, this coat, these eye glasses are not going to stop who I am, I am who I am, but I use these glasses because I need them, <u>period,</u> I need technology, a computer and that does not make me stop being indigenous, right?

01 J: Si uno no está fortalecido en su identidad primigenia....venga todo lo demás, somos como un árbol frágil y nos caemos, pero, si estamos fortalecidos, este saco, estos lentes no van dejar quien quiera que ser quien soy, yo soy quien soy, pero uso estos lentes porque los necesito, <u>punto</u>, necesito la tecnología, la computadora, y esto no hace que yo deje de ser indígena ¿verdad?/

There is agreement about the need to have a strong identity. Jorge sees the strengthening of the "primitive" identity as a way to coexist with modernity. Commodities such as clothes, glasses and technology cannot change the individual who is sure about his self-identification. Pablo's discourse might be a further development of what Jorge explains. That is, a strengthened identity allows them to be part of the globalized world without undermining their self-concept as indigenous individuals.

7.6.1 Fostering values in order to strengthen identity

Strengthening the indigenous identity is no small endeavor since it deals with values, attitudes, and psychological factors that are difficult to address from a pedagogical point of view. In addition, the subordinated situation of the indigenous peoples makes it difficult to address issues like discrimination, prejudice and racism without ruffling some feathers. CGEIB (2006, p. 48) handles the problem through an education in values that addresses the ethical dimension of intercultural education.

Ethical education is based on the concept of responsibility, which roughly focuses on the individual's ability to make choices in a free (i.e., autonomous) way. In order to be responsible, the students need to develop cognitive and emphatic abilities that allow them to critically think about the different factors that compose a situation, and understand the Other from his/her own point of view. Equality and justice are the two pillars that should guide the students' thoughts

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and actions. According to the CGEIB (2006), intercultural education should foster the following socio-moral values in the students (p. 49-52):

- Self-concept, self-knowledge and self-esteem: having a good opinion about oneself, and being able to know oneself is necessary to acquire a positive identity, which in turn determines autonomy and the ability to relate to others and develop a positive self-esteem.

- Knowledge about the others: this is defined as an emphatic ability that will allow the students to consider and appreciate different points of view, values, attitudes, etc. The final objective is that the student develops a social awareness that goes beyond the self to include larger collectives and finally the human kind.

- Moral reasoning: it implies the capacity to reason in a fair and solidary way. Moral reasoning takes as its basis respect to human rights as the guides of coexistence between cultures, which supposedly will lead to the acknowledgment of those moral values that are universally desirable.

- Communication and dialogue skills: The ability to communicate and negotiate in order to reach agreements in complex moral situations is necessary to engage in intercultural interaction.

- Critical comprehension: this is the ability to analyze complex situations from different points of view in order to understand them and, if possible, to improve them. Basically, it refers to analytical abilities (i.e., paying attention to detail, concentrating, searching and researching data) that allow students to understand and evaluate situations within their particular contexts and act accordingly. The word "critical" in this case is not involved with understanding power imbalances.

- Autonomy: this is the ability to make decisions in an independent, informed and responsible way, and to assume the consequences of such decision making. Autonomic responsibility is the result of acting and making decisions that seem to be correct based on the analysis of the circumstances, and not as a result of external criteria.

These values are related to the skills proposed by Byram (1997) as key elements in developing intercultural skills (discussed in Chapter Four). However, these values did not show up during my interviews with the indigenous teachers. Or rather, they showed up indirectly, as part of wider values that sustain communal life. For instance, Gilberto (principal, San Isidro school) agrees that certain values held by the community should be taught to children in schools:

(28)

01 G: Yes: for example/
02 speaking of values, it should be specified <u>what</u>/
03 I could tell you, well the values that the P'urhépecha tongue has/
04 ah: I identify four great areas of values/
05 one is what in Spanish terms is called solidarity/
06 one is respect/
07 one is tolerance/
08 one is the other famous one, how is it called?
09 loyalty, it can be said in that terms/
10 why?/
11 because in that social context the relations of indigenous peoples move and organize/
12 let's say, in the indigenous peoples does not exist: the acceptation and application of written law, yes?/
13 their own rules that are the basis for tolerance exist, with basis on the valuing of the word of the people [that is] how things are fixed/
14 not precisely at court or with a lawyer/
15 but in that way, I don't know what other types of matters, that exist to solve the problems of the communities/
16 then, there are some of the values/
17 that are being lost/
18 why?
19 because at no moment we treat them in school/
20 it is a matter of solidarity/
21 it is a form of organization that has kept us together for more that five hundred years with the constant bombings or invasions or stepping on the indigenous cultures/
22 that form of organization has kept us/
23 what does that mean?/
24 well, that here in the communities individualism was really kept aside/
25 we are all the community/
26 and that, for instance, the one who did not harvest anything we have the obligation to give him, to give him some corn so he has equal conditions let's say of survival that us, no?/
27 but he is also obliged although he does not have: a corn field/
28 he is obliged to lend his work at the corn field of a neighbor, of a community member

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so he has the right/
29 then all these types of matters, when a house was made/
30 all the community intervened/
31 in a way or other no/
32 well, and in the same dynamics/
33 a person who was receiving help had the obligation to return such help to another
   community member who later would also have the need/

01 G: Si: por ejemplo/
 02 hablando de valores, debe de especificarse que/
 03 yo te podría decir, bueno que valores tiene la lengua P'urhepecha/
 04 ah: yo identifico cuatro grandes campos de valores/
 05 uno que es lo que en términos de español se llama solidaridad/
 06 uno que es el respeto/
 07 uno que es la tolerancia/
 08 y otro que es la famosa, como le llaman?/
 09 la lealtad, se puede decir en ese término/
 10 por qué?/
 11 porque en ese contexto social se mueve y se ordena la relación de los pueblos
    indígenas/
12 digamos en los pueblos indígenas no existe: la aceptación y la aplicación de una ley
   escrita, sí?/
13 entonces existen sus propios reglamentos que son en base a la tolerancia, con base a la
   valoración   de la palabra de las personas como se arreglan las cosas/
14 no precisamente ante un juzgado o ante un abogado/
15 sino que de esa manera, pues hay instancias este correspondientes que pues los
   mayores, las   mayordomías, no se que tipo de cuestiones mas, que existen para
   solucionar los problemas de las   comunidades/
 16 entonces, esos son algunos valores/
 17 que se van perdiendo/
18 por qué?/
19 porque eso en ningún momento lo tratamos en la escuela/
20 en cuestión de solidaridad/
21 o sea que es una forma de organización que nos ha este: nos ha mantenido unidos
   ahora si pues por   más de quinientos anos con los constantes bombardeos o
   invasiones o pisoteos a las culturas indígenas/
22 nos ha mantenido esa forma de organización/
23 a que se refiere eso?/
24 bueno, que aquí en las comunidades realmente se hacia a un lado el individualismo/
25 todos somos la comunidad/
26 y aquel, por ejemplo, el que no cosechó nada tenemos la obligación de darle los, algo
    de maíz para que tenga las iguales condiciones de digamos de sobrevivencia que
    nosotros, no?/
27 pero el también está obligado aunque no tenga: sembradío/
28 él esta obligado también a prestar su trabajo hacia el sembradío de un vecino, de un
   comunero para   que tenga la aveniencia de derecho/

29 entonces todo ese tipo de cuestiones, cuando hacen o hacían una casa/
30 pues toda la comunidad intervenía/
31 de una u otra forma no/
32 y bueno, de ese mismo en esa misma dinámica/
33 esa persona que estaba recibiendo la ayuda tenia la obligación de regresar la ayuda hacia otro   comunero que pues que en lo posterior también tenia la necesidad/

The values defined by Gilberto are in fact "cardinal" points that structure the P'urehépecha society. These values stress the sense of community over individual factors. Contrary to the socio-moral values proposed by the CGEIB, the indigenous values start out with the community and then extend to the individuals. For the CGEIB, the child should first develop their sense of self to then advance to an awareness of "us," and finally to the bigger collective of the human kind (2006, p. 50). For the indigenous peoples, the community is the entity that gives strength and allows the survival of the individuals under the attacks to their culture. Solidarity and reciprocity is what actually structures the relationships between individuals and provides care for all (lines 20- 33). Individuality is actually seen as a problem that has appeared because the values of the P'urehépecha culture have not been taught in school. Gilberto acknowledges that "us" (that is, the teachers and the community) have not addressed cooperation, but individualism. Interestingly, individualism is not only limited to material things, but also academic knowledge, which by tradition is evaluated individually by schools. During my observations in the indigenous classrooms, children worked in small groups, helping each other with the tasks, even ignoring the teacher's requests to work individually. Gilberto's concern about individualism in schools goes directly to the heart of cultural ways of learning that are affected by school practices:

(29)

01 G: In school we are not re-taking that/
02 for instance what happens in school, no?/

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03 "do not lend your pencil"/
04 from the family it begins [the problem] in school/
05 "no, don't tell [him]" we don't let, well, the child to share knowledge with another
   child/
06 and that is called in precise terms individualism/
07 we foster individualism/
08 against cooperation, no?/

01 G: En la escuela tampoco no estamos retomando eso/
02 por ejemplo que pasa en la escuela, no?/
03 "Pues no prestes el lápiz"/
04 desde la familia ya empieza en la escuela, no?/
05 "No, no le digas que" o sea no dejamos, vaya, que el niño comparta los conocimientos
   con otro niño/
06 y eso se llama en términos asi precisos, individualismo/
07 fomentamos el individualismo/
08 en contra de la cooperatividad, no?/

I think that the values proposed by the official policies and the values upheld by the communities illustrate the debates around individual vs. community values and rights. Kymlicka (1999) and Taylor (1994) have pointed out that liberal societies emphasize personal freedom and responsibility, whereas communitarian societies focus on the prevalence of the community over individualism (see Chapter Four for an in-depth discussion). This is not to say that indigenous teachers would reject some of the proposals of CGEIB regarding the strengthening of identity and development of sociocultural values (i.e., having a strong cultural identity, self-esteem, respect for others' opinions and cultures, communication skills, etc.,); however, the community and service to the community should have prevalence over other factors, because it is the community that gives foundation to the indigenous individual. As Pablo (National Assembly of Indigenous Immigrants) pointed out, it is the acknowledgment of the community, as well as the participation in it that makes an individual indigenous. Elements such as language, dress and music are elements that help to build the community, but what is at the core of identity is the participation of the individual in the community. For instance, ritual charges (i.e., *mayordomías*)

during traditional celebrations of the community, or non-paid work in favor of the community

(i.e., *tequio*).

(30)

01 P: for example what we could translate/
02 an important element is the communality/
03 It is an element that defined and don Bul already characterized it/
04 that is no more than that conception e: of e: living in community and communal practice/
05 of that way of life that includes the systems of charges, the tequio work/
06 ah: participation in celebrations/
07 this collective construction, mentally speaking as well/
08 it is what I think one of the/
09 it is the main axis through which we should define ourselves as indigenous peoples/
10 the rest are elements that may favor the construction of communality/
11 it is the tongue/
12 it is dress/
13 it is music/
14 it is solidarity, no not solidarity/
15 ah: e: etcetera, etcetera/
16 these elements that ah can [be] the same things in practical terms/
17 the same charge systems/
18 the same mayordomías/
19 the same, these different forms are elements to construct our communality/
20 but at the moment in which there is this perception of this intrinsic attitude of being communitarian/
21 of being solidary/
22 of being participative in the community/
23 at that moment/
24 that is to say, of assuming charges without big problems of not wanting to attend, of not wanting to go, of participating in the celebration or the tequio/
25 That people already knows what their communitarian responsibilities are and they assume it/
26 as long as ah:/
27 in this sense it consolidates or has consolidated the communality/
28 and those are the main elements to define themselves as indigenous/
29 we think/
30 it is not a matter of dressing in a certain way/
31 and we can refer a little to the so-called self-adscription/

01 P: por ejemplo nosotros lo que podríamos traducir/
02 un elemento importante es la comunalidad/
03 es un elemento que define y ya lo caracterizó don Bul/
04 que no es más que esa concepción e: de e: vivir en comunidad y de esa práctica

comunitaria/

05 de esa forma de vida que incluye los sistemas de cargos, el trabajo de tequio/

06 este: la participación de las fiestas/

07 esta construcción colectiva, mentalmente hablando también si/

08 es yo creo que uno de los/

09 es el principal eje por el cual nos debemos definir como pueblos indígenas/

10 lo demás son elementos que pueden favorecer a construir la comunalidad/

11 que es la lengua/

12 que es la vestimenta/

13 que es la música/

14 que es la solidaridad, no la solidaridad no/

15 este: e.. etcétera, etcétera/

16 estos elementos que este pueden las mismas en términos prácticos/

17 los mismos sistemas de cargos/

18 las mismas mayordomías/

19 las mismas, estas distintas formas son elementos para construir nuestra comunalidad/

20 pero en el momento en que haya esta percepción o esta actitud intrínseca de ser comunitario/

21 de ser solidario/

22 de ser participativos en la comunidad/

23 en ese momento/

24 es decir, de asumir los cargos sin grandes problemas de que no quiero asistir, de que no quiero ir, de participar en la fiesta o en el tequio/

25 que ya la gente sabe de cuáles son sus responsabilidades comunitarias y ya la va asumiendo/

26 en esa medida va este:/

27 en ese sentido se va consolidando o tiene consolidado la cuestión de la comunalidad/

28 y ese son de los principales elementos para definirse como indígenas/

29 nosotros pensamos/

30 no es no es una cuestión de que me vista de tal manera/

31 y eso nos podemos remitir un poco a la famosa autoadscripción/

Thus, it would follow that an approach that focuses on strengthening the person's self-identification may not be enough for the indigenous communities since fostering individualism undermines the very basis of the community. Intercultural education attempts to develop in the individual collaboration skills and solidarity as a way to facilitate peaceful coexistence among people of different cultures, but the individual is still the focus of the intervention, not the community. Although the community is supposed to be included, the purposes of intercultural education are not directly aimed at the community in the way it is understood by the indigenous

peoples; rather, the effects of intercultural education are supposed to flow from the individual to the community, to the region, to the country and finally, to the world. In this sense, the official objectives of intercultural education are atoned with the more general liberal objectives of the educational system as to the construction of a citizen and a worker who is able to act independently and coexist in the globalized world.

Figure 5 explains the role of identity and the individual's relation to the community and the global world. In the first map, the community is the basis of the individual's identity, which enables her to interact with the global world. Such interaction, in turn, helps reconnect the individual to the community. On the other hand, the official concept of identity acknowledges the connections between the individual and the community, but the individual is at the center of the model. In both the indigenous and the official point of view, intercultural education should be focused on strengthening children identity through fostering socio-moral values.
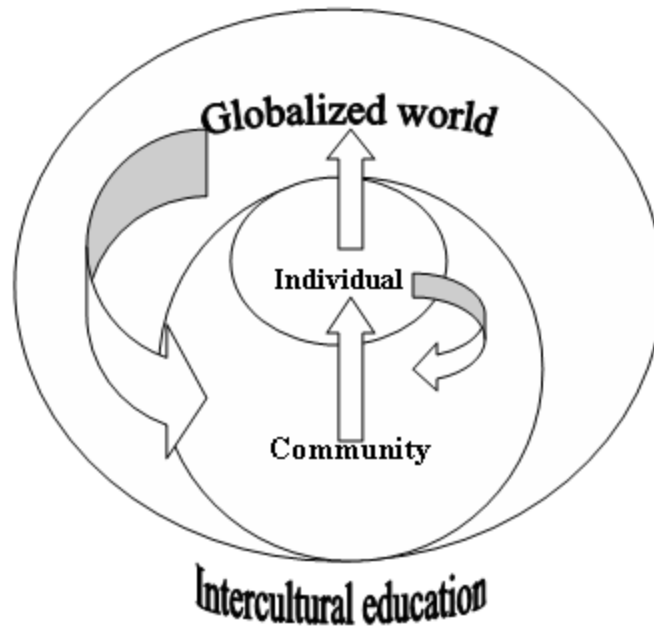
Figure 5. Intercultural education and identity

7.7 CONCLUSIONS OF THIS CHAPTER

The objective of this chapter was to explore how official policy documents and the participants of this project defined the purposes of intercultural education. Just as in the case of its definition, the picture that emerged showed competing discourses. Although some times there are coincidences, there are also subtle differences which are reflected in the participants' speech and in the policies' texts.

The emergent themes show what is relevant for the participants, and their underlying ideologies, which is further shown in their discursive stances. The themes that emerged in the analysis are not unrelated; rather, they are connected by the overarching themes of diversity and culture.

Indeed, it is only under the framework of diversity that rights, discrimination, cultural identity and values may be understood within intercultural education. The official discourse acknowledges diversity as the defining characteristic of the country. However, such acknowledgement is not clear cut. There are strong discontinuities between affirming that the nation is one and indivisible, and then affirming that it is also pluricultural. Furthermore, there are also contradictions in acknowledging the indigenous peoples as the origin of the multicultural nature of the country and then lumping them together with other minorities. The teachers' criticism to the conception of "homogeneous diversity" that is being presented by the educational system shows that a new definition of diversity may have to be reached. It is also clear that the official Discourse on intercultural education acknowledges that ethnic difference cannot be equated to other types of difference, but approaching the problem of diversity from a cultural

perspective only deflects away essential issues that perpetuate the dominated position of the ethnic minorities.

Diversity is a fact of life, but acknowledging difference does not necessarily mean appreciating it, and appreciating diversity may not necessarily change the structural and ideological factors that created discrimination and domination in the first place. Interestingly, this very fact can be seen in the official texts and the participants' discourse, where subtle discriminating attitudes have leaked despite their progressive agenda.

The goal of strengthening the students' identity is perhaps the one that more explicitly coincides with the official objectives, and certainly, there seems to be a degree of agreement between the indigenous and the mestizo actors regarding the need to strengthen the children's identities and their cultural values. But then again, there are differences as to what values should be fostered and the type of individual that should emerge from fostering these values: one who emphasizes her individualism or the community's interests.

The discontinuities between the official discourse and the indigenous actors show cracks through which the underlying ideologies ooze. Despite the sanctioned objectives of intercultural education about diversity, there seems to be a pull towards homogenizing ideology, and more gravely for the indigenous communities, towards individuality. However, as the discourse of the indigenous actors also shows, there is resistance and criticism. Some of the stories told by the indigenous actors not only illustrate their experiences or stances towards the intercultural model, they also show how the teachers position themselves with respect to the dominant discourse and how they exert their collective agency.

CHAPTER 8. THE DIRECTIONALITY OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION: THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY AND TEACHERS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Because of its scope, intercultural education is aimed not only at cultural and linguistic minorities. On the contrary, intercultural education implies the participation and re-education (so to speak) of society at large. As I showed in Chapter Three, the history of indigenous education emphasized indigenous individuals acquiring communicative skills that would allow them to participate and eventually be incorporated into mainstream society. The mestizo culture was the cultural and linguistic referent to achieve. The burden to become culturally and linguistically competent was placed on the shoulders of the indigenous children, while the mestizo population remained impervious to any responsibility about learning to interact with their indigenous counterparts.

Intercultural education implies – at least at the epistemological level – the participation of the whole population. Interculturality presupposes that cultural homogeneity is inexistent, and even within the dominant group there are differences. From this point of view, it does not make sense to speak about majorities or minorities. Therefore, intercultural education should be aimed at the population in general. In this chapter, I will explore the directionality of intercultural education. That is, how both policy documents and the participants of the project describe the

roles and obligations of indigenous and mestizo peoples in the construction of intercultural education. I will also explore how the roles of two important actors, communities and teachers, are defined by official texts and the interviewees. The thematic analysis yielded 5 themes:

1) The directionality of intercultural education.

2) The (im)possibility of dialogue.

3) The intercultural nature of indigenous peoples.

4) The role of the community in intercultural education.

5) The role of the teachers in intercultural education.

By exploring these themes, it will be possible to unveil how power imbalances appear in the social relationships between the mestizo and indigenous people proposed by the intercultural model.

8. 2 THE DIRECTIONALITY OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

The official discourse establishes that intercultural education should be for everybody, which not necessarily has been the case. In the following quote, the National Plan of Education emphasizes that the work towards cultural recognition has been traditionally done at indigenous schools when it should be carried out "in all modalities and all types":

> The acknowledgment of multiculturality is limited to bilingual schools directed at indigenous children, when it should be present in all modalities and types. Above all it is the non-indigenous people that have to value the diversity that founds our richness as a nation. (National Program of Education, 2001, p. 63, my translation).

The Non-indigenous population is now given the obligation to value diversity through the deontic expression "*have to* value." The text singles mestizos out ("it is *above all* the *non-indigenous ones* who should value") by creating a presupposition for the reader that indicates

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that non-indigenous peoples have not been involved in knowing the multicultural condition of the country; however, the initial presupposition is mitigated by the use of "above all," which indicates that even indigenous peoples have participated in ignoring diversity. This move distributes responsibility for valuing diversity between mestizo and indigenous peoples, even though the intended objective seems to emphasize the need to involve mainstream schools and non-indigenous peoples in the recognition of diversity.

It is also interesting to observe that the authors avoid openly using the term "general schools" (which is used in official documents) when referring to schools, preferring the term "all modalities and types." In the same way, instead of using the word "mestizo," the text prefers the euphemism "non-indigenous," which is consistent with the idea of rejecting the mestizo identity in favor of multiculturalism. However, the term "non-indigenous," although more vague, is not devoid of ideological implications. *Mestizaje* is a racial mixture that attempts cultural homogenization. Separating the population between indigenous and "non-indigenous" creates divisions along racial lines in addition to ignoring that the majority of the population has indigenous roots.

The interest on addressing the cultural diversity of the country sets the basis for the creation of the CGEIB, which as I explained before, is the governmental office in charge of implementing intercultural education at a national level. Its objectives are as follows:

1) To improve the quality of education aimed at indigenous populations.

2) To promote intercultural bilingual education aimed at indigenous populations.

to all levels of schooling.

3) To develop an intercultural education for all Mexicans. (CGEIB. Accessed September 10th, 2007)

Two out of the three stated objectives of the CGEIB are aimed solely at the indigenous population. Objective one addresses the problem of increasing the quality of the education for indigenous minorities; however, the National Program of Education acknowledges that low achievement levels affect different sectors of the general population − not only the indigenous one − hence, the need to increase the quality, coverage and equality of education in the country. Certainly, as I have mentioned in Chapter One, the indigenous students have the lowest achievement levels and the higher drop-out rates as well as school failure; however, objective one concentrates on the indigenous population only, despite the low levels of educational outcomes in the country. Objective two also addresses the indigenous population and further specifies that intercultural education should be "promoted" at all levels of indigenous education. This starkly contrasts with objective three, which is wide enough to include the whole population (or "all Mexicans"). Thus, although intercultural education is supposed to be for "all," it ends up focusing mainly on the indigenous groups, which reinforces the idea of difference. Even worse, intercultural education falls in the trap that is trying to eliminate: By offering a differentiated type of education to indigenous children, it implicitly establishes a hierarchy between groups. That is to say, one is already part of the system, and the other needs to be incorporated.

This focus on the indigenous populations first caused negative reactions against intercultural education on the part of the indigenous educators and leaders. In his interview, Pablo (National Assembly of Immigrants) strongly rejected the model of intercultural education because it was proposed as an "obligation" for the indigenous population:

(31)

01 P: It is defined as an obligation of the indigenous peoples/
02 of the indigenous peoples e: it is their obligation to learn to educate themselves in an intercultural way /
03 that is to say, ah: now there is a book that defines exactly that the Indian, indigenous boy and girl will have to value his local culture, his national culture, ah:/
04 and will have to learn to respect other cultures/
05 there are very hard, very hard terms that define such a definition/
06 I believe that the definition is very nice/
07 but if it were applied as a need of the human kind/
08 as a need of Mexican society/

01 P: la define como una obligación del de los pueblos indígenas/
02 de los pueblos indígenas e: su obligación a aprender a educarse interculturalmente/
03 es decir, este ahorita hay una libro que lo define exactamente que el indio, el niño y la niña indígena deberá a valorar su cultura local, su cultura nacional, este:/
04 y deberá aprender a respetar las otras culturas/
05 hay términos muy duros, muy duros que define esa definición/
06 yo creo que la definición es muy bonita/
07 pero si fuera aplicada como una necesidad de la humanidad/
08 como una necesidad de la sociedad mexicana/

The speech acts (Searle, 1979) used by Pablo in 02-04 can be considered as directives (i.e., attempts by the speaker to get the hearer to do something) even though they are stated as assertions. Lozano (1990) argues that although imperatives in Spanish are the unmarked form to express obligations or prohibitions, there are other indirect ways which carry the same pragmatic implications but do not take the imperative form. For instance, deontic modality encompasses diverse syntactic patterns and lexical items, and also provides the means to express commands or obligations. Expressions such as "it is their obligation" or "they should learn" may be understood as imperative-like structures. Thus, Pablo perceives intercultural education as a command directed at indigenous peoples. It is an imposition in which the indigene has no say because they are constructed as the recipients of the orders of DGEI, which defined the behavior and the values that indigenous children should have. Pablo expresses an authoritarian attitude in which

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orders are not mitigated. He also emphasizes the harshness and difficulties of such actions through qualifying them by repeating the adjective "hard." Finally, Pablo points out that such definition of intercultural education would be very nice if it were defined as a need of all human kind, and all Mexican society (not just indigenous); however, the use of the imperfect subjunctive[49] and conditional forms reflects his skepticism and relegates the "application" of intercultural education to an improbability, or at minimum, the least likely situation that may occur.

Skepticism about the bidirectional character of intercultural education is a constant topic in the discourse of the indigenous interviewees. Even though the idea of interculturality is perceived as a need of Mexican society, there is doubt and uncertainty about the Mexican State accepting the changes necessary to establish an intercultural relationship with the ethnic minorities. For instance, in his interview, Julio (Ce-Acatl) defines interculturality as a fact of life in Mexican society, which has been either ignored or erased (lines 02-03). Interculturality is also an acknowledgment of the cultural potential and richness of a diverse society. In this sense, Julio's ideas overlap with the official ones that see diversity as a source of cultural richness (lines 06-07). Interculturality should start at an individual level and advance to the communal and social ones (lines 08-09), which implies again the collective agency of the group and even political rights:

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[49] Serrano (2006) argues that in Spanish, the –ra form of the imperfect subjunctive ("si *fuera* aplicada como una necesidad de la humanidad") is used to imply a greater possibility of occurrence, whereas the form –se ("si *fuese* aplicada como una necesidad de la humanidad) implies less likelihood. However, this distinction may not apply to Mexican Spanish since the form –se is mostly restricted to formal writing.

(32)

01 J: It is a consciousness-making process/
02 finally what I believe is that everything is set on the acknowledgement of reality/
03 that is to say, many times it is about deliberately ignoring, [they] want to ignore it/
04 [they] want to erase it from history, no? from textbooks, anyway/
05 and that does nothing but generate conflicts or delay them/
06 or simply trying to hush them and not to acknowledge the way we are and not to value the potential that a society as diverse as Mexican has, [it] is to close ourselves to a source of I would say of alternatives/
07 interculturality I think/
08 goes through a consciousness-making process of who we are as persons, as a community, as a group, as a complex society/
09 and it goes too through the acknowledgement of the rights that each of these groups, that each of these peoples, that each of these communities have/

01 J: Pues es una toma de conciencia/
02 finalmente yo lo que creo es que todo está cifrado en el reconocimiento de la realidad/
03 es decir, muchas veces se trata de ignorar deliberadamente, se le quiere negar/
04 se le quiere borrar ahora de la historia, no? de los libros de texto en fin/
05 y eso no hace más que generar más conflictos o postergarlos/
06 o simplemente el tratar de acallarlos y no reconocernos como somos y no valorar las potencialidades que tiene una sociedad tan diversa como la mexicana pues es cerrarnos a nosotros mismos una fuentes inagotable diría yo de alternativas/
07 la interculturalidad pienso yo/
08 pasa por la toma de conciencia de lo que somos como personas, como comunidad, como grupo, como sociedad compleja/
09 y pasa también por el reconocimiento de los derechos que tiene cada uno de estos grupos de cada uno de estos pueblos, de cada una de estas comunidades/

In line 04 Julio talks about the attempt to erase "reality" from textbooks. Here he is referring to the reform of secondary education in 2003. As part of the new curriculum for secondary schools, the subject matters of history, ethics and civic education were tried to eliminate from the plan of studies and textbooks of first grade. The reform was severely criticized because the exclusion of such subject matters would have negative effects on the children's national consciousness, and because it was incongruous with the goal of acknowledging the importance of the indigenous population and the multicultural character of the country. Because of the perception of intercultural education being an imposition for the

indigenous communities, and actions such as the ones reported by Julio, the indigenous actors have considered intercultural education as unidirectional. Certainly, CGEIB has emphasized the bilateral character of intercultural education, which is reflected in its work in indigenous and non-indigenous schools, and its very administrative capacities (it deals both with indigenous and general schools). However, as I showed above, there are discontinuities between the official objectives aimed at the general population and the emphasis on indigenous education. Such emphasis has singled out the indigenous peoples, which in turn has reinforced the perception of unidirectionality.

One of the objectives of establishing intercultural education as a bidirectional process is the establishment of egalitarian relationships between groups, and eventually a new distribution of power between social groups. Such egalitarian relationships are supposed to be achieved through intercultural dialogue. In the following section, I will discuss how the participants in the project understand dialogue and the possibilities to achieve it.

8.3 THE (IM)POSSIBILITY OF DIALOGUE

Epistemologically, interculturality implies a dialogic relationship between the parties. Fornet-Betancourt (2000) argues that intercultural dialogue is key for the establishment of egalitarian relationships, which in fact can lead to cultural reorganization and response to phenomena such as globalization and neoliberalism. Dialogue implies cultural openness, which in turn helps individuals analyze the relativity of their own culture's beliefs. Such reflection may open the possibility of change between intercultural relations. These steps prepare cultures to know

themselves and to engage in intercultural dialogue. From Fornet-Betancourt's point of view, dialogue is an ethical project:

> "…guided by the value of the reception that the other as a reality with whom one desires to share sovereignty and with whom, consequently, can share a future that is not determined solely by one's own manner of comprehending and desiring life. In Sartrian terms, I would say that intercultural dialogue is a project that aspires to the restructuring of relations between persons and their cultures, opting for the universalization of principles of co-autonomy and co-sovereignty as modes of life that concretize and realize the "plan" of freedom in and for everyone". (Fornet-Betancourt, 2000, para. 38)

Interculturalism, stemming from a liberal tradition, stresses personal freedom, individual responsibility and reflection about the individual's culture and cultural practices. CGEIB moves along this line of reasoning when it proposed educational actions that are based on self-reflection, values and cultural relativity (see Chapter Seven).

Intercultural dialogue has at its core the solution of conflicts that emerge on the coexistence of different cultural groups, whose different interests, ideologies and ways to see the world may clash. CGEIB considers dialogue as something inherent to diversity. In addition, dialogue is seen as an opportunity for development because the resolution of conflicts leads to mutual enrichment and to the confrontation of unfair social structures (2006, p. 53). As in other cases, CGEIB adopts a non-conflictive or equilibrium perspective regarding the solution of conflicts and the abilities that children have to learn in order to solve such problems. Basically, children need to develop negotiating skills in order to come to an agreement without imposing one over the other. To foster these negotiation skills, teachers must create in the classroom an environment in which students feel comfortable and free to communicate and cooperate, but above all, that children acquire analytic abilities and knowledge to solve conflicts and achieve solutions.

As García *et al.* (1997) have pointed out, knowledge is not a product of the academia, science or merely a cognitive operation. On the contrary, knowledge is developed within specific social conditions and has certain social functions. Therefore, proposing that students should possess cultural knowledge about themselves and the others also implies specifying what the students should be able to do with such knowledge (both inside and outside of the classroom). That is, including intercultural dialogue as a part of the curriculum in intercultural education forms part of an educational policy that has effects on shaping the type of citizens and workers that are educated for the future.

The National Program of Education points out that the country is at a transitional moment in the areas of population, economy, society and politics. In addition, the country is under transformation because of the effects of globalization and democratization processes. Because of these challenges, the country requires that education contributes to the development of a national identity rooted on democratic values. The Program establishes that

> The potential of education as effective factor for the affirmation of collective identity depends on its capacity to create, promote and organize spaces for dialogue and agreement about the interpretation of the world, about the values that should rule individual and social behavior, about acknowledging and valuing their own identity and the foreign one, and about the practical exercise of an ethical behavior (National Program of Education, 2001, p. 44, my translation)

The creation of a collective − or national − identity depends on the capacity of education to instill in children values that are agreeable with the democratic principles of dialogue, respect to diverse points of view and ethics. Hence CGEIB's emphasis in proposing as the main axes of intercultural education ethical and cognitive dimensions; however, intercultural dialogue requires more than knowledge or values. As I have indicated in Chapter Four, one of the problems of intercultural education is to specify the type of intercultural competencies that students should

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have. The knowledge of other cultures, although necessary, it is not sufficient to develop the type of skills that are necessary to interact with other groups. The studies of Kasper and Blum-Kulka (1993; also see Martin-Rojo, 2003) have shown that linguistic knowledge is insufficient at the moment of interaction because there are sociopragrmatic and pragmalinguistic elements that interfere with communication. Gumperz (1982) has also shown that differences in patterns of communication, as well as power differences cause communication break downs. At a macro level, Kramsch (2002) argues that emphasis on communication as a panacea to solve all problems emerging from interaction may be insufficient for power differences and violence. Therefore, it is necessary to reflect on factors that go beyond knowledge of the target language, dialogue and the democratic values that intercultural education attempts to encompass. CGEIB defines in the following way the competencies that children should develop:

> Education in and for interculturality also means to form in value and attitudes, and it implies to develop ethic competencies indispensable to create a fair and peaceful society through dialogue and the coexistence between the peoples and individuals of different cultures. Among these competencies are knowledge, understanding, respect and appreciation for the diverse cultures that conform society; increase of the communication capacity and interaction with people from different cultures, and to foster favorable attitudes to the multiplicity of ways of life. (CGEIB, 1006, p. 26, my translation).

The model of intercultural education adopted by CGEIB assumes that communication can solve the problems stemming from cultural coexistence. Because of its' emphasis on communication, the model overlooks an essential piece in a dialogic relationship: good intercultural dialogue can only be possible when there is a relationship between equals. As Carbonell (2003) points out, intercultural dialogue demands equality, otherwise a power imbalance may lead to imposition instead of trust, which is an ethical dimension necessary to reduce the complexity of the intercultural relation.

In critical pedagogy, dialogue has taken a prevalent place both as a practical and theoretical referent. Dialogue has been synonymous with tolerance, equality, democracy and liberation (see Shor and Freire, 1987). However, dialogic pedagogy has been criticized on the grounds that it is in fact an exercise of power from the majority in order to perpetuate its hegemony. The very conditions the make dialogue possible imply a de-centering of the majority, which should make "room" for the voices of the minorities to be heard (Jones, 1999). Without such space, dialogue could not be possible. The opening of such space implies that dialogue can only take place within the parameters established by the majority, effectively limiting the possibility for disenfranchised groups to express themselves outside of the appropriate channels of communication. Thus, dialogue may be a restrictive way to manage conflict, because if it fails, the solution is limited to only one other option to solve problems: more dialogue (Burbules, 2000). Second, by emphasizing consensus, or rather consensus building, it overlooks conflict and its role in social change (Apple, 1975).

The dialogic relationship proposed by the CGEIB is broken because the indigenous counterparts see dialogue as impossible because of the relationship between the State and the Mexican people. For instance, in Pablo's interview (National Assembly of Indigenous Migrants) intercultural dialogue is considered a need that cannot be avoided, but there are several impediments. To my question about the odds to carry out an intercultural dialogue, Pablo answers positively. When he describes the attempts of the indigenous and other individuals of civil society − with whom he establishes ties of solidarity through the words "non-indigenous brothers" − Pablo explains that the indigenous actually live an intercultural relationship through their practices (lines 09-13). For Pablo, civil society (i.e., indigenous and non-indigenous individuals) is working towards an intercultural coexistence despite the history of fear and

ignorance that the State has stilled in them as a result of colonialism. It is interesting to see that Pablo resorts to the word "non-indigenous" as a strategy to extend a net of solidarity to the rest of civil society. A similar move has been done in the National Program of Education, where the term "mestizo" was avoided to refer to the "non-indigenous" population. In both cases, it seems to have the same objective: to eliminate the implications that the word mestizo indexes. Elinor Ochs (1992) uses the term indexing to explain the indirect relationship between linguistic forms and social meaning. The notion of indexicality is related to a class of signs known as indexes whose meaning is not determined by their linguistic properties, but by the context in which they appear and the meaning that is conventionally associated with them. Thus, by not using the word mestizo, Pablo effectively avoids the implications that it has historically acquired: cultural homogenization and social domination.

According to Pablo, Mexican society has also been socialized into an ideology that sees "the indigenous" as inferior and not worthy of learning (lines 17-20), but despite this rejection, there is a de facto coexistence between the indigenous and non-indigenous cultures, which makes possible intercultural dialogue. Thus at the social level, intercultural dialogue will happen, but this is conditioned to a change in the relationship with the State.

(33)

01 J: it, it is possible/
02 it is very possible because there is even proof/
03 but from the State it has not been possible because of a series of fears/
04 of ah: how can we call it?/
05 there us a term ah: of traumas that the very State has built from the conquest/
06 but it is as if it could not exist/
07 but we have seen it in practice/
08 what have we seen?/
09 here to this communal space non-indigenous brothers have come /
10 and we show them and expressed that/
11 and many of them ah: are surprised or interested in integrating themselves in this way/

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12 in our celebrations, in our celebrations that we made, indigenous. Zapotecs,
    P'urhépechas/
13 our non-indigenous brothers go/
14 and then what is it, what is it?/
15 in general, people in practice/
16 this is a possibility and it is an opportunity to mix/
17 what happens is that as Mexicans [they] have formed us [thinking] that what is
    indigenous is something unknown/
18 or even ignored or ignorant/
19 and therefore it is not subject to be learned/
20 it is not subject to be co-existed/
21 this is the ah: vertebral problem of this matter/
22 but what there is a:/
23 it is possible in practical terms the social relationship/
24 it is not po: it will take a long road that's true/
25 in educational terms because it has to go through a transformation of the state/

01 J: lo, lo es posible/
02 es muy posible porque hay pruebas inclusive/
03 si bien desde el estado no ha sido posible por una serie de miedos/
04 de este: de cómo le podemos llamar?/
05 hay un término este: e: de traumas que tiene el propio estado construido desde la
    conquista/
06 pues hay como que si no pudiera existir/
07 pero nosotros lo hemos visto en la práctica/
08 qué hemos visto?/
09 aquí en este espacio comunitario han venido hermanos no indígenas/
10 y les plateamos y les expresamos esto/
11 y muchos de ellos este: pues se quedan sorprendidos o interesados a integrarse en esta
    forma/
12 en nuestras fiestas, en nuestras fiestas que se hacen, indígenas, zapotecas,
    p'urhépechas/
13 van los hermanos no indígenas/
14 y entonces qué es qué es?/
15 en lo general, la gente en la práctica/
16 ésto es una posibilidad y es una oportunidad de combinación/
17 lo que pasa es que como mexicanos nos han formado que lo indígena es algo
    desconocido/
18 o incluso ignorado o ignorante/
19 y por lo tanto no es no es sujeto de aprenderse/
20 no es sujeto de convivirse/
21 ése es el problema este: vertebral de este asunto pues/
22 pero lo que si es que hay una:/
23 es posible en términos prácticos de la e: de la relación social/
24 no es po: llevará yo creo que su camino, eso sí/
25 en términos educativos porque tiene que pasar por una transformación del estado/

Interestingly, Pablo continues his answer talking about the intercultural education model proposed by the Mexican State and his rejection of it for considering an imposition to the indigenous groups (see 38). As I explained in the previous section, the modal expressions used by Pablo reflect his perception of intercultural education as an imposition, which in turn shows the indigenous' lack of agency and an imbalance of power between the parties. As noted previously, the parties are supposed to be engaged in a dialogue between equals. Pablo's answer is emblematic of the indigenous actors' position regarding intercultural dialogue between the State and the indigenous populations. Civil society seems to be doing in practice the work that the State is unable (or unwilling) to do because of the history of domination and fear rooted on a colonial relationship. However, although the civil society seems to be open to dialogue and interaction, it is the indigenous population that has been per se intercultural, and it is the mestizo people who should open up to dialogue. I will explore this issue in the following section.

8.4 THE INTERCULTURAL CHARACTER OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

As part of their survival strategies, indigenous groups have acquired intercultural skills that have allowed them to interact − although not in a balanced way − with the mestizo population. As I indicated in excerpt 35, Chapter Seven, Pedro (San Isidro school) explained that indigenous groups have been intercultural. He understands that we are all human beings and respects this fact, which has not been done by the majority group.

Along the same lines, indigenous educator José (Cherán normal school) explains that interculturality is not new to the indigenous communities. In fact, it has been them who have

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been open to teach their knowledge, language and culture, and at the same time, have learned the mestizo culture. On the other hand, mestizos have maintained their distance and kept to themselves. José's discourse is a reversal of the official version, in which indigenous peoples have isolated themselves and refused to integrate to the "national" culture:

(34)

01 J: Because ah:/
02 I say that for us the intercultural always existed/
03 R: uhu/
04 J: or rather, e: interculturality does not exist for mestizos/
05 because sometimes they isolate themselves/
06 because all those who are from here e: we are going to transmit to them all knowledge/
07 those who are not from ah:/
08 from our language, right?/
09 from our culture, well no/
10 they do not even understand us, yes?/
11 what for?/
12 we have coexisted/
13 we learn [have learned] well the the: mestizo culture, the indigenous [one]/ *
14 but mestizos haven't/
15 they are just [stayed in their] culture/

01 J: Porque eh:/
02 Yo digo que para nosotros eso de intercultural existe desde siempre/
03 R: uhu/
04 J: más bien,e: la interculturalidad no existe para los mestizos/
05 porque ellos pues se apartan a veces/
06 todos los que son de acá pues este: les vamos a transmitir todos los conocimientos/
07 aquellos los que no son de este/
08 de nuestra lengua, verdad?/
09 de nuestra cultura, pues no/
10 es más no nos entienden, si?/
11 para qué?/
12 nosotros pues sí hemos convivido/
13 hemos aprendemos pues la la: cultura mestiza, la indígena/
14 pero los mestizos no/
15 ellos nada mas es pues su cultura/

Gilberto (San Isidro school) also manifests the same skepticism. In his interview, he answers my question about how to prepare children to engage in intercultural dialogue. Gilberto answers by pointing out that such a question must be focused from a domination perspective, in which the indigenous languages and cultures have been oppressed and have been the objects of the actions of the majority. He uses an impersonal expression (line 07 "Porque al estar dominados siempre se ha hecho de la lengua y la cultura indígena lo que se… quiso no?/ : Because of us being dominated [they] have done of the indigenous language and culture whatever [they] wanted, no?) to refer to such domination, effectively erasing the cause of the process of domination (See Kress and Hodge, 1979); however, just as Llorente Maldonado (1982) has pointed out, the elimination of the subject may be due to the fact that it is known both to the listener and speaker, so there is no need to reinstate it. So, perhaps for this reason the speaker does not state openly who the oppressors are; however, Gilberto clearly emphasizes the lack of agency of indigenous peoples by using the expression "se ha hecho lo que se quiso," which is used to express lack of power or victimization. The indigenous peoples appear as objects of the will of the majority, but in positioning them as victims, Gilberto remarks the "moral grammar" of indigenous peoples (Leyva, 2005). In line 06, by using an adverb that reflects certainty, Gilberto commits to the truth of the proposition: that indigenous are "unquestionably" open to dialogue, despite the domination they have suffered. This movement both reinforces their moral authority and displaces the responsibility on the mestizos. The point for Gilberto is not whether the indigenous peoples are willing to engage in dialogue with the majority, but to what extent the "national culture and language" are open to dialogue, and to what extent they would allow the indigenous languages and cultures to develop.

(35)

01 G: I believe that that question about the basis of an education that has been done/
02 where I say well, I believe that the indigenous peoples, culture and the very same language/
03 e: for a very long time have been exposed to domination/
04 on the part of the dominant language and culture, no?/
05 in terms of whether or not we are open to dialogue/
06 I believe that it is unquestionable/
07 because of us being dominated [they] have done of the indigenous language and culture whatever [they] wanted, no?/
08 then I would ask the contrary/
09 to what extent the national culture and language is open to such dialogue/
10 and to what extent such national culture and language/
11 allows the development of languages ah: let's say subordinated for a long time/

01 G: Yo creo que esa pregunta en base a una educación en donde la han hecho/
02 donde yo digo bueno, creo que los pueblos indígenas, la cultura y la lengua misma/
03 e: mucho tiempo ha estado expuesta a una dominación/
04 por parte de la cultura y lengua dominante, no?/
05 en términos de que si estamos abiertos a ese diálogo/
06 creo que es incuestionable/
07 porque al estar dominados siempre se ha hecho de la lengua y la cultura indígena lo que se quiso, no?/
08 entonces yo preguntaría al revés/
09 qué tanto la cultura y la lengua nacional está está abierto a ese diálogo/
10 y qué tanto esa cultura nacional y esa lengua nacional/
11 permite el desarrollo de las lenguas este: digamos subordinadas por mucho tiempo/

Then again, we find the shadow of an unequal relationship because it is the "national culture and national language" (not the people) that that may not be open to dialogue, and the one that can decide the extent to which the subordinated cultures may develop. José and Gilberto's criticisms about the mestizo majority are in fact quite common. Jones (1999) argues that minority groups are immersed in the world of the dominant groups and experience it everyday. It is the exclusion created by the powerful that has created in them *an inability to hear* the voice of the Other (p. 307, emphasis in the original). Selective deafness has been confused with the silence (or lack of incorporation in this case) of the subaltern, which in turn, reproduces

and reinforces their exclusion. Thus, it is not the subordinates that need to cross the border, but the majority needs to learn how to listen.

Despite this skepticism, the indigenous actors acknowledge the need to engage in a dialogue with the mestizo society, but not under the current circumstances because it would be "very difficult under these conditions." Interestingly, it may be intercultural education that is the very factor that facilitates dialogue between the indigenous and majority cultures. Then, what are the conditions for that dialogue to take place? The indigenous proposal is quite complex. First, some of my interviewees pointed out the need that mestizo people be "educated" (*capacitada)* to understand the multicultural nature of the country in order to eliminate discrimination, then dialogue may take place. For instance, Pedro (San Isidro school) explains this idea:

(36)

01 P: I told them in that course-workshop that in order to avoid marginalization, so discrimination does not exist anymore/
02 we first need to train the people from the cities/
03 above all to/
04 what's their name?/
05 to the mestizos/
06 so they understand us/
07 and [they] understand that our country is full of pluri, no?/
08 it is a pluriethnic country/

01 P.:Yo les decía en ese curso taller que para evitar eso de que ya no exista la marginación, la discriminación/
02 que necesitamos primeramente capacitar a la gente de las ciudades/
03 sobre todo a los/
04 cómo se llama?/
05 a los mestizos/
06de que ellos nos entiendan/
07 y que entiendan que nuestro país ps está lleno de pluri, no?/
08 es un país plurietnico/

The indigenous Discourse also emphasizes awareness about respect to diversity. For instance, Silverio (UPN, Zamora) argues that dialogue is indeed possible but it requires

"consciousness-making" on both parts (i.e., the mestizo and indigenous society). Interestingly, like Pedro (San Isidro school), Silverio brings up the idea of discrimination. The fact that discrimination frequently appears in the discourse of the informants shows again how the indigenous parties perceive the imbalance of power in the intercultural dialogue, even though in some cases they may be arguing in favor of the latter, as in the case of Silverio:

(37)

01 S: no, well, it is possible/
02 but there is the need to make conscious well a lot…/
03 well, to the two parts/
04 because: I believe that we indigenous, we have felt such: discrimination, right?/
05 R: uhu/
06 S: because of the fact of being indigenous/
07 it seems that we do not have, well spaces for other types of:/
08 well of functions, for example, no?/
09 but it is also important: for example, dialogue, dialogue as you [formal] say:/
10 R: uhu/
11 S: but it requires awareness/
12 to make ourselves conscious/
13 right?/

01 S: No, o sea si, si es posible/
02 pero para eso hay necesidad de concientizar pues mucho.../
03 pues, a las dos partes, no?/
04 porque: creo que nosotros los indígenas, sí hemos sentido: ora si esa discriminación, verdad?/
05 R: uhu/
06 S: por el hecho pues de ser indígenas/
07 tal parece que no no tenemos pues, pues espacios para otros tipos de:/
08 pues de funciones, por ejemplo, no?/
09 pero también si es importante: por ejemplo, el diálogo, el diálogo como usted dice/
10 R: uhu/
11 S: pero se requiere pues de conciencia/
12 de concientizar pues a nosotros mismos/
13 Verdad?/

The idea of consciousness is shared by representatives from CGEIB. In her interview, Elsa (CGEIB) talked about the need for dialogue in order to achieve consensus and advance

some programs, whether indigenous or official; however, she stressed the need of a better attitude or awareness on the side of the indigenous communities. Elsa has a special position because not only is she part of the institution, but she is also an indigenous person herself (Mapuche from Chile) who was working as a researcher for the CGEIB. She has a unique perspective because of her experience as an academic working in the area of intercultural education, and because of her work as a social activist in her country. Despite her convergence with indigenous peoples in some areas, Elsa's discourse is also intersected by the official Discourse of the CGEIB and the academic community of practice to which she belongs.[50] In the following excerpt, Elsa comments on the productive value of dialogue. Through her pronominal choice, she positions herself as an indigenous person, and talks about her experience rejecting dialogue and then realizing its usefulness – as opposed to confrontation – and the need for the indigenous people to realize what could be won through dialogue:

(38)

01 E: look I have realized that ah, dialogue has not been valued, it took me a lot to assume that dialogue is important for human relations, which at the moment after a long time it made me understand that dialogue/
02 because I saw dialogue as something negative, as something that was not useful and [we] have to assume that dialogue contributed, in reality it is the way in which we understand each other, that is, as human beings ultimately, no?/
03 that is, through dialogue we know each other, through dialogue, we are going to say what we think and we can do with everything, from the child, the daughter, the mother and all that is what is needed more, then if [we] indigenous knew how to dialogue,through the word we would win a lot/

01 E: mira yo me he dado cuenta de que también eh, ni ha habido una valoración del diálogo, me costó tanto asumirte que el diálogo es importante para las relaciones

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[50] Elsa's discourse should be treated carefully because of her special position both as a participant in the design of policies and materials related to intercultural education, but also because of her role as a foreign "observer" of the process of the interculturalization of the educational system. On one hand, she participates in the ideas of intercultural education and interculturality, but on the other hand, she is highly skeptical of how the process is taking place in Mexico, as I will show later.

humanas, que en el momento después de mucho tiempo me dio a entender que el diálogo/

02 porque yo veía el diálogo como algo negativo, como algo que no servía y sí hay que asumir también de que de el diálogo contribuye , en realidad es la manera en que nos damos a entender, o sea, como ser humano, por último ¿no?/

03 o sea, a través del diálogo nos damos a conocer, a través del diálogo vamos a decir lo que pensamos y eso lo podemos hacer con todo, partiendo con el hijo, la hijo, la mamá y todo esto y es lo que mas se necesita , entonces lamentablemente si lo indígena supiéramos dialogar, a través de la palabra también ganaríamos mucho.

Elsa's epistemic remarks stress personal awareness, agency and responsibility ("I have realized.."; "after a long time I came to understand"; "one should assume that dialogue contributes…"). Epistemic factives are used to express the subjects' state of knowledge or the way she came to know the truth of her assertion. In the case of Elsa, she arrived to the conclusion that, more than the effects of external factors (e.g., social or economic structures), the individual should take care of his/her own thoughts and prejudices in order to advance to a level in which he/she can have a dialogue with the Other, and even gain something from it.

For some indigenous actors, even though a process of raising consciousness is necessary, it will not change anything. What is necessary is the actual experience of living in the conditions in which indigenous peoples live that may change the majority's attitude. As José (Cherán normal school) puts it:

(39)

01 J: well yes/
02 look [formal] ah: I believe that the only way/
03 we have experimented here/
04 in order to understand the mestizos I need to go and live over there/
05 we have done so/
06 to coexist with them, do what they do to understand/
07 then that's what mestizo people should do/
08 if they really want to understand that there should be equality/
09 then [they] need to know/
10 live with us to feel in their flesh what we live, right?/
11 R: uhu/
12 J: do the same, eat the same/

13 right?/
14 so [they understand] because I (inaudible)/
15 a dialogue is not enough/
16 because I imagine we would be talking about something subjective, right?/
17 R: uhu/
18 J: I could be telling you this and that/
19 but if you don't see it, if you don't touch it, if you don't feel it well no/
20 probably [you] are not going to understand much, right?/

01 J: Si bueno/
02 mire este: yo creo que la única manera/
03 nosotros lo hemos experimentado acá/
04 para poder entender a los mestizos yo necesito ir a vivir allá/
05 o sea, lo hemos hecho/
06 convivir con ellos, hacer lo que ellos hacen para entender/
07 entonces la gente mestiza eso es lo que debe hacer/
08 si realmente quiere entender que debe haber esa igualdad/
09 entonces necesitan conocer/
10 vivir con nosotros para sentir en carne propia lo que nosotros vivimos, verdad?/
11 R: uhu/
12 J: hacer lo mismo, comer lo mismo/
13 verdad?/
14 para que entienda porque yo (inaudible)/
15 un diálogo no es lo suficiente/
16 porque yo me imagino que estaríamos hablando de algo subjetivo, verdad?
17 R: uhu
18 J: Yo le puedo estar contando esto y aquello/
19 pero si no lo ve, si no lo palpa, si no lo siente pues no/
20 a lo mejor no me va a entender mayor cosa, verdad?/

The idea of indigenous peoples being the ones who have adapted − which render them intercultural − is present in the discourse of the indigenous actors. The experience of living in the other culture seems to be necessary to understand the other. The subjectivity of dialogue is insufficient to transmit their lived experience. Thus, an educational policy based on dialogue instead of actual contact seems to be inadequate to bring about any changes. The modal expressions used by José ("In order to understand the mestizos I need to go live over there"; "Then that's what mestizo people should do if they really want to understand that there should be equality") show the absolute necessity of such experience.

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The indigenous actors point to an important issue: real contact with the Other. Certainly, intercultural education assumes that diversity is a reality that exists in the classroom, and it should be addressed from this very place. But even if classrooms are diverse, ethnic diversity is not as prevalent as other types of diversity in certain geographic areas. The CGEIB acknowledges this fact when designing linguistic policies based on the composition of student population and sociolinguistic situations. For schools far from urban centers or with a monolingual population (be it in Spanish or an indigenous language), contact with other ethnic groups is rare or inexistent, as Pedro's story about the mestizo teacher who wanted to take her students on a field trip to see "indians" shows. Thus, the idea of an egalitarian dialogic relationship may be just that, a good idea, if no further steps are taken.[51] In some informal interviews with indigenous educators, they pointed out the need to extend contact to the exterior so that both the mestizo and indigenous children had the opportunity to get to know each other. Podesta's (2004) work is aimed in that direction. In her study, she established an intercultural dialogue between children who lived in an urban context with indigenous children in rural communities. The children communicated through different visual and written media to explore areas that interested them (e.g., things that they liked, their communities, schools and even linguistic reflections) which helped them establish some themes that worked as intercultural bridges. Such bridges are necessary in the design of educational plans.

Before exploring the last two themes it is necessary to look at the past three themes since they are intrinsically linked. As I explained above, even though intercultural education is supposed to be aimed at the population in general, its major focus is still on the indigenous

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[51] The need to get acquainted with other groups is expressed in the CGEIB's documents (2006, p. 41). Homogenous classrooms are seen as covered "segregation," so it becomes necessary that classrooms have a diverse constitution. Still, it is just a good idea if no other steps are taken.

communities. In fact, the indigenous participants perceived the implementation of the intercultural model as an imposition and obligation for the indigenous peoples, who needed to learn the values and skills predetermined by the Secretariat of Education. The imposition of the intercultural model (which is a repetitive theme throughout this project) initially caused the rejection of intercultural education.

The indigenous peoples also point out their intercultural character and have reservations about the willingness of the majority to engage in an intercultural dialogue. Furthermore, the indigenous participants question the strategy employed by the educational system (i.e., dialogue) to change the mainstream society's attitudes.

The analysis of the directionality of intercultural education reveals power imbalances. The indigenous actor's discourse reveals that they do not feel on equal grounds with the mestizo population, and dialogue seems to have limitations to change social relationships. According to Carbonell (2003), intercultural dialogue is possible when the parties are on equal grounds; otherwise, there is the risk of domination. The scenarios described in this chapter shows that power imbalances persist despite the attempts to implement a model that at its very theoretical foundations attempts to fight domination.

Figure 6 summarizes the points presented above. As it can be seen, both the indigenous and the official point of view coincide on the need of intercultural education and in the cultural dialogue, but just as in the other cases, there are subtle differences.
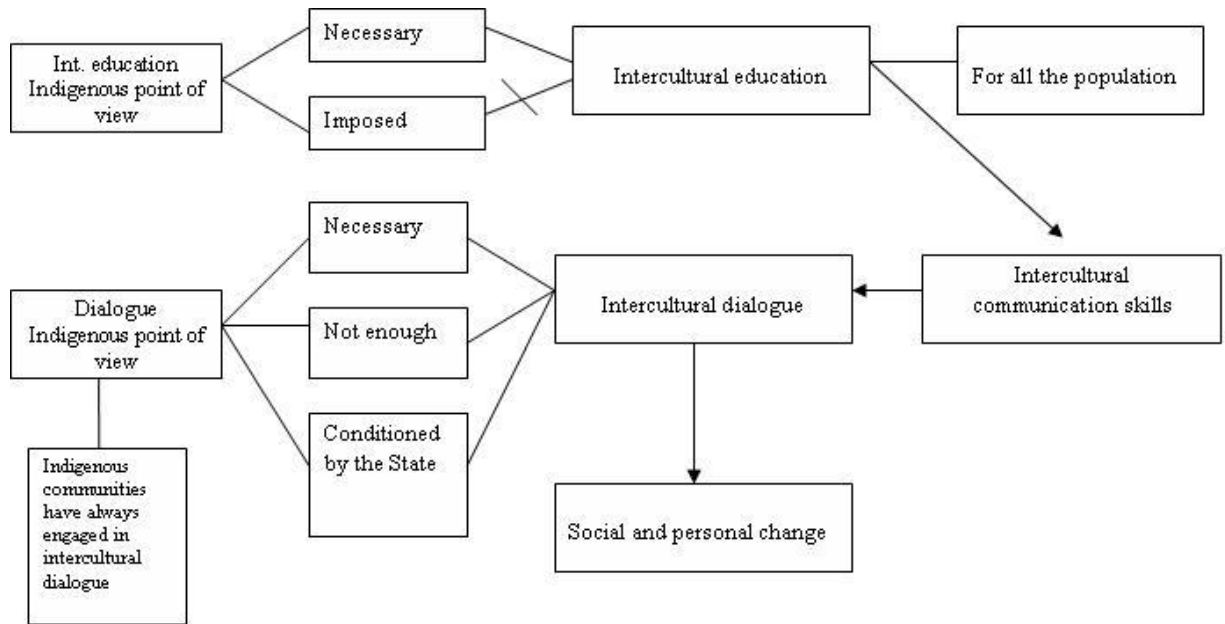
Figure 6. Intercultural education and intercultural dialogue.

8. 5 THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY IN INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

One of the important changes brought about by the intercultural model (at least theoretically speaking), was the inclusion of different members of the community (i.e., parents, students, and the wider community) in the school life. Traditionally, parents have had only a minor role, being relegated to the organization of civic and social festivals, and carrying out occasional fundraisers to help the school. According to CGEIB, parents (and the community) should be incorporated in the school activities because "it is not about that [parents and the community] support the actions of the school, but that [they] participate in the definition of the course of the school" (p. 40). Interestingly, such course only concern decisions dealing with the diversity of the classroom. CGEIB's recommendations are aimed at sensitizing the parents towards the different types of

diversity present in the classroom, and to take advantage of their cultural knowledge (i.e., knowledge about the environment, language, traditions, arts and crafts, etc.,) to deliver workshops and presentations to enrich the curriculum and to further raise awareness about diversity in the classroom. Parents are an important target in intercultural education because of their potential actions as school allies, but also because mismatches between their expectations and the school's can create serious problems:

> [Both] the parents as well as other members of the community have particular expectations and specific needs in relation to the school, so they cannot be ignored in decision-making that can affect everyone. Doing this brings as a consequence the deficient functioning of school, the creation of a gap between school and community, and in the worst of cases, the distancing of the students. (CGEIB, 2006, p. 41)

The first step in involving the parents in schools is to make them aware of their own prejudices and the existence of diversity in schools (CGEIB, 2006, p. 40), and the advantages that the later have at the pedagogic level. The ultimate objective is that parents become active members in deciding the academic affairs of the school so they are involved in their children's education and are satisfied with their progress.

There is a strong emphasis on the cultural contributions that parents can provide as cultural informants, and they and the community are seen as sources of knowledge for the curriculum. However, their presence is not required in other areas of school. For instance, administrative and political affairs are excluded from the parents' scope of action,[52] at least in this CGEIB's document. The clearest case is that of the normal school of Cherán. Although this

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[52] The extent to which parents may intervene in academic, administrative or political decisions is not clear and seems to depend on the individual parent organization. My interviewees related some stories about parents requesting principals to fire teachers (who are protected by a strong teachers' union) who were abusive or frequently were absent from duty. Parents have also been known to pressure teachers to switch the language of instruction.

school is not an elementary school, its case exemplifies how parents are relegated to a "cultural" realm and are given no voice in other administrative or political affaires.

The Cheran normal school was born as a result of the struggle of the National Coordination of Education Workers (CNTE) in 1989. The demands of the CNTE were basically salary oriented, but the indigenous teachers of Michoacán included other requests, such as the creation of an indigenous normal school that tended to the needs of indigenous bilingual teachers.

In 1994, the demands of the teachers took renewed importance because of the creation of the National Agreement for Educational Modernization. Such agreement installed what was called the "magisterial career," a system aimed at improving the teachers' academic preparation, but that also determined their salaries according to the teachers' professional credentials. Indigenous teachers were in clear disadvantage under the new system because of their scarce academic preparation (most teachers underwent "induction to teaching" courses that only lasted three months). In addition to the National Agreement, the Secretariat of Public Education reduced enrollment of prospective students in normal schools, effectively eliminating the only possibility for indigenous youth to get a white collar job. Because of the refusal of the Secretariat of Education to increase enrolment in normal schools, local XVII of the teachers' union decided to open an independent normal school. This normal school was short-lived because of the lack of support from the Secretariat of Education of the State of Michoacán, the federal government and ultimately the very local XVII. However, this project functioned as a precedent for the new Indigenous Normal School, which opened its doors in 1998 in the town of Cherán, a cultural and political indigenous center. The school was built by the teachers, students and the community in lands donated by the municipality.

Two teacher education programs were opened: indigenous pre-school and elementary indigenous education. The objective of the school was to train teachers who were able to tend to the linguistic and cultural needs of indigenous children, which in turn would change the pedagogic practice at indigenous schools. One of the major goals was to develop an indigenous pedagogy, which according to the ENIM (Indigenous Normal School of Michoacán) should

> …imagine teaching-learning environments with other structures and other schemes for the practice of freedom and democracy; a pedagogy to enrich cultural diversity and that makes possible learning strategies that allow pupils, through scholarly practice, the knowledge of their culture and their environment, as well as the capacity to understand and appreciate the life and culture of the other. (ENIM, 2000, p. 8, my translation)

Since the objective of the Indigenous Normal School of Michoacán agrees with the objectives of intercultural education one could assume that support might have been given. However, the school has had several problems in achieving official status. The refusal to grant official status to the school has been justified on the grounds of the deficient academic formation the students receive. Indeed, most of the professors at the normal school are not experts on curricular development or had experience in teacher education. The curriculum has also been rejected (at the moment of the interviews the school had received the third rejection from SEP) because it does not comply with the official requirements of the Secretariat of Education. The curricular map offers courses that address the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the indigenous communities, but in doing so, it exceeds the number of credits hours that the students need to graduate. Finally, the school is deeply involved with the struggles of the teachers' union in the State, which has caused the students, professors and staff to participate in political mobilizations. These activities are not well regarded by school officials, who consider the

students and professors from the indigenous normal school as "rebels." Nonetheless, the school has managed to stay active because it can prepare bilingual teachers for the region, which cannot be done by other normal schools that lack bilingual personnel.

The school's work has been attacked on several fronts that supposedly should be protected by the official Discourse. For instance, Lolita (director, Cherán normal school) narrates how their proposed curriculum was rejected because it followed the "Plan of '84" (referring to a curricular plan that was active before the educational reform of 1993). The teachers of the normal school chose to continue working with the '84 plan because of the social and community implications it had:

(40)

01 L: right now the curricular approach, now of normal [schools]/
02 that is right now/
03 it focuses on the teacher and technical didactic matters, yes?/
04 from the beginning [the teacher] has to be in a school and not, well the <u>problems</u> of the…school and groups are not going to interest him/
05 the characteri:stics and the way [he] works, how to work with a group, how to work with another [one]/
06 but it doesn't say what to do with the parents, what to do with the community/
07 and the plan of eighty-four…used to work with the problems of the community/
08 and then [I] said to them "we want to stay with the approach of eighty-four"/
09 because for us that…/ |
10 R: uhu uhu/ |
   L: that suits our reality/ |
11 R: right/ |
12 L: then the [people] from DGEI and the [people] from normativity said to me: why do you want to stay behind?"/
13 that is, that's an approach that already expired/
14 but I say that our reality needs it/
15 R: uhu/
16 L: for us, and because we have not initiated/
17 they have allowed us to work with it two or three years/
18 but ah: we would like to work with that two or three years/
19 R: yes yes/
20 L: questions and all [we] showed them reality/
21 [they] wouldn't accept us/

01 L: Ahorita como que el enfoque de la currícula, ahora de normales/
02 o sea de ahorita/
03 es de que centra mucho al maestro en la cuestión técnica didáctica, si?/
04 desde sus inicios debe estar en una escuela y no, bueno no, le van a interesar
   problemas de.. la escuela y su grupo /
05 que las caracterí:sticas, y que como trabaja, como trabajar con un grupo, como trabajar
   con otro/
06 pero no dice que hacer con los papás, que hacer con la comunidad/
07 y el plan ochenta y cuatro…trabajaba los problemas de la comunidad/
08 y entonces yo les decía "nosotros nos quedamos con el enfoque ochenta y cuatro"/
09 porque para nosotros eso…/ |
10 R: uhu uhu/ |
L: Eso se adecua a nuestra realidad/ |
11 R: ya/ |
12 L: Entonces luego me decían los de la DGEI y los de la normatividad pero por qué se
   quieren quedar en el atraso?/
13 o sea ese ya es un enfoque que ya caducó/
14 le digo pero nuestra realidad eso requiere/
15 R: uhu uhu/
16 L: para nosotros, y como nosotros no hemos iniciado/
17 o sea que nos han dejado trabajar con eso dos años o tres/
18 pero: este, o sea, nosotros quisiéramos trabajar con eso dos años o tres/
19 R: sí, sí/
20 L: con todo y los cuestionamientos que les demostráramos que la realidad/
21 No nos aceptaban/

Lolita's account reflects the tensions between the indigenous teacher and the SEP. She justifies the professors' choice to maintain the '84 plan on the grounds that it took into account the community's needs. In order to get acquainted with the community, the students should spend some time at their target school and evaluate the children and their community. This field experience usually took a complete semester and the students were supposed to produce an educational intervention at the end of the semester. The new plan of studies, on the other hand, stresses teaching skills. The fact that student teachers should be at a school from the very beginning instead of studying the place where they were going to work would produce indifferent teachers who would see their classes as exchangeable (lines 05). Thus, instead of

educating a teacher who would be able to be a core part of the community, the new plan seemed to be focused on forming technicians.[53]

The defense of the community, as well as their needs (or reality) makes the '84 plan more suitable, which is considered "backward" notwithstanding its proven results in the indigenous context. The educational institution deemed the teachers' work obsolete. By evaluating the teachers project and "allowing them to work" or by rejecting it (lines 12, 17) the bureaucracy establishes its power and authority over the indigenous teachers, while the teachers' role is to demonstrate "good results" (line 20) and modify their project in order to fit the official requirements. In this scenario, the importance of the community appears diminished.

Since the community donated the plot of land where the school was built, and the school is also supported by the contributions of it, Lolita finds it necessary to include the community in order to continue the school's work, but also as a way to maintain political pressure to get official status. However, the rules and regulations of SEP and DGEI prohibit the intervention of parent associations on the basis that they are not necessary because the student-teachers are adults. The cultural relevance that parents may have in school is just ignored. However, teachers resist the rules by asserting their constitutional rights, which is something that frequently appears in the indigenous discourse:

(41)

01 L: what is needed is a lot of awareness/
02 from all instances, from personnel, the coordination, students and communities/
03 that all get together and we say "this is our objective"/

_____

[53] Ginsburg et al. (2003) have studied how teacher education was shaped to produce certain types of citizens and workers between the years of 1821 to 1994. For the period of the 1980s, teachers were defined as agents of social change, but within the limits defined by the ideology and principles of the constitution. Furthermore, social change should be understood in the terms established and directed by political and economic elites. Thus, teachers were still pawns of the powerful despite the rhetoric of considering them "agents of social change." Despite these problems, the indigenous teachers seemed to find the 1984 program more suitable for their purposes.

04 here I have tried to ah: work on Sundays and Saturdays…with the parents/
05 because the intention is that they realize <u>what</u> their children are learning/
06 <u>so they also</u> give their points of view/
07 R: of course/
08 but anyway, the decree comes to limit and says:/
09 "Why do you want a committee if they are already adults"?/
10 and for us is convenient to have the parents' committee/
11 because culturally/
12 even though the kid is married/
13 the parents come and say "teacher here I entrust you [with my child]"/
14 "if he does something wrong <u>you</u> [formal] are the authority to tell him and if he does not obey you you tell me "/
15 that is, we are two/
16 we are two the ones that have authority over the kid/
17 even though he is married/
18 that is there is respect to the school/
19 then the official part says "no why do you want to relate yourself with the parents if…"/
20 well but in some way or another we are looking/
21 well the legal foundation to have that association/
22 and we are re-taking the cultural matter to found ourselves on that/
23 probably later they are going to say "but you have to deal with a [constitutional] article"/
24 but there it is article nine that says: on the right to associate/

01 L: Se necesita mucha conciencia/
02 es de las instancias, el personal, la coordinación, los alumnos y las comunidades/
03 <u>que todos nos juntemos</u> y que digamos "<u>Este es nuestro objetivo</u>"/
04 aquí yo he tratado de este: trabajar los domingos y los sábados…con los papás/
05 porque la intención es que ellos se den cuenta de <u>que</u> es lo que están aprendiendo sus hijos/
06 <u>para que también</u> den sus puntos de vista/
07 R: claro/
08 pero bueno, el decreto ya viene a limitar y dice:/
09 "para qué quieres comité si ya son adultos?/
10 y a nosotros nos conviene tener el comité de padres/
11 porque culturalmente/
12 por más que el muchacho aunque ya sea casado/
13 vienen sus papás y dicen "maestra se lo encargo"/
14 "si algo hace mal <u>usted</u> es la autoridad para decirle y si no le obedece a usted me lo dice a mí"/
15 o sea, somos dos/
16 somos dos los que tenemos la autoridad sobre el muchacho/
17 así sea casado/
18 o sea hay un respeto de la escuela p's/
19 entonces allá: la parte oficial dice "no, para que quieres relacionarte con los papás

si…/
20 bueno pero de alguna o de otra manera estamos buscando/
21 este: el fundamento jurídico de por qué tener esa asociación/
22 y estamos retomando la cuestión cultural para fundamentarnos en eso/
23 a lo mejor al rato van a decir "es que tu debes manejar un artículo"/
24 pero ahí esta el artículo nueve que: dice el derecho de asociación/

One of the core points of intercultural education is the need to give an intercultural character to the whole educational system: from pre-school to universities, including normal schools. So it is a blatant contradiction to ask "why do you want a committee if they are adults" given that in indigenous communities parents bestow teachers with the power to oversee the students (regardless of their age and marital status). It seems a contradiction to the principles of intercultural education to deny parents the right to intervene in their (adult) children's education. Lolita is aware that such measure has implications that go beyond the cultural realm. Indeed, excluding parents from the management of the school has as an effect of deactivation of the political demands of both teachers and students. Parents accompany their children to all the mobilizations (i.e., demonstrations, protests) where they go to demand their official status or to support the teachers' union's demands. By legally eliminating parents from the school life, the authorities are getting rid of both an important cultural and political adversary; however, Lolita's interview is an example of appropriation of the legal discourse. By framing their arguments on constitutional grounds, they are using the same language and strategies as the authorities, which makes it more difficult for the latter to refuse the teachers' proposals.

For the indigenous teachers, it is important to have the support of the community. In order to get the community's support, the teachers keep communication with the parents and create involvement by means of appropriation. That is, the teachers' attempt to show the parents that the school is not a foreign entity, managed by the State or the Secretariat of Education.

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Rather, the school is a part of the community; therefore, Lolita needs to inform the parents about what the students learn and who the owners are in view of a policy that claims to help the community, but in reality alienates it. Furthermore, by showing the parents that they own the school and what it does (line 12), bad criticism to the school project is neutralized (line 13).

(42)

01 L: but well/
02 we are going to be observed in that sense/
03 because official matters/
04 parents should not be dealt with/
05 well, but the decree does not contemplate the communities either/
06 but it says that it is going to be for the communities/
07 I am thinking about reuniting the authorities/
08 … and also tell them what the school is for/
09 or for whom the school is/
10 because of that ah: that is because not having the information/
11 sometimes there are bad-intentioned criticisms/
12 buy if they are aware of whom it is for, what it is for and what it does/
13 well it wouldn't, it wouldn't come anymore/
14 although there is a lot of work/
15 yes?/

01 L: pero bueno/
02 vamos a estar siendo observados en ese sentido/
03 por la cuestión oficial/
04 de que aquí no se deben manejar los padres de familia/
05 bueno, pero independientemente a eso y al decreto no contempla a las comunidades también/
06 pero dice que va a ser para las comunidades/
07 yo estoy pensando también reunir a las autoridades/
08 …y también decirles para qué sirve la escuela/
09 o para quién es la escuela/
10 porque también por eso este: o sea al no tener la información/
11 luego hay criticas dolosas/
12 pero si ellos están concientes de para quién es, para qué es y qué es lo que hace/
13 pues ya no, ya no vendría/
14 aunque es mucho trabajo/
15 sí?/

The strategy of making the community the support and basis of the school is also used by elementary indigenous teachers. According to Gilberto (Principal, San Isidro school), the project

to use P'urhépecha as the language of instruction at the San Isidro and Uringuitiro schools was the brainchild of young indigenous teachers who became aware of the dismal problems of the schools (i.e., high drop-out rates, low achievement, teacher absence). The teachers came to the conclusion that the main problem was the language of instruction (Spanish) and the effect it had on the children's learning (or lack thereof) and their self-esteem. Once the teachers designed a tentative curriculum, the teachers convinced the community to allow them to implement their educational intervention, promising the parents better learning results. After the community gave its blessing, the teachers went ahead with their plan, learning and modifying their strategies as they went, in the absence of official support. Certainly, the teachers' project has faced strong opposition from teachers and parents who believe that Castilianization should be enforced; however, because of the support of the community, the teachers have been able to continue with their bilingual education project, and actually have gotten official support from school inspectors and even the then secretary of indigenous education of the State of Michoacán. To ensure the continuous support of the community, the teachers keep open channels of communication with the parents. Parent-teacher conferences are frequent during the school year. During the time of the data collection, I observed two such reunions, in which the teachers explained to the parents the achievements of the students and their future plans.

Although the parents seemed to be informed and their consent was requested to implement all academic interventions, parents were not always included as a source of knowledge in the classroom. In his interview, Pedro (San Isidro school) answered in the following way my enquiries about how parents were incorporated in deciding academic content:

(43)

01 P: uhu/
02 well, first we don't/

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03 or especially I do not: almost we deal with parents very little/
04 but at the same time it may be because I know the environment, no?/
05 that is what is the immediate environment of children/
06 thing that is very difficult for a teacher that comes from outside, and that doesn't have a relationship with the parents to see what the child knows and from where we can start/
07 then I: I have talked about that in meetings/

01 P: uhu/
02 bueno, primeramente nosotros no/
03 o sobre todo yo no: casi no tratamos muy poco con padres de familia/
04 pero también a la vez eso será porque conozco el entorno no?/
05 o sea cuál es el entono inmediato de los niños/
06 cosa que les dificulta mucho a un maestro que viene de fuera y que también tampoco tienen ellos relación con los padres de familia para ver qué es lo que el niño conoce o de dónde podemos partir/
07 entonces yo: si he tratado reuniones de ésto/

The teachers are aware that parents are not consulted. But just as Pedro pointed out, this claim deserves a second look. First, since most of the teachers are part of the community, the need to incorporate the parents in the school's activities in order to match the school to the students' experience is considerably less than in schools where parents and teachers come from different backgrounds. In addition, I believe that the parents are participating in schools to a great extent. During my fieldwork, I was able to observe parents participating in the school's activities. For instance, Salvador (San Isidro school) sent his students to interview the elders of the town about its history. It was quite interesting to witness because the children and their interviewees learned about a whole new communicative event: the interview. The elders sheepishly answered the children's questions while the latter took notes. The information was later used in a lesson plan about the community and how it had changed over time. Also, Gilberto (principal, San Isidro school) informed me about a plan of the elder women. They wanted to reintroduce some of the traditional costumes and wanted to teach the children some

sewing techniques. Thus, parents were incorporated and they do indeed have a say in the school's functioning.

CGEIB's stance towards the community's participation in schools seems to be clear at first; it should be taken into account in order to reduce the discrepancies between the environment of the school and the community. The greater the similarities between the two, the greater the possibility is of children having less problems and staying in school. Parents should be consulted and included as a source of knowledge. In addition, their expectations and needs regarding school and schooling should be met (or at least leveled out) to ensure that the school and the community go in the same direction. Open dialogue with the parents is suggested as a means of consensus building. In addition, parents should be taken as a source of knowledge, for both the curriculum and as a way to increase sensibility to difference and therefore, reduce prejudice. All in all, the ideas proposed by CGEIB seem to depict an open and dialogic relationship between parents, teachers and the school system in general. However, the definition of this relationship is at times ambiguous. The discourse seems to include the participation of the parents at all levels, but the lexical choices are, at times, vague. For instance, in the description of the importance of parental participation in school, the text explains how it should be achieved:

> In order to realize this task it is fundamental to count with the participation of parents and other members of the community. It is not only that [they] support the actions of school, but also that they participate in the definition of the direction of the school activities. (CGEIB, 2006, p. 40, my translation)

"School activities" is a broad term that may include both academic and administrative matters, and the text does not clarify what it means. The text goes on to mention the mismatch between the parents' expectations and needs and the school functioning. Thus, schools should build a dialogic relationship with parents. Clearly it is a positive step that parents' opinions are

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taken into account, but they are excluded in other matters. Although Cherán's normal school is certainly not an elementary school, and it was created under special circumstances, it is a good example of how parents – and the community in general − are kept from fully participating in the school life, particularly in political decisions. A way to effectively exclude the community from taking a bigger role in school is by establishing rules and regulations about who can and cannot make decisions regarding the school; however, as Lolita's interview shows, teachers are fighting back by using the very legal discourse that attempts to exclude the community. Also, by helping parents and the community to appropriate the school, teachers are attempting to achieve one of the big goals of intercultural education, which is to make school an organic part of the community, an objective that at times is undermined by the very school system that is trying to implement an intercultural program. Figure 7 shows the areas in which communities should participate according to CGEIB. The case of the Cherán normal school shows that in practice, parents have limited or have no participation at all in the administrative functions of the school; however, both parents and teachers claim the right to participate based on their cultural traditions and constitutional rights, which forces the authorities to address the teachers' and communities demands in order to be consistent with the intercultural Discourse.

The issue of school control is part of a State strategy that has ruled the Mexican educational system since its foundation and still permeates the most advanced educational programs. An integral part of this control has been teachers. In the following section, I will analyze the role of teachers in the intercultural model.
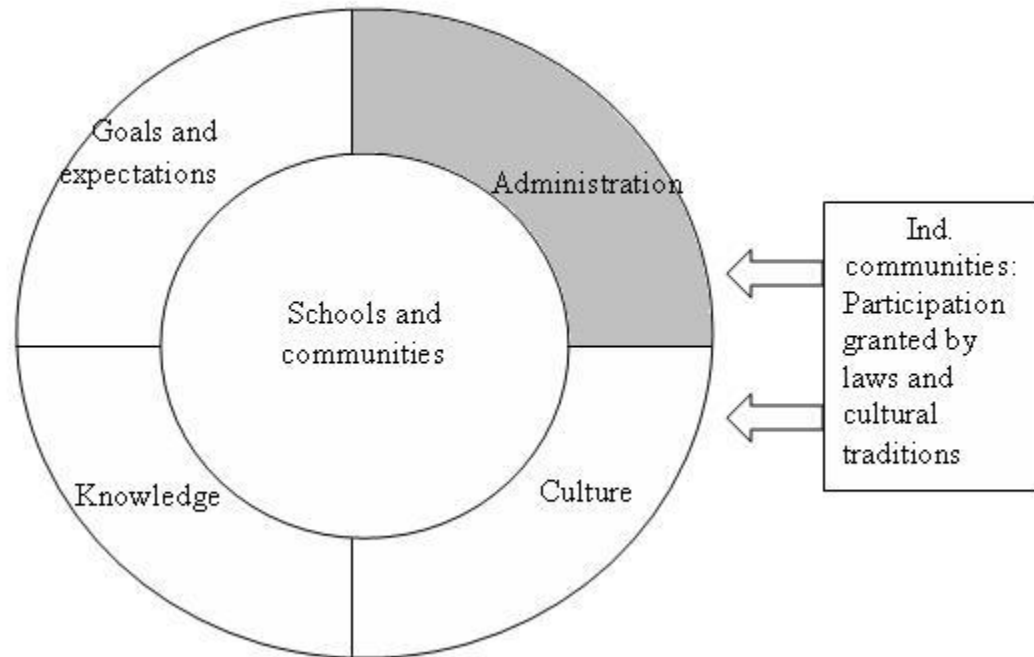
Figure 7. Intercultural education, communities and schools

8.6 THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

In Chapter Two, I described the role of teachers through the history of indigenous education in Mexico. If any conclusion can be reached from such a review, it is that teachers have played a role that goes beyond mere pedagogic functions. Indeed, the academic formation aimed at indigenous teachers has defined them as acculturation agents and intermediaries of the hegemonic interests of the Mexican State.

The intercultural model also requires teachers to have roles that go beyond being mere deliverers of knowledge in the classroom. According to Ipiña (1997) and Serrano (1998), teachers in the intercultural model will have to be experts in pedagogical techniques that are suited to the children's learning styles. They also should have knowledge in applied linguistics to teach Spanish as a second language. In addition, instructors have to be researchers in the

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classroom and the community, helping determine the Western and traditional knowledge to be included in the curriculum. Finally, teachers also will have to serve as an intercultural example themselves by establishing a relationship (on equal terms) with the mestizo communities. The skills and attitudes needed by indigenous teachers in the intercultural model are quite different from the ones required decades ago, in which the teachers should be themselves models of acculturation for the communities.

The professional training of teachers is stressed in the intercultural model because of the cultural, political, social and economic context in which intercultural education is immersed (i.e., a globalized world). According to CGEIB (2006, p. 39), teachers should be able to

1) Know (dominate) the basic theoretical knowledge that underlies interculturality and intercultural education.
2) Know and value the distinctive multilingual character of the country.
3) Recognize both linguistic and cultural diversity in the classroom and be able to address it through appropriate didactic strategies.
4) Address the academic contents included in the curriculum from a point of view that takes into account the different types of diversity present in the classroom (i.e., cultural, linguistic, gender, social, etc.,).
5) Establish school and classroom climate that fosters self-esteem, respect and autonomy.
6) Establish an intercultural dialogue between students, teachers, school administrators and authorities, parents and other members of the communities.

Teacher education is embedded within the official Discourse that establishes intercultural education as a way to change the relations between the State, the indigenous peoples and national society (SEP, 2004, p. 9). This educational reform is anchored in other constitutional

amendments that acknowledge diversity and the laws that protect the rights of indigenous peoples. Intercultural education is also defined as a "constitutional right" and a "strategic project" to achieve an "ideal country." In order to address the new intercultural perspective in education, the teacher education plan of studies (1997) was revised for the academic year 2004-2005. The new proposal had three main objectives:[54]

1) To reformulate the Plan of Studies of 1997 under the intercultural perspective. The ultimate objective is to critically approach the ways in which diversity is considered, valued and managed in schools, and to improve the relationships between individuals in society.

2) That prospective teachers have the ability to use diversity as a pedagogical resource in the classroom, both as a source of knowledge and as a tool to develop approaches to address diversity and linguistic difference.

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[54] The new plan of studies acknowledges the need to train teachers not only to have the skills that any teacher should have, but also to give them the specific skills that allow them to deal with children from indigenous backgrounds. This is the most important reform within the plan of studies, and certainly, it is one that fits with the demands of indigenous teachers. What was conspicuously absent from previous indigenous teacher education programs was specific formation of the pedagogic aspects of language learning and teaching. The new plan of studies addresses this issue by adding to the curricular map six courses that deal with the foundations of intercultural education and the linguistic and formal basis of language teaching and learning. In addition, four courses concentrate on observation and practicum, and the last two semesters involve an intensive practicum supported by a workshop in which the student-teachers' practice is analyzed. In total, the students formed under the new plan of studies would have eight semesters of instruction in language teaching, which represents a substantial difference with the scarce or non-existent instruction that in-service teachers received.

The major difference is that these courses do address the linguistic bases of language teaching and learning, but also emphasize the communicative nature of language and its social and cultural situated nature. That is, it is expected that prospective teachers do acquire the formal (structural) knowledge of their indigenous tongue, but also the communicative competence that would allow them to use it as a means of instruction in the classroom, and as a language of authentic communication outside of it. Teachers are also expected to acquire the four linguistic skills (i.e., speaking, listening, reading and writing), which in turn will allow them to continue developing and revitalizing the indigenous language in the community (and national) context. Special emphasis is placed on acquiring pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competences so the students are functioning members of a speech community.

This plan of studies was introduced for the first time in the academic year 2004-2005, and it has been gradually implemented. The plan was first introduced at the time of the data collection, so many of my informants (particularly those not involved with the DGEI or the CGEIB) were not aware of this proposal. In any case, it is important to point out the advances in the area that have happened in the last two years.

3) That prospective teachers are able to reflect on the social, cultural and linguistic factors that determine children's performance in school. Special attention is given to linguistic factors.

The new intercultural plan of studies focuses on preparing teachers who posses knowledge and pedagogic skills to tend to the needs of their students. Furthermore, the plan also is aimed at improving social relationships in schools (and the society at large), to improve the professional preparation of teachers and school administration. The plan also addresses the issue of social and power imbalances and the role of schools in shaping the oppressed identity of the indigenous peoples. So, the personal history of the prospective students becomes a focal point in this reflection:

> With the purpose of preparing future teachers to reverse the effects of social inequality and discrimination, the study and reflection about the [student's] own sociocultural and linguistic conditions are incorporated, which implies to review personal history and the role that school has played in relation to the appreciation of [one's own] identity among the communities and society as a whole (SEP, 2004, p. 12, my translation).

Personal action and reflection is stressed as a way to counteract the effect of systemic discrimination and inequality; however, the document does not explain how this personal reflection should "reverse the effects of social inequality and discrimination." In this sense, although the combating of inequality is mentioned, disparity is also moved to the realm of cultural and linguistic problems. Furthermore, teacher education has as its ultimate goal the establishment of a professional and ethical identity and the acquisition of professional skills that are coherent with the official educational system:

> The set of attitudes and actions that are developed in the normal school to configure the intercultural approach will strengthen the individual and collective identity of the students as a condition to propitiate a professional and ethic

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identity coherent with the educational conception that gives foundation to the program. (SEP, 2004, p. 12)

The goals of the educational system, in turn, are determined by the national curriculum, which will function as a guide for the teachers' actions and reflections, and the children's prescribed learning skills (SEP, 2004, p. 13). Thus, the teachers' pretended "liberatory" self-reflection and practice are contained within the framework of the institutional goals and Discourse.

In the interviews, I enquired about the future of intercultural education, to which Carlos (San Isidro school) replied by emphasizing the role of teachers as "social shapers" in the implementation of intercultural education. Such implementation, as its first step, encourages teachers to reflect and become self-aware about their role as social guides for children:

(43)

01 C: well…(unintelligible) it is very important that…[we] become conscious first/
02 we as, ah: I think that us: as social shapers have this task, this great task, of putting, ah:, putting on its' way such education/

01 C: pues…(inteligible) es muy importante de que ... concientizarnos primeramente/
02 nosotros como, este: creo que: nosotros como formadores sociales tenemos esa tarea, esa gran tarea de ir, este, encaminando esa educación /

There is an acknowledgement of the teachers' role in shaping and implementing any type of education. However, the indigenous actors that I interviewed stressed the need of becoming aware; that is, realizing the factors that contributed to creating the situation in which the teachers (and the indigenous communities at large) are situated, and take actions accordingly. In this sense, teachers are aware that through their discourse and practice the so-called "hidden curriculum" comes into play, particularly in the area of indigenous language teaching and learning. The mere fact that the children's native language is not used as a means of instruction is

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sending children messages about the value of their language in the academic world. In response to my question about the objectives of intercultural education, José (Cheran normal school) began by addressing the issue, but then he broke the frame (Goffman, 1981) of his answer and shifted the topic to explain the fact that the indigenous language and culture are discriminated in school contexts because of the dominant linguistic ideology (Woolard and Schiefflin, 1998). Within this context, indigenous individuals reject the [academic] usefulness of the indigenous languages in favor of Spanish. Thus, the indigenous teachers are the product of an acculturating education that worked to displace the indigenous culture (line 06: "then ah: our knowledge, our attitudes, our language were left aside… right?") and knowledge and subordinate them to the mestizo ways.

(44)

01 J: well that education has to be directed to all inhabitants/
02 from ah: children, ah: youth, teachers/
03 ah: something is happening with the teachers/
04 we were formed ah: in the same way in which mestizos were formed/
05 with the same contents, with the same language and all that, right?/
06 then ah: our knowledge, our attitudes, our language were left aside… right?
07 then at the moment we began to study we think that ah what is useful is…the Spanish
  culture, P'urhépecha or the indigenous language isn't, because we are not using it
  for…as a means for preparation, right?/
08 but we just use it to communicate among ourselves/

01 J: Pues esa educación tiene que estar dirigido a todos a todos los habitantes/
02 pues este: desde los niños, los este: los jóvenes, los maestros/
03 este está pasando una cosa con los maestros/
04 nosotros fuimos formados este: en la misma manera en que se formaron los mestizos/
05 con los mismos contenidos, con el mismo idioma y todo eso, verdad?
06 entonces este: nuestros conocimientos, nuestra actitudes, nuestro idioma quedaron a
  un lado…verdad?/
07 entonces en el momento en que nosotros empezamos a estudiar pensamos que este que
  lo que sirve …es la cultura español, el P'urhepecha o la lengua indígena no, porque no
  lo estamos utilizando para…como un medio de preparación, verdad?/
08 sino que eso lo utilizamos nada mas para comunicarnos entre nosotros mismos/

Indigenous teachers emphasize the importance of being aware of their personal history as subordinated individuals within an acculturating school system. As I showed above, the plan of studies touches upon the teachers' reflection of their own personal history as a step towards "revers[ing] the effects of social inequality and discrimination"; however, just as in the other cases, it stops short of spelling out who or what has been responsible for such power imbalances. Once more, the responsibility is shifted to a personal plane, where teachers are responsible for leveling out these imbalances, not the State or institutions. Certainly, the National Program of Education addresses the issue of indigenous education being inconsistent and in disadvantage (compared to mainstream education), but the explanation for such shortcomings is blamed on problems related to theoretical approaches and the lack of a holistic view that included the whole Mexican society:

> The educational attention to elementary education and teacher formation has been developed in a parallel way to the services of general elementary education and to the system of normal schools. In this parallel history of attention have been developed diverse conceptions, on occasion contradictory about attention to the indigenous children and to the formation of professors for the work in such settings. Thus, the concepts of bilingual education, initially, afterwards bicultural, and intercultural education from the 90s, have been interpreted and treated as exclusive for the educational environments that tend to the indigenous population and not to the whole Mexican society, [which is] characterized by its diversity. In this way to conceive and tend to the multicultural and plurilingual character of the children who attend elementary school has had an effect on the configuration of their identities and the educational results. (SEP, 2004, p. 10, my translation)

Once again, the ill effects of the education imparted by the State are explained away with pedagogic reasons, or they are not explained at all as it happens in the last line of the above mentioned paragraph. For the indigenous teachers, the reflection on the circumstances that subordinated their native language and culture goes beyond mere cultural and social analysis. In fact, it goes right to a political dimension in intercultural education. In his interview, Gilberto

(principal, San Isidro school) replied in the following way to my question about how the controversial issue of politics in intercultural education was mentioned to the children:

(45)

01 G: well, I believe that such political dimension that you [formal] just mentioned/
02 Well in order to (inaudible) to soften it, no?/
03 [one] has worked making teachers conscious/
04 in the sense that if a few teachers continue or want to continue being object of …the reproduction of the very same State and the State, well of the most powerful people/
05 well let's see who is the State? really people who have the major economic. power…within a national or international system: or whatever, no?/
06 what path do we want to follow?
07 do we want to continue in that process?/
08 or do we really want to implement a reflective formation?
09 a formative education?/
10 R: uhu/
11 G: an education for transformation, yes?/
12 according to the interests of the communities and the people/
13 R: of course/
14 G: then that is a way to make the teachers conscious/
15 and well that is being transmitted to the children/
16 I would leave it in that sense what it [means] to politically treat that term of interculturality/

01 G: bueno, yo creo que esa dimensión política que acaba de mencionar usted/
02 bueno para (inaudible) para hacerla mas suave, no?/
03 se ha trabajado p's haciendo conciencia con los maestros/
04 en el sentido de que si los pocos maestros seguimos o queremos seguir siendo objeto de…reproducción de intereses del propio estado y del estado, pues de la gente más poderosa/
05 pues digamos quiénes son el estado? pues realmente gentes que tienen el poder económico mayor…dentro de un sistema: nacional o internacional, como sea, no?/
06 y en ese sentido hacer una conciencia con los maestros, verdad?/
07 qué camino queremos seguir?/
08 queremos seguir en ese proceso?
09 o realmente queremos implementar una formación reflexiva?/
10 una educación formadora?/
11 R: uhu/
12 G: una educación de transformación, si?/
13 de acuerdo a los propios intereses de las comunidades y de los pueblos/
14 R: claro/

15 G: entonces esa es una forma en hacer conciencia con los maestros/
16 y que bueno eso mismo se vaya transmitiendo hacia los niños/
17 yo lo dejaría en ese sentido lo que es tratar políticamente ese término de
    interculturalidad/

Gilberto's analysis goes beyond social or cultural factors and focuses on the power imbalances created by economic elites. In this context, it is up to the teachers to continue serving as the pawns of the State or to implement a "liberation" education, which goes along critical objectives. The political dimension of intercultural education rests on the teachers' awareness of their role as part of a system that works to oppress them, and in their practice to challenge it. The teachers' function, therefore, is to "form" children who are aware of who they are, and to provide them with a type of education that serves the interests of their own community. In this sense, the role of the teachers is not that of self-sacrificing apostles, working for the State project, as the ideology of the Mexican revolution stated it (see Chapter Three). Rather, they are agents of their own community working on behalf of its best interests. In the following excerpt, I asked Carlos about the suitability of intercultural education, and whether or not it could be "defended." In his answer, he emphasized the role of teachers as social shapers; therefore, they need to be clear about the objectives of education and its effects on children in order to prevent teaching students who end up working against their community and in favor of "other interests" (line 05):

(46)

01 R: Could we defend it?/
02 C: yes it is possible but…it is very important that us as social shapers…ah:…[we] are concentrated on what really is our mission as educators/
03 what [we] expect, that is…what type of students we are forming as well/
04 because if we do not clearly know what our mission as educators is and what the mission of education really is…we may very well be forming students that at the end…are the first in…in ah destabilize/
05 in detriment of their community, and they serve other interests/

01 R: la podríamos nosotros defender?/

02 C: sí es posible pero...es muy importante de que nosotros como formadores sociales...este…estemos bien centrados en cual es realmente nuestra misión como educadores/

03 Qué espera , o sea... qué tipo de alumnos nosotros estamos formando también/

04 porque si no tenemos bien clara cual es nuestra misión como educadores y cuál es realmente es la misión de la educación... pus a lo mejor estaremos armando alumnos que ... al final sean lo primeros en…en este desestabilizarte /

05 en detrimento de su comunidad, y que sirvan a otros intereses/

If intercultural education has some value – besides considering linguistic and cultural factors in the teaching-learning process – it is the potential to change the status quo. In this sense, the teachers' stance towards their own role seems to be one of "liberation" in Freire's (2005) sense. That is, through their praxis and reflections, teachers are trying to change the structural dynamics – at least within school – that lead to the domination of the children's mind through a pedagogy and educational system that tends to the interests of the dominant classes.

The official Discourse, on the other hand, seems to incorporate all the important keywords and elements that the indigenous teachers have struggled for in the past. Contrary to the indigenous teachers, who locate the source of power imbalances on a system that favors economic elites, the official Discourse glosses over these factors and focuses the teachers' attention on their self-history, deflecting away any potential conflicts. Certainly, any reflection that is sponsored by the official educational system –which constitutes an ideological apparatus of the State – has to be done within the limits established by the very institution implementing it. The fact that the official Discourse incorporates the issues that have been brought up by the indigenous groups shows that the State follows a "script" so to speak, in which the demands of the oppressed groups have room to exist.

The role of the teachers is one of the major challenges in intercultural education. As I explained in Chapter Three, historically they were thought and trained as acculturation agents

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who would bring their communities to the national, political and economic project; however, as Vargas (1994) has shown, teachers went from pawns of the State to cultural intermediaries between the State and the communities, amounting in the process considerable personal and economic power. The very teachers who were supposed to turn around their people were the ones who later demanded a greater participation in indigenous education (the fact that it was co-opted by the State is another matter). In the present circumstances, one of the major issues for indigenous education is to make teachers aware of the importance of their job in the survival of their people, and to develop both a professional and ethnic identity that benefits the community. In this sense, the political dimension of the intercultural project is of utmost importance. Gasché (1997) has pointed out that more than "culture," it is politics, or rather the political aspect of interculturality, that should guide the educational strategy and pedagogy involved in indigenous teacher training programs. In his experience with a group of prospective teachers in the Peruvian Amazon, Gasché worked under the political demands of the communities to articulate them in the pedagogical formation and curricular content of a teacher education program. The goal of the project was to give prospective teachers a broad view of the role of the indigenous populations in historic processes in order to make them aware of their own agency. That is, the objective was to change the traditional view of indigenous populations as victims of social, class and racial domination to active agents who were able to analyze their current situation and to actively participate in political actions to benefit their community. I think the discourse of indigenous teachers of this study goes along these lines. Taking care for the best interests of their community shows an evolution in the teachers' conception about their role, not as acculturation agents, but as organic representatives of their communities. The problem for the indigenous teachers – at least for the ones that appear in this study – is to articulate their own project and

make it work under the very limits created by the official Discourse. I will address this issue in the next chapter.

Figure 8 shows the role of teachers in intercultural education. The goals proposed by CGEIB are determined by the National Program of Education, whose ultimate objective is the formation of an intercultural citizen-worker. Contrary to previous goals related to teachers' functions both in the classroom and society, the type of teacher described by the educational system is one who possesses the pedagogic skills and knowledge to prepare the students to interact in the globalized world. The right side of the map shows that indigenous teachers agree on the need to form intercultural individuals, but the function of the teacher is one of being an agent of change for their communities.
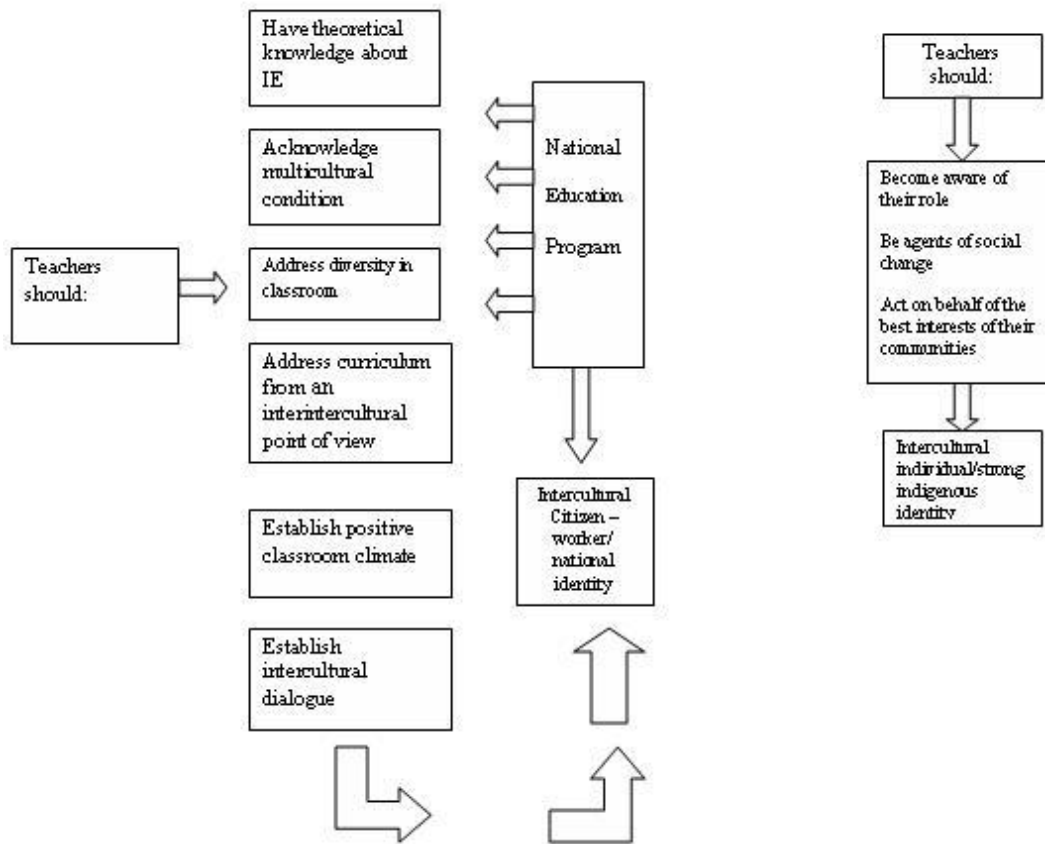
Figure 8. The role of the teachers in intercultural education

CHAPTER 9: HOW INDIGENOUS TEACHERS TRANSFORM, APPROPRIATE OR REJECT INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

9.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapters, I have shown that the Discourse on intercultural education, like any other Discourse, is not a homogeneous entity. On the contrary, there are fractures, contradictions and discontinuities. I have also shown that such Discourse interpellates subjects in different ways. Indeed, even though there seems to be an agreement regarding the applicability of the intercultural model to the whole Mexican population, the goals to be achieved are different. The discursive space of interculturality provides room for opposing views to coexist, but most importantly, the same discursive space allows the existence of points where the Discourse (and practices) of indigenous actors can be articulated. If the Discourse of interculturality is to be coherent, it has to be a dialogic space where the voices of different actors can be heard and negotiated. In addition to preserving the coherence of the intercultural project, the existence of opposing voices also gives legitimacy to the project and maintains the State hegemony, which makes sure that democracy is maintained and minorities are actually permitted to participate in the educational policies it implements.

Although I have addressed the points of view of the indigenous actors in the previous chapters, in this one I will focus on how the indigenous actors have transformed, appropriated or

rejected the official model of intercultural education. As an example of the appropriation of the model, I will analyze a native language literacy program developed by the teachers of the San Isidro - Uringuitiro schools. Since the chapter focuses on the actual appropriation of the intercultural mode, the chapter is divided into two main sections. The first one explores how the indigenous teachers related to intercultural education and their perceptions about their own capacity for action before the new model. The thematic analysis yielded the following themes:

1) Going through the hoops: Agency (or lack thereof) and resistance
2) Between utopia and acculturation
3) Intercultural education as an opportunity

Because the guiding research question for this chapter focuses on the appropriation of intercultural education by the indigenous actors, the second section of the chapter deals with the actual pedagogical implementation of the intercultural model at an indigenous school. I the second section, I will analyze how a group of indigenous teachers have developed their own curriculum and how it is actually implemented in the classroom. In order to understand the differences and overlaps between the indigenous and the official curricular guidelines, I will explore the indigenous proposal in-depth as well as analyze model lesson plans. I will finish the section by analyzing actual classroom interaction to explore how intercultural education – or rather the indigenous actors' conception of intercultural education − is played out in the classroom.

9.2 GOING THROUGH THE HOOPS: AGENCY (OR LACK OF THEREOF) AND RESISTANCE

Previously, I showed how the indigenous actors (i.e., teachers, researchers and teacher educators) received the model of intercultural education. For them, it seemed as one more change in a long list of policies. In particular, the indigenous teachers felt that the changes were imposed on them. In Chapter Six, I analyzed how teachers were told that there was another name for indigenous education. Posterior workshops informed them about the characteristics of the model and the pedagogic changes that they should implement. What was apparent in these interviews was that teachers, through their discourse, manifested a sense of lack of agency because they were forced to change.

Agency can be understood as "the socioculturally mediated capacity to act" (Ahearn, 2001b, p. 112). Even though the concept of agency is frequently used in anthropology and discourse analysis, its use is not exempt from controversies because of problems related to its definition and its implications. For instance, Ortner (2006) argues that emphasis on agency downplays the importance of social, historic and cultural processes, whereby it overemphasizes individuals' intentionality. Indeed, the idea of an individual freely defining one's goals and imposing his/her actions in the world implies a simple interplay of intentions, outcomes and the sociocultural factors that mediate them. In addition, the idea of making choices and imposing them on the world does not describe the experience of subordinated subjects. In this respect, Smith's research (1987, as cited in Davies and Harré, 1990), refers to the experience of women, who although doing actions that seem agentive are not considered as such because women have been discursively constructed as non-agentive, non-powerful subjects, whose actions are

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considered supportive at best. Thus, individuals' actions are not per se agentive, but they depend on current discursive practices and the positioning of the subjects within them. However, this last idea has also been contested, since as Foucault (1980) has pointed out, people still make agentive choices, even though they are constrained by ideological frameworks that limit their thoughts and actions.

Despite the problems in its definition, there seems to be some degree of agreement in the conceptualization of agency:

1) It is a human universal capacity that is culturally, socially and historically constructed and mediated (Ahearn, 2001a).

2) Agency is not a thing, but a process that is involved in the transformation of social and cultural structures (Ortner, 2006).

3) Agency is not a monolithic entity. Rather, there are several types of agency and they can be multiply enacted during interaction. Therefore, agency should not be reduced to resistance or free will (Ahearn, 2001b).

Studies on agency in linguistics have focused on describing how in transitive sentences, an agent − or subject − is the cause of a change of state in an object or patient. Discourse analysis, however, looks at how grammatical and lexical choices (together with other linguistic devices) are used by speakers to signal the way in which they position themselves in relation to other subjects or objects in the world. These grammatical and lexical choices are used to accomplish linguistic strategies that fit the discursive and communicative goals of the speaker by downplaying or emphasizing certain actors, actions or events (See Kress and Hodge, 1979). Some studies on agency have focused on determining how transactiveness (i.e., the representation of an action by semantically mapping an agent and patient, an origin and a

receiver) is used to allocate responsibility. See for instance the study of Henley, Miller and Beazley (1995) in which written news reporting sexual violence against women tended to be presented in passive voice, which downplayed the responsibility of the perpetrators in the eyes of the readers. Other studies focusing on discourse have concentrated on how speakers negotiate their own responsibility through their positioning in narratives (O'connor, 1995; Rymes, 1995) and use of pronouns and speech acts in narratives (De Fina, 1999).

In this study, I will adopt Ahearn's (2001b, p. 112) definition of agency as "the capacity to act socioculturally mediated." This definition is wide enough to function as a framework to understand how the indigenous participants enact agency through their discourse and practices. I will especially focus on oppositional agency – or resistance – because of its prevalence on the discourse of the interviewees. I am defining resistance as oppositional discourses and practices that challenge power. Critical approaches to the study of resistance in education (see Collins, 1996) traditionally have focused on exploring how individuals pose challenges to authority, which in turn exerts power on them. However, resistance in this conception seems quite deterministic, with actors exerting power on one end and subjects resisting on the other. I understand resistance as a fluid concept that is co-constructed by both the authorities and the indigenous educators. As I will show in the following sections, the educational authorities exert power and the indigenous actors challenge it; however, both are constrained by the rules of their interaction. As Scott (1990) has argued, both dominant and dominated subjects follow "scripts" that regulate and maintain their position. In the same way, McLeod (1992) goes beyond a linear conception of agency and resistance by pointing out that individuals (Islamic women in her study) do more than just accept or resist oppression. They can challenge, accept, or ignore it, sometimes all at once. This complex interplay of agency and resistance renders power

relationships as a struggle that is complicated by the individuals' own subjectivity and purposes (McLeod, 1992, p. 534).

Thus, by understanding both agency and oppositional agency as fluid concepts I will be able to explore how agency and resistance are played in the acceptance/rejection/appropriation of the intercultural model. It also will allow me to locate agency and resistance both in individual events and also as a "big picture" that emerges through the discourse and practices of the educational authorities and indigenous actors.

In the interviews with the indigenous teachers, a recurrent theme was agency or lack of thereof with respect to the decisions of educational authorities, policies, and interactions with mestizo individuals and the mestizo culture. For instance, Pedro's story on the mestizo teacher's excitement about finding out about the existence of indigenous communities is an interesting example of how the indigenous individuals report their perceived capacity for agency. I have referred to this story in Chapter Seven, where I explained it as a complaint, but I believe it is worth analyzing it in terms of agency and resistance. I am presenting the whole stanza below:

(47)

01 P: All intercultural education
02 the courses were aimed at all the teachers/
03 now I liked Querétaro very much because because here we realized that:/
04 that many teachers from general elementary schools/ |
05 R: uhu/ |
06 P: P's they say that indigenismo does not exist in México anymore/
07 that there are no ethnic groups anymore/
08 like they were surprised when "well we are P'urhépechas, we speak P'urhépecha"/
09 R: in Querétaro? That's weird, isn't it?
10 because in Querétaro there are/ |
11 P: No, they were/ |
12 it was a [female] teacher from Guanajuato the one who surprised us with "how is it possible that ethnic groups exist?"/
13 R: In Guanajuato there are as well/ ((cuckles))
14 P: yes but what happens is that [they] are radicals, no?/

15 to the extermination of the ethnic groups/ |
16 R: mh/ |
17 P: I understood it like that because [she] got surprised/
18 when a [female] teacher:/
19 I don't remember, from San Luis Potosí/
20 from: ah: from the. Chichimeca ethnic group/
21 no, Chichimeca or something like this is their name/
22 [she] told us that they tended a group/
23 to a group of what is it called? multi./
24 R: multigrade?/
25 P: multigrade but also multiethnic/
26 [where] there are P'urhépechas that there are I don't know/ |
27 R: uhu from different groups/ |
28 P: uhu from different indigenous groups/
29 and the teacher started "where is that school?" and she started to take out her notebook/
30 "where is it?" "to take the children"/
31 and she imagined that the indigenous [person] walks around with his little feathers and this../
32 well she surprised us/
33 well then we began to show our claws no?/
34 how is it possible? we are not talking about the pre-Hispanic epoch, no?/
35 where people are semi-naked and everything, no?/
36 the thing is that language persists/
37 cultures persist/
38 above all, traditions/
39 but we are not going to see people very different from the other/
40 indigenous people already dress like the others/
41 they are already incorporating themselves regarding dress/
42 to the other culture/
43 then we are not going to see that/
44 but simply what distinguishes us is language/
45 and traditions and costumes/
46 and then the [female] teacher got surprised and tell us "no because.."/
47 well what it pained me is that she said "where so [I] can take the children, so they find out how indigenous are"/
48 as if there were an enor:mous difference no?/ ((chuckles))
49 then it did surprise us what she said because almost fifty percent were indigenous and fifty percent were of the other system/
50 well the majority understood because even we did activities in which we used our language in translations/
51 all those things that they, we said to them "you can tell us, you can speak in two three languages, it may be English, may be French/
52 but the thing is that there is an overlap/
53 in this way I understand interculturality

01 P: o sea todo la educación intercultural/

02 o sea los cursos talleres fueran dirigidos a todos los docentes/
03 'ora a mi me gustó mucho en Querétaro porque porque ahí bueno nos dimos cuenta de
    que:/
04 de que muchos docentes de primarias generales/ |
05 R: uhu/ |
06 P: p's dicen que ya no existe el indigenismo en México/
07 que ya no hay grupos étnicos/
08 como que se sorprendieron cuando "bueno nosotros somos P'urhépechas", nosotros
     hablamos el P'urhépecha/
09 R: en Querétaro? Que raro no?/
10 porque en Querétaro hay./ |
11 P: no es que eran / |
12 era una maestra de Guanajuato que nos sorprendió con eso de que "como es posible de que
     existan grupos étnicos?/
13 R: en Guanajuato también hay/ ((chuckles))
14 P: pues si pero lo que pasa es que son los radicales no?/
15 al exterminio de de los grupos étnicos/ ((chuckles)) |
16 R: mh/ |
17 P: así lo entendí yo porque se sorprendió/
18 cuando una maestra:/
19 no me acuerdo, de San Luis Potosí/
20 de los: o sea del grupo étnico de los. Chichimeca/
21 no, chichimeca o algo así se llama/
22 nos dijo que ellos atendían a un grupo/
23 a un grupo de cómo le llaman? Multi./
24 R: multigrado?/
25 P: multigrado pero también multietnico/
26 Que hay P'urhépechas que hay no sé:/
27 R: uhu de distintos grupos/ |
28 P: uhu de distintos grupos indígenas/ |
29 y que la maestra empezó "en dónde está esa escuela" y empezó a sacar su libreta/
30 "en qué parte está? para llevar a los niños"/
31 y ella se imaginaba que todavía el indígena anda con sus plumitas y su../
32 bueno pues nos sorprendió/
33 bueno ahí nosotros empezamos a sacar garras no?/
34 como va a ser posible? o sea no estamos hablando de la época prehispánica no?/
35 o sea de que todavía la gente está semidesnuda y todo, no?/
36 la cosa es que persiste la lengua/
37 persisten las culturas/
38 sobre todo las normas, las tradiciones/
39 pero no vamos a ver una gente de que va a ser muy diferente a otra/
40 ya la gente indígena se viste igual/
41 ya se están incorporando al a cultura en cuanto a la vestimenta/
42 a la otra cultura/
43 entonces no vamos a ver eso/
44 sino simplemente aquí lo que nos distingue es el lenguaje/

45 y los usos y costumbres/
46 y entonces la maestra se sorprendió y dice "no por que:."/
47 o sea a mi lo que me dolió mucho es que ella decía "donde para llevar a los niños, para que se enteren cómo son los indígenas"/
48 como si hubiera una diferencia eno:rme no?/ ((chuckles))
49 entonces <u>si</u> nos sorprendió con lo que dijo porque bueno porque casi el 50% eran indígenas y el 50% eran del otro sistema/
50 pues si la mayoría entendió porque incluso nosotros hicimos actividades en el cual utilizamos nuestra lengua y la traducción/
51 todas esas cosas que ellos, bueno nosotros les decíamos "pero ustedes nos pueden decir, hablar en dos tres idiomas, puede ser el inglés, puede ser el francés"/
52 pero la cosa es que haya un intercale/
53 no yo así le entiendo la interculturalidad/

Pedro's story was embedded within a question that explored what he thought about the directionality of intercultural education. His story functions as a complaint and a comment about the mestizo teacher's lack of sensitivity and ignorance about the ethnic composition of the country. The mestizo teacher showed her ignorance regarding the existence of indigenous schools within the educational system, and adopted a "tourist" approach towards them by requesting information about the school location in order to take the mestizo children on a visit, as if the indigenous children were attractions to see (lines 29-30). Pedro depicts the mestizo teacher's lack of sensitivity − which also reflects a general attitude from the rest of the population − by reporting her speech. Certainly, we cannot assume that this report is verbatim, but it shows his perception about what happened. Pedro uses this constructed dialogue as an involvement strategy to help me make sense of what is reported, and to share his negative experience with his audience.

Reported speech, or constructed dialogue, can be a sort of re-enactment in which the speaker constructs the events that occurred at a certain point in the past for the audience. The reported speech that speakers focus on is not a verbatim report of what happened. Rather, the words used by the reporter, as well as the aspect of the encounter (s)he chooses to focus on, show

what was relevant for that subject during interaction and his/her positioning during the interaction. Tannen (1989), referring to reported speech, states that

> In the deepest sense, the words have ceased to be those of the speaker to whom they are attributed, having been appropriated by the speaker who is repeating them. (p. 101)

In the same trend, Polanyi (1982) argues that narrators manipulate their point of view on the interaction they are reporting on. Thus, the narration can be told from the point of view of a character, a witness or a narrator. The subjective nature of reported speech is due to its belonging to two different worlds: the "reported context" (i.e., the context in which the interaction took place) and the "reporting context" (i.e. the context in which the narration is taking place). For these reasons, Tannen (1989) argues that reported speech would be better understood as constructed dialogue. Furthermore, constructed dialogue can be understood as an involvement strategy not only because it has the power to help the hearer to participate and make sense of the story, but also because it gives immediacy and drama to it.

By using reported speech, Pedro reinforces involvement and shows how agency is played in this episode. In the opening of the story, Pedro is narrating his story as an individual and as an indigenous teacher, as his pronominal choice reflects it. But in line 32 he produces an expressive speech act − that is, an act that describes how the teachers felt about a situation (Searle, 1979) − that states incredulity about the teachers' comments and beliefs (line 32), "it surprised us," but then he states "we indigenous showed our claws" (line 33). This metaphor conveys strength, which positions the indigenous teachers as powerful individuals who are able to defend themselves, but it also affirms their collective agency since they work together in this manifestation of defense and force. At this point, Pedro has changed his pronominal choice from "I" to "we," which also accomplishes a change of footing from an individual to a collective.

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The lexical choices that Pedro uses to report the mestizo teacher's thoughts reflect disdain towards the indigenous peoples ("and she imagined that the indigenous [person] walks around with his little feathers and this"). In Spanish, diminutives are intensifiers that can be used both to express endearment or scorn, and scorn is what Pedro is trying to convey. On the other hand, his discourse about what identifies an indigenous person is much more technical. Contrary to the words he uses to describe the mestiza teacher's thoughts (i.e., diminutives), he utilizes a higher register. For instance, instead of using the word "dress," he employs the more sophisticated "vestimenta" (clothes, garments). In the same way, Pedro uses "lenguaje" (language) instead of the more commonly used word "lengua" (tongue) to refer to the P'urhépecha language. This change in jargon signals a change of footing and shows that Pedro is talking as an academic. It is important to mention that Pedro is part of a select group of indigenous teachers who possess a *licenciatura* (bachelor's degree) in indigenous education, and at the moment of the data collection he was doing a master's degree, so in the interview he not only is retelling his experience with the mestizo teacher, but also offering explanations about identity, language and culture as an academic.

In line 47, Pedro changes footing by expressing his personal pain ("well what pained me is that she said "'where so [I] can take the children, so they find out how indigenous are'"). By using an expressive speech act that denotes his emotional state, Pedro conveys his lack of agency, since what he can do is just to react emotionally to the teacher's comments; however, he changes his footing again to become part of a collective to assert their agency. At the end of the segment, Pedro states that the other teachers and him used their native language to carry out activities in which the other teachers could see that their language was as functional as Spanish in the academic field. Furthermore, they compare their language to other prestigious languages.

At the end of his story, Pedro goes back to answering my initial question by saying that he understands interculturality as an "overlap" (*intercale*) of cultures (line 52).

Pedro's use of reported speech, although limited, is used to create important discursive strategies. He first presents a context in which the speech of the mestizo teacher reflects a lack of information and a negative attitude against the indigenous populations. Pedro's evaluation of the circumstances shows his lack of agency, but then he regroups with the other teachers to form a collective capable of action, arguing and challenging the assumptions of the mestizo teacher.

How agency is played out, both at the collective and individual level, is a theme that frequently appears with respect to the lost of ethnic identity, which is rooted in the native language and culture. The following excerpt was partially analyzed in excerpt (44) in Chapter Eight, but I will go over it again to explore agency issues in-depth. José (Cherán Normal school), starts out by answering a question about the target population of intercultural education, but immediately he shifts the focus of the answer to explain how teachers were trained and how the official curriculum – which was shared with the mestizo population – sent the message of the superiority of the Spanish language, rendering their language as not suitable for academic purposes. In line 04, José marks the lack of agency of indigenous teachers by using a construction in the passive voice ("we were formed ah: in the same way in which mestizos were formed"). Indigenous teachers appear as the patient to be formed under the "same contents, with the same language and all of that, right?" As a result of the above actions, their "knowledge, our attitudes, our language were left aside." This chain of events shows that the indigenous teachers are subjected to the decisions of the educational system. That they feel unable to react shows that they internalized the dominant rules ("then at the moment that we began to study we think that ah what is useful is…the Spanish culture"). This symbolic violence (Bourdieu and Passeron,

1990) imposes the message not only about the superiority of Spanish and the mestizo population, but it also reinforces the lack of agency within the indigenous teachers. In lines 11-13, José explains the capability of the native tongue to function as do other major languages, and explains why teachers have not been properly prepared in their native language to make it happen. The reported speech that José describes in lines 14 and 15 actually reinforces the indigenous teachers' lack of agency. In line 14, he introduces an assertive speech act ("your language is not useful") that evaluates the usefulness of the indigenous tongue, and positions indigenous teachers as simple recipients of such evaluation: "They have told us." The following line, José reports a clear command by using the imperative mode: "You (plural) have to learn to speak Spanish," and then again he positions the indigenous teachers (and presumably of the whole indigenous population) as oppressed individuals by using a passive construction ("we were forced to learn Spanish") and a verb that not only implies transactiveness, but also denotes a certain degree of violence (to force). Finally, he concludes by stating that in order to be accepted, they had to speak Spanish:

(48)

01 J: well that education has to be directed at all inhabitants/
02 from ah: children, ah: youth, teachers/
03 ah: something is happening with the teachers/
04 we were formed ah: in the same way in which mestizos were formed/
05 with the same contents, with the same language and all that, right?/
06 then ah: our knowledge, our attitudes, our language were left aside… right?/
07 then at the moment that we began to study we think that ah what is useful is…the Spanish culture, P'urhépecha or the indigenous language isn't, because we are not using it for…as a means for preparation, right?/
08 but we just use it to communicate among ourselves/
09 R: ok/
10 J: Yes, there has not (inaudible) up to now books where it could be written right?/
11 everything is written in Spanish, English, French and all knowledge can also be written in P'urhépecha/
13 they can be they can be made public in the indigenous language but it has not be done perhaps because our formation has been insufficient/

14 [they] have told us "your language is not useful"/
15 "I know that you have to learn to speak Spanish"/
16 [they] forced us to learn to speak Spanish/
17 in order to be accepted to (inaudible)/

01 J: Pues esa educación tiene que estar dirigido a todos a todos los habitantes/
02 pues este: desde los niños, los este: los jóvenes, los maestros/
03 este está pasando una cosa con los maestros/
04 nosotros fuimos formados este: en la misma manera en que se formaron los mestizos/
05 con los mismos contenidos, con el mismo idioma y todo eso, verdad?
06 entonces este: nuestros conocimientos, nuestra actitudes, nuestro idioma quedaron a un lado…verdad?/
07 entonces en el momento en que nosotros empezamos a estudiar pensamos que este que lo que sirve …es la cultura español, el P'urhépecha o la lengua indígena no, porque no lo estamos utilizando para…como un medio de preparación, verdad?/
08 sino que eso lo utilizamos nada mas para comunicarnos entre nosotros mismos/
09 R: Ya:
10 J: Si, no (inaudible) ha habido hasta la fecha libros donde se puedan escribir verdad?/
11 todo lo que está escrito en español, el inglés, en francés y todos los conocimientos se pueden escribir este también en P'urhépecha/
13 se pueden se pueden dar a conocer también en la lengua indígena pero no se ha hecho porque tal vez nuestra formación ha sido escasa/
14 nos han dicho pues "no sirve su lengua"/
15 "Se que tienen que aprender a hablar español"/
16 a nosotros nos obligaban a hablar en español/
17 para poder ser aceptados en (inaudible)/

From the interviews, it seems that history and the teachers' experience have left a deep mark in the teachers' perspective on what they can or cannot do in the educational system, and what the results were on their identity and sense of power. Below I will analyze some extensive quotations from Lolita's interview (Cherán Normal School). Because of her position as both an administrator and teacher educator, but also as an intermediary between the educational system and the community, Lolita shows a unique perspective about the tensions between the State and grassroots efforts to implement new curricula in teacher education schools. In addition, Lolita's narrative style uses reported speech, which makes it more illustrative of the issue of agency.

In the interview Lolita discussed the need to give official status and independence to their normal school. Such independence should be in accordance with tenets of intercultural

education. Then she talked about the struggles of the normal school to get approval from the Secretariat of Education due to the fact that their proposed curriculum and plan of studies differed from the official guidelines. In line 01, she referred to the "…documents that come," or the official guidelines, and how the professors are again told 'to change this and that" (line 02). This reported speech is also a command in which the professors are told what to do, with no right to reply, as I will show below; however, in the next line, Lolita shows that the professors did not just follow orders, but rather pretend to do it or do it in an incomplete way ("and then one just like pretend to patch it up"). Thus, despite receiving official orders, teachers still exert oppositional agency in their decisions, even within official rules and regulations.

Lolita's discourse also shows that despite the official Discourse that gives indigenous teachers freedom to determine their curricular contents, such freedom exists only up to a certain point. In this case, the indigenous teachers were only allowed to follow the official programs for normal schools, and add to it, but still within certain limits that preserve the number of credit-hours described in the curricular maps and forms of evaluation. Although it is not reported in this part of the interview, Lolita also talked about the problems they had in order to have P'urhépecha language and culture classes approved as part of the official curriculum. Lolita refers to this event by stating that it was difficult to deal with it, because they were told not to step out of the established legal framework (line 23). The modal expression and directive speech act reported here establish the teachers' responsibilities and limits that should not be transgressed. Lolita stressed the word "no" to further emphasize this prohibition. Lolita's reaction to this imposition is to point out that their proposal comes out of necessity (line 25). Her speech act, although an assertion, also works as an explanation and as a plea; the rising pitch in the word "necessity" stresses the urgency of her plea. Interestingly, Lolita changes her footing in line (27), as she

switches her voice from an individual mediating with the educational authorities, to being part of an indigenous collective − and her pronominal choice reflects it. As part of this collective, Lolita wonders how they can surpass the problem and who will allow them to surpass it, because it does not depend on them. She finishes her explanation recounting what they were allowed to do ("they allowed us to add but not to take away anything from the other"). I believe this stanza shows Lolita's perceived lack of agency, especially in lines 22-33. Whether the teachers liked or not, they had to follow the guidelines no matter how defective ("even though it had misspellings it had to be respected") they were. I think that Lolita's use of the word "respect" shows precisely the submission of the teachers to the rules of the system, and the attitude that the system would want them to have, that is, respect to the rules as a natural fact. The last lines show the naturalization of this relationship by stating, "Well that's the way it is."

(49)

01 L: Because in all the documents that come/
02 "Change this and that"/
03 there is something pre-established alright/
04 R: huh/
05 and then one just like pretends to patch it up/
06 for example: the program of the normal
07 they told us that everything that any program of any normal school had/
08 plus what we ah:…/
09 R: you'd like to add?/
10 yes, [what] we wanted to add/
11 but as I tell you [formal] everything was already pre-established/
12 there we had the problem of/
13 of regulations/
14 because there are some that have to be dealt with at school/
15 well and with our addition/
16 the [credit] hours were extended/
17 R: OK/
18 and then the evaluation criteria are altered/
19 the [number] of work hours was altered/
20 all that is altered/
21 R: OK/
22 then there it was very difficult because [they] use to say to us/

23 "you do <u>not</u> have to step out of the established legal framework"/
24 what the norm says/
25 well then I said "well but because of the need^"/
26 "how do we do it to surpass that?"/
27 and who is going to allow us to surpass [that]?/
28 R: of course…then there was no political will for that?/
29 L: they allowed us to add but not to take away anything from the other/
30 whether we liked it or not/
31 nothing should be taken away/
32 even though it had misspellings it had to be respected/
33 well that's the way it is/

01 L: Porque en todos los documentos que vienen/
02 "que adecua esto y que"/
03 ya hay algo prestablecido pues/
04R: Uhu
05 L: Y entonces uno nada mas como que le parcha ahí/
06 por ejemplo: el programa de la normal/
07 nos dijeron que todo lo que llevaba cualquier este programa de alguna otra normal/
08 y más lo que nosotros este.../
09 R: quisieran agregar?/
10 L: sí, quisiéramos agregar/
11 pero pues como le digo ya estaba prestablecido todo/
12 allí tuvimos el problema de../
13 de normativamente/
14 pues son ciertas las que se tienen que manejar en una escuela/
15 bueno y con nuestro agregado../
16 pues ya se estaban extendiendo las horas
17 R: Ya/
18 L: Entonces se alteran los criterios de evaluación/
19 se alteran las horas de trabajo/
20 se altera eh este todo/
21 R: ya/
22 L: entonces ahí estuvo muy difícil porque como nos decían/
23 "es que <u>no</u> te tienes que salir del marco jurídico establecido"/
24 Lo que la norma este dice/
25 bueno entonces yo decía "bueno pero por la necesidad^/
26 "como le hacemos para rebasar eso?"/
27 y quien nos va a permitir rebasar?/
28 R: claro...entonces no había voluntad política para eso?/
29 L: nos permitieron nada mas agregar pero no quitar nada de lo otro/
30 así nos parezca o no nos parezca/
31 no se debió de quitar nada/
32 aunque tuviera también faltas de ortografía y si habría que tener respeto/
33 bueno se da de esa forma/

The acceptance of the rules does not go free of criticisms from Lolita. In the following stanza, she recaps saying what they had to do ("we did not alter anything," "just added contents"). But then in line 05, she introduces a criticism against the contradictions between the official goals and the objectives of intercultural education regarding respect between groups. Lolita clarifies that "we cannot not feel" (i.e., disrespected) in view of what happens in practice. Furthermore, the new policy seems to belong to the discursive or textual realm because it does not solve much, although it may be very well written. Lolita stresses the difference between reality and discourse in line 12, when after criticizing the actual practices of imposition goes on reflecting on the need to experiment before suggesting ideal conditions (lines 13-14). However, by using verbs in the conditional tense, Lolita expresses the imaginary, non-real nature of her own reflections and wishes. In line 13, she uses a sort of imaginary reported speech to further place her opinions in an unreal realm in which she could say how things should be done correctly, or ideally. As I will show below, the objectives of the intercultural model are seen as a utopia both for the indigenous and the mestizo actors, which has strong political implications.

(50)

01 L: well but/
02 we did not alter anything/
03 just added contents/
04 then I say if…/
05 if ah:…talking about objectives and seeing that intention, that in order to create
    respect between groups and that we do not feel/
06 we cannot not feel like this/
07 that is that that approach does not ah:/
08 well like it does not remedy much
09 because like I say to you [formal] it is well written/
10 intention is fine/
11 R: uhu/
12 but in reality/
13 yes? and what I could [say] <u>before</u> thinking to say "this should be ideal"/
14 well that it was worked out well in order to experiment/

15 yes?/

01 L: Pero bueno/
02 no alteramos nada/
03 más que agregar contenidos/
04 entonces yo digo bueno si.../
05 si este si este...si hablando de objetivos y viendo esa intención de que pues para crear respeto entre grupos y que no nos sintamos/ /
06 no podemos no sentir así//
07 o sea ese enfoque no nos este:/
08 como que no nos remedia gran cosa/
09 porque como le digo esta bien escrito/
10 la intención está bien/
11 R: uhu/
12 L: pero ya la realidad/
13 sí? y lo que yo si pudiera antes de pensar en decir "así sería lo ideal"/
14 pues que se trabajara bien para poder este experimentar/
15 sí?/

The lack of autonomy of the teachers with respect to the intercultural model appears in different ways during the interview. In the following segment, I asked Lolita about the idea of intercultural education being a utopia, to which she answered by pointing out the lack of autonomy suffered not only by the indigenous teachers, but by all Mexicans:

(51)

01 What happens is that we cannot hide/
02 that we are not autonomous/
03 that is in a way or other there is a matter of educational policy where we are taken to, yes?/
04 and that we can't and we felt it more clearly and saw it more clearly/
05 when we wanted to do our own program/
06 R:uhu/
07 and that was rejected for eight years/
08 R: for eight years?/
09 yes/
10 R: then there is no autonomy and…/
11 L: that is well, and I could even say among all Mexicans/
12 there is no autonomy that [things] are done, that certain methodologies are created here/

01 L: lo que pasa es que no podemos ocultar/
02 que nosotros no somos autónomos/

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03 o sea de alguna u otra manera hay una cuestión de política educativa en donde nos
   llevan, sí?/
04 y que no podemos este y nosotros lo sentimos más claro y lo vimos más claro/
05 cuando quisimos hacer nuestro propio programa/
06 R: uhu/
07 L: y que nos fue rechazado durante ocho años
08 R: durante ocho años?/
09 L: sí/
10 R: entonces no hay autonomía y…/
11 L: o sea entre bueno, pudiera incluso decir entre todos los mexicanos/
12 no hay una autonomía de que se hagan, que se creen ciertas metodologías acá/

By using an assertive speech act that incorporates lexical forms that express modality ("**what happens** is that **we cannot** hide"), Lolita describes the fact that no one can deny or hide: the lack of autonomy of indigenous subjects (and later   of all Mexicans) regarding the educational policies that are imposed on them (line 2). The experience of eight years in which their curricular proposal was rejected by the Secretariat of Education limits the ability of the indigenous teachers and all Mexicans to create new methodologies. In this sense, teachers are "taken to" educational policies that are not decided by them.

Later in the interview, Lolita emphasized such impositions by using three metaphors in which she expresses the indigenous teachers' powerlessness to keep up with policy changes and the lack of resources that would allow them to face the challenges created by these changes. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1981), metaphors are not just matters of elegant or novelistic language. Rather, they are used in everyday life in reasoning and understanding processes. Metaphors make abstract concepts more comprehensible because they structure our perceptions and understandings in terms of more concrete domains closer to our experiences. Thus, Lolita uses metaphors to help me understand their dominated position in the educational system. In the following excerpt, Lolita answers my question about intercultural education becoming a permanent policy, as opposed to disappearing after president Fox's presidential administration.

She stated that it depended on the teachers and on the educational authority (lines 4-5); she then breaks the frame again and goes back to discussing the teachers' lack of power in relation to policy changes. Lolita shifts the focus of her answer (line 06) and reports a dialogue that someone apparently had with the educational authorities (the identity of the listener is not reported, but contextually it can be assumed that Lolita is talking to the educational authority). In this reported speech, she refers again to the teachers' lack of agency by requesting that the authorities not make them "jump" from one approach to another (line 07). To make someone jump is a metaphor that shows the power of the person who is exercising the authority, as in the saying "if I tell you to jump, you ask how high." In addition, "jumping" from one approach to another also reflects a sense of incompleteness, of not having enough time for finishing something due to the quick movement from one side to the other. In line 09, Lolita extends her metaphor to a race, in which the educational authority drives a brand new car and the indigenous teachers ride a donkey. This metaphor reveals a lot about how the mainstream educational system and the educational authorities are perceived: fast, modern, urban and updated, while indigenous teachers are rural, backward, old-fashioned and slow. The metaphor continues in line 12, where she points to the extra time (and presumably the experience gained from it) that the mainstream system has had in comparison with the indigenous one, which "is just setting off," so it is not possible to compete with them in curricular matters.

(52)

01 R: so how do you see [formal] the future, teacher?/
02 is the program eliminated after six years, [does it] continue/
03 what do you think?/
04 L: because it also depends on us, yes?/
05 it depends on the authorities that are managing educational policy/
06 because I even made a proposal to them, I told them "listen, we"/
07 that is "don't make us jump from one side to the other"/
08 R: mh!

09: L: because it is as if we were racing/
10 while you ride on a brand new car I ride a donkey/
11 yes?/
12 or while you left yesterday I'm just setting off and you want to compete with me/
13 R: uhu, uhu/
14 L: that's where we are with the issue of the curricular proposal/

01 R: y entonces como ve el futuro, maestra?
02 se elimina el programa en los seis años, continúa?/
03 qué le parece?/
04 L: porque también eso depende de nosotros, si?/
05 depende de las instancias que estén manejando la política educativa/
06 porque yo incluso les hacia un planteamiento, les decía "oigan, para nosotros"/
07 o sea "no nos hagan brincar de un enfoque a otro"/
08 R: mh!
09 L: porque es como que si nos vamos a las carreras/
10 mientras que tu vas en coche ultimo modelo yo me voy en un burro/
11 Si?/
12 o mientras tu salistes ayer, yo voy saliendo ahorita y quieres competir conmigo/
13 R: uhu, uhu/
14 L: entonces así estamos con la cuestión de la propuesta curricular/

What I have analyzed in this section is the way in which indigenous actors have experienced their powerlessness or lack of agency with the mainstream educational system. Certainly, the theme of agency is quite recurrent, and it is framed within a context in which, as victims, they have the authority to report abuses and express their rejection about the absurdity of the demands that are exerted upon them − for instance, in the case where the teachers were banned from changing anything from the official plan of studies, even misspellings. Reported speech, or constructed dialogue, played an important role in expressing lack of agency. Through these mini-dramas or "little-shows" (Goffman, 1986), the indigenous actors reconstructed their experience, but embedded in such reconstruction are their own voices. Vološhinov (1973) has pointed out that it is in fact difficult to distinguish between the voice of the narrator and the voice of the person who originally uttered the words because they become blended to such a degree so that the two cannot be distinguished one from the other. This blending of voices renders the

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original report a subjective construction. Certainly, when the teachers assume the voice of the Other, it stresses their ignorance, as in Pedro's story, where the mestizo teacher ignored the existence of indigenous schools and populations. Or, it emphasizes the majority's authoritarianism, as in the case of the educational authorities. The reported speech then becomes a commentary on these negative elements during interaction, the identities of the parties involved, and the projects of the indigenous actors.

The lack of agency of the indigenous teachers is constructed by their lexical and grammatical choices. The speech acts used by them in reported speech places indigenous teachers as patients in transactive actions. Teachers can only react with emotions or evaluations of the situations to the commands or actions exerted upon them; however, together with the construction of lack of agency, teachers also show glimpses that they can be more than just subjects undergoing domination. Indeed, the construction of a collective voice through pronominal choices shows, like in the case of Pedro, that these teachers working together were able to "show their claws" and demonstrate that their language was as suitable as any other prestigious language used in academia. In addition, Lolita's "patched up" curricular proposal falls along the "weapons of the weak" that Scott (1985) discusses. That is, before the impossibility of an open confrontation with the dominant elites, people resort to other mediums to express their rebellion and resistance. On the hand, dominant actors are obliged to keep up a script in which they exert power no matter how illogical the situation. The fact that misspellings had to be preserved in the indigenous teachers' curricular proposal is an example of how authority has to be preserved even when it is wrong. Undeniably, there is symbolic violence involved in this dominant relationship, but the indigenous actors find ways to articulate their projects within the limits of the discourse of intercultural education.

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9.3 BETWEEN UTOPIA AND ACCULTURATION

This chapter deals with how indigenous teachers accept, reject or modify the model of intercultural education in their discourse. As I have explained in the previous section, the model was very much imposed on the teachers. In this sense, the model has primarily made them "suffer," but I have also showed that the teachers are not as helpless as it might seem. They have shown resistance through their discourse and practices.

One more theme that fits within this framework is the issue of intercultural education perceived by indigenous teachers as oscillating between a utopia and the ultimate method to ease the assimilation of the indigenous children into mestizo society. During informal conversations with indigenous actors, the word utopia came up relatively frequently. Interestingly, the theme appeared as such only in four of the interviews that form the corpus of this study. Certainly, this is a low percentage of appearance, but because the theme appears in the official documents of the Secretariat of Education, I think it is worth taking an in-depth look at the implications of describing the goals of intercultural education as a utopia.

The Royal Academy of the Spanish Language, defines utopia as a "Plan, project, doctrine or optimistic system that appears as unattainable at the moment of its formulation" (Real Academia Española, 2007, my translation). Thus, the word utopia carries the connotation of being something ideal that may or may not be possible, at least at the beginning, but it opens the door to future possibilities. Traditionally, utopias have functioned as imaginary places or states that drive the actions of visionaries who lead their peers to better futures. The idea of utopia is not unfamiliar in Mexican history. For instance, the ideology of *mestizaje* can be seen as a racial

utopia that would unify different races, erasing the problems caused by other differences, like social class or gender (Grijalva, 2004).

Intercultural education appears in the official documents of CGEIB as a utopia, goal or ideal that has to be achieved: "A relationship between cultures from egalitarian planes. Without asymmetries. It is an arriving point. A utopia. We should walk towards it" (Schmelkes, 2001a, p. 1, my translation). The use of the word utopia in this context reveals that egalitarian relationships are utopian and not realizable. However, the author expresses that such a utopia is a future that can be reached by working (walking) towards it. By situating egalitarian relationships in the future, the possible failure to achieve this "arriving point" and the work needed to do it are downplayed. After all, the future is wide open and things may or may not happen. The Secretariat of Education also situates intercultural education as a means to achieve "an ideal of a country" (or an ideal country) whose character has been depicted in the constitutional amendments that acknowledge the multicultural nature of the country:

> The current social and political transformations that the country is living are expressed in the constitutional and institutional reforms that have been carried out in the last years, particularly in the content of Articles 1 and 2 of the Political Constitution of the Mexican United States. Bilingual and intercultural education, as a right and as a strategic project to achieve an ideal of a country, is contemplated in the 2nd constitutional article; in this it is recognized the pluricultural composition of the Mexican nation. (SEP, 2004, p. 9, my translation)

To use intercultural education as a means to achieve an ideal nation is a strategy similar to the one reported above. By proposing an ideal country to be constructed, existing problems are deflected away, and a future solution is promised by the implementation of an educational project that may consolidate the social and political transformations that the country is already undergoing. Offering an educational solution to social and political demands is not a new in Mexican history. As Vaughn reports (1982), the post-revolutionary governments of Mexico used

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public education as a way to respond to the demands of the peasant and lower class masses, but at the same time, this saved the political and economic elites from addressing other social, political and economic demands. The symbolic capital acquired through education functioned as a placebo for the lower classes that hoped to achieve social mobility through education. Intercultural education has the same potential, because it offers, at least for the indigenous populations, the promise to achieve a more egalitarian relationship with the mestizo society, a certain degree of autonomy in educational matters, and the preservation of their languages and cultures.

Certainly, situating intercultural education and interculturality within the plane of utopias causes problems for the system, which has to be able to offer better alternatives or solutions that are realizable within the time of the presidential period in which educational policies are implemented. So, how is the idea of intercultural education as a utopia managed? In his interview, Jorge (CGEIB) answers this question by explaining again that intercultural education is an arrival point that is difficult to reach because of structural and historic conditions. In addition, when compared to other policies, it has been active for a very short period of time has produced nothing. Jorge prosodycally stresses the word "nothing" and repeats it three times to show how little time the model has been around. Indeed, the results of an educational policy can only be measured many years after its implementation, which very appropriately renders intercultural education as an arrival point; however, Jorge's discourse is interesting because of his contradictions regarding the utopian nature of intercultural education. In line 03, he uses an interrogative − which basically functions as a rhetorical question − to answer why they (i.e., the policy brokers from CGEIB) do not believe that intercultural education is a utopia, but then he affirms that indeed they believe it is but they want it to be a creative one. What he means by this

is unclear in this context, but it may refer to the capacity of utopias to create goals and produce

venues of action to achieve them. The rest of Jorge's answer functions, just like in the case of the

above utterances, to defend the model against criticisms about its lack of political and economic

preoccupations. At the same time, he limits the scope of action of intercultural education to

educational objectives, and most particularly to leveling out educational inequalities, which

should be the first step to change Mexican society.

(53)

01 L: we see intercultural education not as a departure point but as an arrival one, yes?
are you understanding more or less why [it is] a utopia, it is an arrival point because
we acknowledge that there are historic, structural, strong systemic issues that are not
easy to eradicate, no?/
02 there has been more than one hundred years approximately of an education of
monocultural approach like (unintelligible) and in the intercultural approach in the
case of the coordination we just have like two years, nothing, nothing, in reality
nothing yes? it is just the beginning, well, that's the third, that this is an arrival not a
departure point/
03 now, why do we believe that it is not totally a utopia?, that is we believe that it is a
utopia, but, we want a creative utopia, imaginative which is possible…and we believe
here in the coordination, that maybe we cannot have an effect in political, economic
change and that, and that is precisely the critique to the intercultural approach, because
critics say and we say, if we

don't insist on a more integral view, more holistic, we can't advance very much, that's
the criticism and I consider, however, in the educational field we say, we say that to the
teachers, perhaps we cannot have an effect in economic, political [issues] because that's
in another area/

01 J: La educación intercultural lo vemos no como un punto de partida sino como un
punto de llegada , sí? me vas entendiendo más o menos porque lo de la utopía , es un
punto de llegada porque reconocemos que hay cuestiones históricas , estructurales,
sistémicas fuertes que no es tan fácil de erradicarlos, no?/
02 Han pasado más de cien años aproximadamente de la educación con enfoque
monocultural como (Inteligible) y con enfoque intercultural en el caso de coordinación
apenas llevamos casi dos años, nada, nada, en realidad nada, sí? es el inicio apenas,
bueno, ese es el tercero que es un punto de llegada no es un punto de partida /
03 Ahora bien, por qué, por qué creemos que no es así totalmente la utopía?, o sea
creemos que sí es utopía , pero, queremos una utopía creadora, imaginativa que es
posible....y creemos también desde la coordinación ,que tal vez no podamos incidir en
el cambio político, económico y que, y que es justamente la crítica hacia el enfoque

intercultural, porque los críticos dicen y nosotros decimos, si no incidimos en una visión más integradora, más holística de cómo, cómo cambia el sistema educativo mexicano, o como cambia el estado nación, no podemos avanzar mucho, esa es la crítica y yo considero, sin embargo, en el ámbito educativo decimos, les decimos a los maestros, eso se lo decimos a los maestros, tal vez no podamos incidir en lo económico, en lo político porque está en otra esfera/

The idea of creative utopias as being necessary to change the system is actually shared by some indigenous actors. In his interview, Julio (Ce-Acatl) used the metaphor of utopia as a mechanism for change. Furthermore, the power of utopias is in their unattainable nature. The creativity derived from the impossibility to reach a utopia is what motivates people to look for alternatives. Thus, placing intercultural education in this category is not necessarily negative, but rather works as an incentive.

(54)

01 J: utopias are just like that/
02 it is necessary to work with them to death and even more/
03 because if not/
04 it is a mechanism that brings about change/
05 effectively yes/
06 ah: and well that's utopia's object/
07 it is never achievable/
08 it is good that utopias are not achievable/
09 on the contrary/
10 it is the ideal that moves millions of people in the world/
11 or hundreds of thousands/
12 or ten or a small group/
13 but ultimately human virtue, I think/
14 creativity is in constructing new and better utopias/
15 farther uopias/
16 unreachable utopias/

01 J: pues así son las utopías/
02 hay que trabajar con ellas hasta la muerte y todavía más/
03 porque si no bueno/
04 es un motor que mueve al cambio/
05 efectivamente ahora sí/
06 este: y bueno la utopía ese es su objeto/
07 nunca es alcanzable/

08 que bueno que no sean alcanzables las utopías/
09 al contrario/
10 es el ideal que mueve a millones de personas en el mundo/
11 o a cientos de miles/
12 o a diez o a un grupo pequeño, lo que sea/
13 pero finalmente la virtud humana, yo pienso/
14 la creatividad está en construir nuevas y mejores utopías/
15 más lejanas incluso/
16 inalcanzables utopías/

Not all attitudes towards intercultural education are utopian. On the contrary, some indigenous actors openly express their doubts about it. The difference between the institutional discourse and the actual practices (determined by the social and political context) cannot be ignored. In the segment below, Lucía (DGEI, Michoacán) opens her answer with a reference to what happens in actuality, but after some hesitation she shifts the focus to what would be "ideal" as a proposal. The use of the conditional "would be" marks the intangible nature of the proposal, which is further strengthened by the use of the word "ideal." Lucía backs up her opinion by anchoring it on her experience as an authority on the issue because of her institutional position. This is reflected by her pronominal choice in line 03. However, she backtracks a little by saying that it is not impossible but certainly quite difficult that intercultural education works because of resistance from society in general and the educational system in particular. Interestingly, she refers to "general elementary schools" (i.e., non-indigenous) as the ones that might oppose resistance to the ideas of intercultural education. As I have shown in this chapter, some indigenous actors claimed that they have always embraced interculturality, but mestizo society has ignored it and imposed acculturation. Lucía's answer moves along this argument, but in the last line she declares that solutions will be sought. In Spanish, the future tense can be used to express probability (Serrano, 2006), but the use of a hedge, "Although I don't know," is clearly an attempt to mitigate her opinion. This move is expected because she herself is an administrator

working for the system. In fact, several modal marks appear in this stanza (e.g., "I don't think," "I feel," "impossible"). In addition to describing Lucía's personal evaluation of the situation, such marks also function as disclaimers, which in turn reflect Lucía's skepticism:

(55)

01: well in reality ah:/
02 at best as a proposal it would be ideal/
03 But in practice [we] who let's say, have been closer in this work/
04 well I don't think/
05 as I told you impossible/
06 but very difficult because ah let's say in general society or in this case the educational system/
07 will not stop making an effort that is carried out in general schools/
08 however I feel that there is going to be a strong resistance/
09 although I don't know e: I think that the best strategies will be sought/

01 L: Pues en realidad este: eh/
02 a lo mejor pues como un planteamiento sería lo ideal/
03 pero en la práctica quienes hemos estado digamos más de cerca en estos quehaceres/
04 pues yo lo veo/
05 como le decía no imposible/
06 pero si bastante difícil porque este digamos generalmente la sociedad en general o en este caso el sistema educativo/
07 pues no dejará de hacer un esfuerzo porque esto se realice en las escuelas generales/
08 sin embargo yo siento que va a haber una resistencia muy fuerte/
09 aunque no se, e: yo pienso que se estarán buscando las mejores estrategias/

The utopian nature of intercultural education was also expressed by Lolita (Cherán normal school), who attributed it to the lack of autonomy of the indigenous groups to implement their own programs. Moreover, the model has resulted in impositions that restrict the agency of the indigenous subjects and reinforce the authority of the system. From the above interviews, it seems that the point of convergence is the difficulty of implementing the model because of the resistance of society and the barriers created by the educational system. In any case, the interviewees are aware of the difficulties, but also Lolita (Cherán Norma School) and Lucía

(DGEI) manifest their skepticism by pointing out their experience "in practice" and the differences between written policies and reality.

The difficulty of implementation and resistance from the system and general society do not seem to be the only factors that raise the skepticism of the teachers. The possibility of intercultural education actually facilitating the acculturation of the children is present in the thoughts and discourse of the indigenous teachers. In his interview, Gilberto (San Isidro school) defines interculturality both as a political and economic system imposed by the ruling elites. In his discourse, Gilberto imitates the voice of the dominant other to express their intentions. Although formulated as a request, the speech acts that Gilberto uses are in reality indirect commands, as it would be expected in the speech of authorities. The same authoritative language is used on lines 05 and 06 where it is stated how the indigenous people should do things in order to please the educational authority. Again, the lack of agency emerges even in this imaginary encounter between the dominant system and the indigenous people. However, the most important point in this segment is how Gilberto depicts interculturality in education as a sort of Trojan horse that, although it carries markers of the indigenous identity (i.e., language, culture and knowledge), serves as another means of colonization and affirmation of the dominant values.

(56)

01 G: and about that term ah: I would interpret it/
02 that term interculturality/
03 it would mean to say "listen allow me to intervene in your autonomy"/
04 "allow me to determine in your self-determination"
05 eh: "the way you should do things"/
06 the "way I like things to be done"/
07 and in that sense speaking about education I interpret it in the sense of saying
 "allow me to use your tongue, your concepts"/
08 R: uhu/
09 "so I can introduce my own"/
10 "and that ultimately what is mine is going to be more important and yours no more"/

11 that is in terms of education I I would leave it like like that/

01 G: Y de eso termino este: yo lo interpretaría
02 que el termino de interculturalidad/
03 significaría en decir "oye permítame intervenir dentro de tu autonomía"
04 "permítame determinar dentro de tu autodeterminación"/
05 e: "cómo debes hacer las cosas"/
06 "y como me gusta a mi que hagas las cosas"/
07 G: y en ese sentido hablando de educación yo lo interpreto p's en el sentido de decir
    "permítame usar tu lengua, permítame usar tus conceptos"/
08 R: uhu/
09 G:" para yo poder introducir los míos"/
10 "y que finalmente al rato este lo mas importante va a ser lo mío y lo tuyo ya no"/
11 o sea yo yo en términos de educación, así así lo dejaría/

The idea of intercultural education being just one more educational approach aimed at the acculturation of indigenous groups is quite frequent in the interviews of the teachers, which I think should not be surprising given the history of indigenous education in the country. However, what is surprising is that actors working within the educational system actually agree with the indigenous teachers on the possible acculturating effects of intercultural education. Certainly, such results are not seen as the goal of the dominant system, but as the byproduct of an approach that has the potential to facilitate the acculturation of the indigenous children if their identity is not strengthened first. In his interview, Jorge (CGEIB) analyzed a question about intercultural education being at the same level of other approaches that were aimed at the assimilation of the indigenous groups. I informed him about the teachers' doubts on the purposes of intercultural education. His answer is interesting because he accepts that intercultural education can be thought that way, and even he thought about it in that manner. Jorge leaves his answer incomplete and in the following stanza he shifts his answer to addressing teacher education and their ethnic awareness. Later in the interview, Jorge goes back to the question and makes an interesting move. First, he makes a disclaimer about the opinion that he is going to cast, which

also marks a shift in footing, changing his voice from an institutional authority to an individual. According to Jorge, the risk of intercultural education is precisely to "take into account" the indigenous people so they feel that they are part of the majority, which would complete the cycle of assimilation. The antidote to this problem is the affirmation of the indigenous identity and the intercultural approach, which is the "basis" of the project.

(57)

01: Well yes the issue is that politics have been born out of, well…from this perspective of homogenization, they are right in the middle of assimilation and in this case interculturality may, one could thought just so, and I myself in some moment have thought it…if one does not really work…on/

01 J: Pues, sí, pero el asunto es que antes como eso de las políticas han nacido de , bueno... desde la perspectiva esta de la homogenización, están justamente en medio de la asimilación y en este caso de la interculturalidad, este , se puede pensar justamente así, yo mismo en algún momento lo he pensado ...si no se trabaja realmente .... en/

(58. Second stanza)

01 J: now, the second part you asked about this being acculturation and everything, also, if you want to see it, take it from my personal perception, not the institutional one, I in a talk that I gave that, eh: [I] criticize the intercultural question, it could be a transitional bilingualism, do you remember transitional bilingualism? it was only to learn Spanish, a bridge, it was not to strengthen the culture…it really was to pass to Spanish and forget about the other, in the intercultural question I see, if we really do not get to strengthen the approach, to set the basis we are at risk of saying "well now we indigenous are being taken into account"/
02 and I indigenous say "well yes. we are taking ourselves into account"/
03 now I am part of the dominant, then, but if it is not strengthened, again as I told you, if it is not strengthened it may become an acculturation process/

01: ahora, la segunda parte que preguntabas de que esto puede ser de aculturización y todo, también , eso si lo quieres ver, tómalo desde mi percepción personal, no es institucional, yo en una charla que dí, eh: critico a la cuestión intercultural, que puede correr la suerte de un bilingüismo de transición, ¿recuerdas el bilinguismo de transición? fue solamente para aprender español, un puente, no era para fortalecer la cultura...era realmente para pasar al español y olvidarse de lo otro, en la cuestión intercultural le veo, si realmente no logramos fortalecer el enfoque, logramos sentar las bases si puede correr riesgo de que realmente sea una forma de decir, te vuelvo a repetir es percepción personal, puede correr el riesgo de decir, bueno es que ahora los

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indígenas nos estamos tomando en cuenta/
02 Y yo indígena diga "pues sí, nos estamos tomando en cuenta"/
03 Ahora, soy parte de la cultura dominante, entonces, pero si no se fortalece, otra vez
    como te decía, si no se fortalece puede llegar a un proceso de aculturización/

The Discourses on intercultural education oscillate between the romantic side of a creative utopia and acculturation. This oscillation is precisely what I think Žižek (1998) refers to when he talks bout multiculturalism as the logic of late capitalism, and what Gilberto reports in his discourse. The acceptance of difference under the rules of the dominant Discourse may very well serve to function as a sophisticated form of assimilation. At this moment, intercultural education has not been fully implemented and the programs still need time to develop, so it is not clear what long-term effects (if any) it will have; however, what is a fact is that contrary to other educational policies aimed at indigenous education, interculturality has opened the door (both discursively and in legally) to grassroots projects from the indigenous communities. I will analyze this issue in the next section.

Figure 9 summarizes the relationship between the indigenous teachers and the educational authority. As the interviewees explained, they are under the direct control of educational authorities, who dictate what teachers can and cannot do regarding the curricular design and administration of their schools; however, as I showed in the above sections, the teachers' actions go beyond mere compliance. Indeed, teachers have to follow instructions, but they find ways to exert their agency by resisting orders and asserting their rights, which have to be respected by the authorities in order to preserve their position. Teachers' agency is also played out by constructing a collective self that manifests itself through the discourse of the interviewees. "I" is part of a larger community that resists/complies with the authorities. In this way, power and agency –as the arrows in the map show- are not unidirectional, but co-constructed.
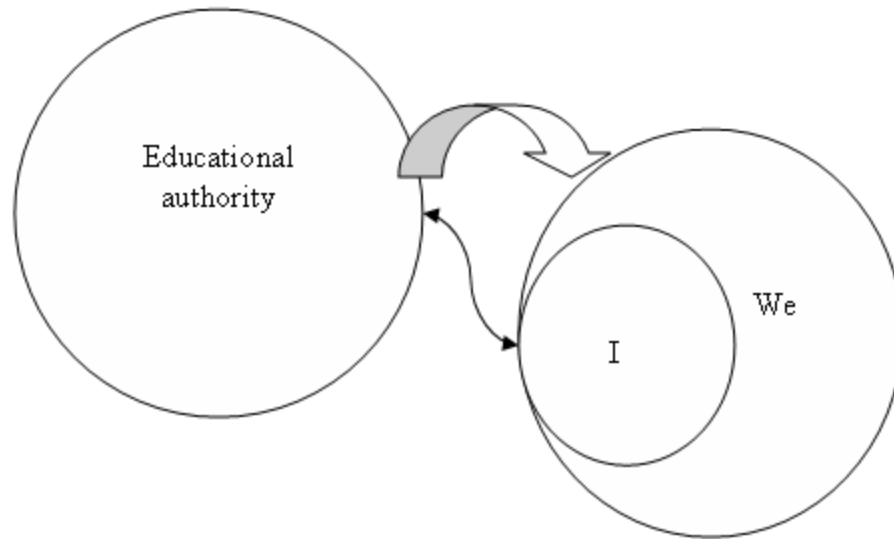
Figure 9.   Indigenous teachers and the educational authority: Power and oppositional agency.

9.4 INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION AS AN OPPORTUNITY

Despite the teachers' perceptions about the imposition and the goals of intercultural education, it is undeniable that it is perhaps the best opportunity for the indigenous communities to develop their own educational projects. Since one of the main tenets of intercultural education is granting autonomy to indigenous groups so they are active agents in their own educational development (see Chapter Four), the educational authority has to maintain the coherence of such Discourse by allowing indigenous actors to decide − within the limits established by legislation − some leeway to do their own projects.

The existence of "bottom-up" indigenous educational projects has preceded the official adoption of the model, as I will show below. These projects grew out of the indigenous teachers' necessity to adapt to their circumstances before the failure of official education to satisfy the

linguistic and cultural needs of the indigenous children. However, these projects faced obstacles that stem from the teachers' lack of training and pedagogic materials, and above all, from the pressure of the educational system to comply with the goals and requirements established for the Spanish-speaking, and mainly urban population. Before the appearance of the intercultural model, the work of indigenous teachers on bilingual education was at least marginal. But it became increasingly accepted with the introduction for the plan of studies 1993, which instead of dictating to teachers how they should address academic contents, it gave teachers the freedom to implement their own didactic strategies, including the use of the native tongue in the language classroom. But perhaps what has made a difference, according to my interviewees, is the fact that the right to participate in the preservation of their native languages and cultures is part of the official Discourse. As Lucía (DGEI, Michoacán) stated: "now, well now is like a right and we feel with the freedom to be able to do it and to take this to the classrooms, above all." Interestingly, there is a qualitative leap from the lack of agency that the teachers reported to feel free to establish their own programs and express their own voice. In the following excerpt, Silverio (UPN, Zamora), narrates how he identified with the ideas of interculturality because of the opportunity it opened to demand respect. Interculturality also marked the right time to do it:

(59)

01 S: I tell them that we also deserve such respect/
02 and thanks to interculturality it began to eh:/
03 for me like it awoke, no?/
04 a: desire to yell, almost to demand do you know what? here I am/
05 I am indigenous, here I am/
06 then through it I began to identify myself/
07 I liked interculturality gradually/
08 I said "ah well this is the moment"/
09 like, of course in good manners, no?/
10 to make some manifestations, some: well to say what one knows/
11 what one thinks/

01 S: yo les digo es que también nosotros merecemos ese respeto/
02 y gracias a a lo que es la interculturalidad se empieza eh:/
03 para mi como que como que: despertó, no?/
04 una: ese deseo de de gritar, casi de exigir saben que? aquí estoy/
05 yo soy indígena, aquí estoy/
06 entonces a través de eso me empecé a identificar mas/
07 me fue gustando mas lo que es la interculturalidad/
08 dije "ah no pues este es el momento"/
09 para como para, claro de manera educada, no?
10 hacer algunas manifestaciones, alguna: pues externar lo que uno sabe/
11 lo que uno piensa/

In line 03, Silverio uses the metaphor "to wake up"− to reflect his emotions and desires liberated by interculturality. He also expressed his right to assert his ethnic identity (line 05); however, within this liberation there are restrictions and mitigations. Silverio uses discursive strategies that can be understood under the framework of negative politeness (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Instead of directly expressing his needs or wants, Silverio shows concern for the mestizo authority and uses mitigation devices that mitigate illocutionary force. For instance, in line 01, Silverio chooses to use the verb "to tell" (instead of, for example, "to demand"), which mitigates the illocutionary force of his utterance: Instead of requesting or demanding, he ends up producing a statement. The use of the adverb "también" also mitigates his statement, making it almost a plea, trying to expand the range of people deserving respect to the indigenous peoples. Even in line 04 when he asserts his ethnic identity he says that he had a desire to "yell, almost to demand," not an outright command. In lines 9-11, Silverio continues mitigating his utterances. For instance, he argues that it is time to say "in good manners," "some" (as opposed to all) of the things "one" knows and thinks. Silverio's discourse is also a good example of the multiplicity of agency and how it is played out during the interviews. Certainly, the excerpt shows an individual who seems to be asserting his identity and affirming his rights, which can be seen as an example of oppositional agency or perhaps agency of power. But on the other hand,

Silverio enacts such agency within the limits established by "good manners" and the institutional context.

To summarize the previous sections, there is an ambivalent construction of agency in the discourse of the indigenous teachers. The use of speech acts that reflect the emotions of the indigenous peoples rather than their actions, passivizations, modals, lexical choices, metaphors and other linguistic and discursive devices builds a sense of limited agency. On the other hand, the indigenous agents exert resistance and even power through their actions and discourse. The interplay of agency and resistance together with the national context has opened the door to the teachers to have their voices heard in educational matters.

The question then becomes: what does an educational project proposed by indigenous teachers look like? In the following section of this chapter, I will address the issue of how teachers, despite their reports of the imposition of the intercultural model and resistance to it, have appropriated intercultural education.

9.5 FROM THE BOTTOM-UP: THE SAN ISIDRO AND URINGUITIRO SCHOOL PROJECTS

The guiding research question for this chapter taps into how the indigenous actors have rejected, transformed or appropriated the intercultural model of education. In this section of the chapter, I will explain how a community of teachers (my interviewees) appropriated intercultural education at the pedagogical level. Rockwell (1996, p. 302), following Chartier (1991), defines cultural appropriation as a collective achievement that puts to use in social situations cultural resources that have been taken over. I believe such appropriation has taken place in the case of the school

project reported here, since the teachers have taken advantage of the discursive space created by the intercultural model to construct their own curriculum based on the P'urhépecha language. As I will show, more than the intercultural model, the teachers have appropriated its Discourse and the opportunities that it has opened to develop bottom-up projects. The end result of this appropriation, as Lucía (DGEI Michoacán) states, may not be intercultural bilingual education, but a different "strategy" in indigenous education:

(60)

01 L: well if we could/
02 if we could get to consolidate a different strategy/
03 a different alternative/
04 and that we reached a model the truth is that we do not know if this is going to be
    intercultural bilingual education/

01 L: bueno pues nosotros si pudiéramos/
02 si llegásemos a consolidar una estrategia diferente/
03 una alternativa diferente/
04 y que llegáramos a un modelo la verdad no sabemos si va a ser la educación
    intercultural bilingüe/

Since this section of the chapter deals with the actual pedagogic appropriation of the model, I will analyze materials developed by CGEIB, the San Isidro-Uringuitiro P'urhépecha curriculum and classroom interaction. First, I will describe in-depth the social and historic context in which the P'urhépecha program was developed. Then I will proceed to explain the characteristics of the P'urhépecha curriculum in order to understand its overlaps and points of disagreements with the official plans. Also, I will explore a model lesson plan proposed by the CGEIB and compare it to an actual lesson plan developed by an indigenous teacher. Finally, I will analyze the implementation of such a lesson in classroom interaction. Analyzing curricular materials, lesson plans and classroom discourse will help determine how intercultural education is being understood and implemented at the pedagogical level in the classrooms.

The educational project which I am reporting in this study, like other early attempts to make changes to teaching methodology, academic contents and curricula, was first met with opposition from the educational authorities. Under the current conditions it has actually been hailed as an example of "enriching rebellion" (SEP, 2006, p.8), which was the result of the State's failure to provide indigenous groups with an adequate educational offer.

The San Isidro and Uringuitiro school project began in the academic year on 1995-1996, and to date, it is one of the most well established and acknowledged indigenous projects. Both schools are in neighboring villages that are historically related, since they split in the 1930s from an original community named Jurhinhitiro. The "Miguel Hidalgo" school is in the small community of San Isidro, which has about 750 people, and around 75% of the population is monolingual in the P'urhépecha language. The school offers grades 1 through 6. At the moment of data collection, the school had 19 teachers who took care of 17 groups. The "Benito Juárez" school, at Uringuitiro, had 7 teachers taking care of 102 students. Before the beginning of the project, the schools were considered as "punishment Places," to which novice teachers or teachers who had fallen out of grace with school administrators were sent; therefore, the teachers' corps was non-committed, registering high levels of teacher absences. In addition, the school was classified as one of lowest ranking in academic achievement, but with high levels of drop-outs and academic failure.

Figure 10. The geographical location of the state of Michoacán. The townships of San Isidro and Uringuitiro are located approximately 220 Kms. west of the city of Morelia.

In 1989, teachers originally from San Isidro arrived to the school for their first teaching assignment. According to Gilberto (San Isidro), they were "dismayed" by the extremely low test scores of the children and their difficulties in learning. In addition, there was very low motivation among the students, which resulted in poor class participation and high drop-out rates. The teachers' corps was not in better shape. Among the "old" teachers there was low morale, high level of absences and widespread irresponsibility. There were reports of teachers working only two days a week, and even teachers drinking on the premises.

Despite their lack of teaching experience, the novice teachers were committed to improving the school of their hometown. The first step was to run a diagnostic of the children's academic achievement, which yielded poor results, especially in the areas of reading and writing. Even though children were able to read in Spanish, their comprehension level was minimal

because they were sounding out words, or just doing rote memorization. Furthermore, the children's proficiency level in the Spanish language was very low or inexistent.

As a first step, the teachers made a deal with the parents of the children: the teachers would do their jobs (i.e., attend school every day, teach their classes on a regular basis, and report on the students' performance). The parents would send the children to school, supervise their performance and support the teachers' work. According to Gilberto, this resulted with some improvement in the children's achievement. However, it was obvious to the teachers that the root of the problem was the language of instruction.

The educational reforms of 1989-1992, gave teachers the freedom to address academic contents in the way they thought was best for their students. Based on the ideas of constructivism, the new reform stressed the importance of the children's background knowledge in the acquisition of meaningful learning. Supported by this change of rules, the teachers made the decision to change the teaching methodology and academic contents. At the same time, some teachers began attending the National Pedagogic University and received classes on linguistics and bilingual education. The knowledge acquired by the teachers confirmed their hypothesis about the influence of the linguistic factors in the teaching and learning processes, which made the teachers realize that they were not satisfying the children's learning needs. Thus, the teachers were aware of the children's needs and the need for change, but they had not the methodological tools to make that change happen.

The San Isidro school was contacted by native ethnolinguist Valente Soto, who was trying to implement a pilot project on teaching reading and writing skills to indigenous children in their native languages. The project was sponsored by the Secretariat of Education, so the school gave support to three teachers who were hand-picked by professor Soto. The project

included workshops on teaching methodology and materials development; however, the project was truncated because of the gradual lack of institutional support. The teachers who were involved in the pilot-project decided to continue on their own because of the motivational effects on the children and their improving achievement. Interestingly, the project was born out of the teachers' awareness of their students' needs and their interest in learning new teaching methodology, but it connected to a space opened up by the educational system, which by 1992 started introducing the ideas of intercultural education.

The following step for the teachers was to earn the parents' support based on the partially positive results of the pilot project. Not all the community was supportive because of the proposal to teach the children in the native language. Many parents reacted by withdrawing their children from school and registering them in Spanish-speaking schools. For the parents who decided to keep their children in school, the teachers agreed to show positive results and inform the parents periodically about any advances or problems.

Because of the lack of methodological training, and the inexistence of a modern method to teach P'urhépecha children in their own language, the teachers had to develop their own curriculum by adapting their techniques of teaching reading and writing in Spanish to P'urhépecha. In addition, the teachers had to develop materials and lesson plans that were suitable for the children's life context, which implied deviating from the texts and materials provided by the Secretariat of Education. Through the years, the project has been both supported and rejected by school authorities, parents and teachers. In fact, some of the most important opponents have been teachers from this very school who continue teaching in Spanish. Despite its problems, it has evolved to be a well defined model in terms of objectives and methodology.

In 2000, the teachers of the "Miguel Hidalgo" school carried out an evaluation of their incipient project. The following were some of their initial results (Alonso, Cano, Alonso, Diego, and Cortés, 2000):

1. There was higher motivation among the students, which resulted in higher levels of participation and interest to stay in school.

2. The rapport between students and teachers increased, which promoted better classroom climates.

3. There were better results in reading comprehension tests in L1 and L2. The students were also showing improved proficiency and creativity in writing and speaking. Furthermore, academic contents were being discussed by children in class, as opposed to rote memorization.

Certainly, there were positive findings in the projects' evaluation, but there were some shortcomings that were hindering the advancement of the students. They were divided in 3 categories: 1) Pedagogical-Technical, 2) School administration, and 3) Relationship between the school and community. The project emphasized the pedagogical technical aspect as the root of the children's problems in reading, writing and speaking. Teaching methodologies were too traditional and worst of all, they propitiated Castilianization and integration because they did not take into account the children's languages. In the same way, teaching materials furthered acculturation because they ignored the children's reality (i.e., rural context) and were directed at the urban, mestizo, Spanish-speaking population. Finally, evaluation criteria were alienating and closed. These elements resulted in the children's problems with reading comprehension, and ultimately, with the comprehension and learning of academic contents. In addition, the sociolinguistic and economic problems of the community contributed to the children's school failure and dropout because of the extenuating circumstances that they created.

In 2001, the teachers proposed a new Literacy project in P'urhépecha (Alonso, Cano, Alonso, Diego, and Cortés, 2000). The project proposed a new approach to teaching literacy in L1. Although one of the objectives of the project was aimed at the acquisition of Spanish and the development of coordinated bilingualism, the main focus was the development of literacy skills in the native tongue.

The P'urhépecha curriculum was also designed to work in tandem with the official one. For this reason, the main objectives were organized around the four basic components of the official curriculum: oral expression, reading, writing and "language reflection." Taking these components as the basis ensured that the students would develop their literacy skills within the established academic framework, and that the skills learned in the first language would be readily transferable to their L2. The main curricular objectives of the project are shown below.

General Objective: To reach the full development of the linguistic and reasoning skills of monolingual P'urhépecha children by fostering literacy in [their] mother tongue, fostering the coherent acquisition of the Castilian tongue through the transference of such abilities, so they can have access to meaningful learning of academic contents in a more efficient way.

Specific objectives:

- To initiate literacy in the children's mother tongue, achieving its efficacy.
- To achieve the comprehension of writing and reading from [through] the literacy process.
- To collect all the previous knowledge that children have about literature in their culture.
- To facilitate the expression of students' ideas through the written and oral use of their native tongue.
- To develop all linguistic skills through reading and writing in the native tongue.
- To facilitate the development of mathematical reasoning skills on the basis of its concepts in the mother tongue.
- To strengthen the use of the oral and written native language as a fundamental part in the social communication of the community.
- To achieve meaningful learning of academic contents through concepts [from] the mother tongue.

- To introduce knowledge of the Spanish [language] as a second language through the transference of the skills developed in the mother tongue.
- To achieve a coordinated bilingualism in a six year elementary school process as a fundamental part of the purposes of bilingual intercultural education.

Alonso, Cano, Alonso, Diego, and Cortés, 2000, p. 11-12, my translation.

For each language skill, the teachers defined the following goals for L1 development. Each cycle corresponds to two academic grades:

1) Oral expression:

a. First cycle: Development of narration skills through short stories, tales and legends. Descriptions and dialogues are also emphasized through the use of the children's immediate context.

b. Second cycle: Narrating skills are further developed as well as descriptions, dialogues, discussions and interviews. The students are expected to learn to achieve consensus and make decisions based on these skills. Presentational activities are introduced.

c. Third cycle: Presentational skills are further developed, as well as analytic and interpretational ones. Structured discussions and presentations are used to help students exercise argumentation.

2) Writing

a. First cycle: The students are supposed to learn the P'urhépecha alphabet and to be able to write words, sentences and short paragraphs in their native language.

b. Second cycle: Writing of simple and short descriptions and narratives. Students are also expected to be able to identify main ideas and types of genres.

e. Third cycle: Writing of different types of texts according to its genre in the native language.

3) Reading

a. First cycle: Listening comprehension to stories, tales, legends, etc. Students should also create their own narratives and represent them.

b. Second cycle: Reading and re-creation of stories, songs, poems, proverbs, and jokes. The students should be able to create their own.

c. Third cycle: Reading and writing of plays, short stories, dialogues and other texts. Creation of anthologies compiling oral traditions, songs, jokes, proverbs and poems. Representation of rituals and festivals.

4) Language Reflection:

a. First cycle: Learning of the P'urhépecha alphabet (graphemes). Use of capital and small letters. Learning of the parts of simple sentences.

b. Second cycle: Identification of the parts of simple sentences. Use of nouns, adjectives, verbs, verb tenses and personal pronouns. Use of punctuation marks in writing.

c. Third cycle: Use of demonstrative pronouns, suffixes, verbal tenses, accent marks, synonyms, antonyms, homonyms.

The P'urhépecha language constitutes the core of the curriculum. It is the language of instruction, literacy and the object of study. Through the language, children learn to read and write, but also to think about the structure of it and its relationship with their culture. Academic contents are based on the ancestral knowledge of the community and the immediate children's experience in order to anchor learning objectives in both the context and the interests of the community. To achieve this, the P'urhépecha curriculum, besides integrating the four main components related to literacy skills (i.e., oral expression, reading, writing and language reflection), is organized around a central concept in the P'urhépecha culture: Kaxumbikua, which means the values that an individual needs to coexist harmoniously within the P'urhépecha

culture. Kaxumbikua reinforces values such as solidarity, respect, tolerance, loyalty, justice and knowledge.

The official lines of curricular training proposed by SEP (1999) initially served as guides for the P'urhépecha project. These guides establish the learning objectives and content (both cultural and knowledge based) to be covered in each grade in elementary education. Although the curricula are supposed to be designed to cover the whole student population (no matter whether indigenous, mestizo, rural or urban), they seem to apply more to individuals who are already part of the so-called national community. The lines were designed keeping in mind the formation of a student (and future citizen) that is able to take care of him or herself (health line); to relate to his/her environment and take care of it (ecology line); to appreciate its environment (aesthetics line); to have the skills to accommodate to the changing world (lines of technology and science); participate in the community and be part of it (line of identity), but also to be part of the national and wider global community (democracy and international solidarity):

- Irekurhikua 'Identidad' [identity]
- Jarhojperakua 'Solidaridad internacional' [international solidarity]
- Jurhenakua 'Ciencia' [science]
- Marku irekurhikua tsipitiicheri 'Ecología' [ecology]
- Sesi jaxiku 'Estética'[aesthetics]
- Sesi irekurhikua 'Democracia' [democracy]
- Anchikurhita ambe 'Tecnología'[technology]
- Sesi janku 'Salud'[health]

(Alonso and Nieto, 2006, p. 13)

According to the San Isidro and Uringuitiro teachers, although culturally and ideologically laden, such lines were used in order to follow the national standards and because they were a practical template to do the initial selection and grading of their own curriculum. The title of the lines merely translated into the P'urhépecha language, while the academic content was more difficult to define because cultural categories and their pedagogical treatment was not

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specified. A special case was the problem of availability of academic jargon that the P'urhépecha language lacked to address the contents of subject matters such as math, so the teachers had to develop their own terminology. For instance, Pedro (San Isidro school), developed a system to designate Cartesian coordinates based on the concepts of "xanharu" (to walk horizontally) and tirhipakua (to hang [something] vertically). Pedro developed this terminology after observing children struggling with the abstract notions of the "x" and "y" axis. Once he developed this system, the teachers used it to explain to the children their use in their own context. I observed a sixth grade class taught by Salvador (San Isidro school), who developed a lesson in which children had to locate different buildings on a chart. This task had great relevance for the children, not only because they learned basic principles of mathematics, but also because it helped them understand the geographical distribution of their own town and the reasons behind it. The P'urhépecha cosmogony permeates all aspects of life, including the decision for where to build sacred places. Through using the P'urhépecha terminology, the children learned that the graveyard was located on the east side of town so that the dead can receive the sunrise.

For these reasons, the teachers gradually evolved towards "Kaxumbikua" as the organizing principle of their curricular design. Despite the teachers' skepticism about intercultural education, there are in fact some points of intersection between the indigenous concepts and the official curricular lines. Certainly, the lines of health, ecology and identity are areas that teachers addressed in the actual curriculum. Furthermore, concepts such as solidarity are part of Kaxumbikua, and democracy is an area in which teachers have shown interest. Ultimately, what is important for the curricular project is not the curricular lines of academic formation that the teachers rejected, but what they decided to adopt as the central component of their program; that is, the P'urhépecha language, which supersedes all subject matters taught in

school and connects to essential values of the community. The following figure shows how the P'urhépecha curriculum defines the connection between the language and the areas of study.
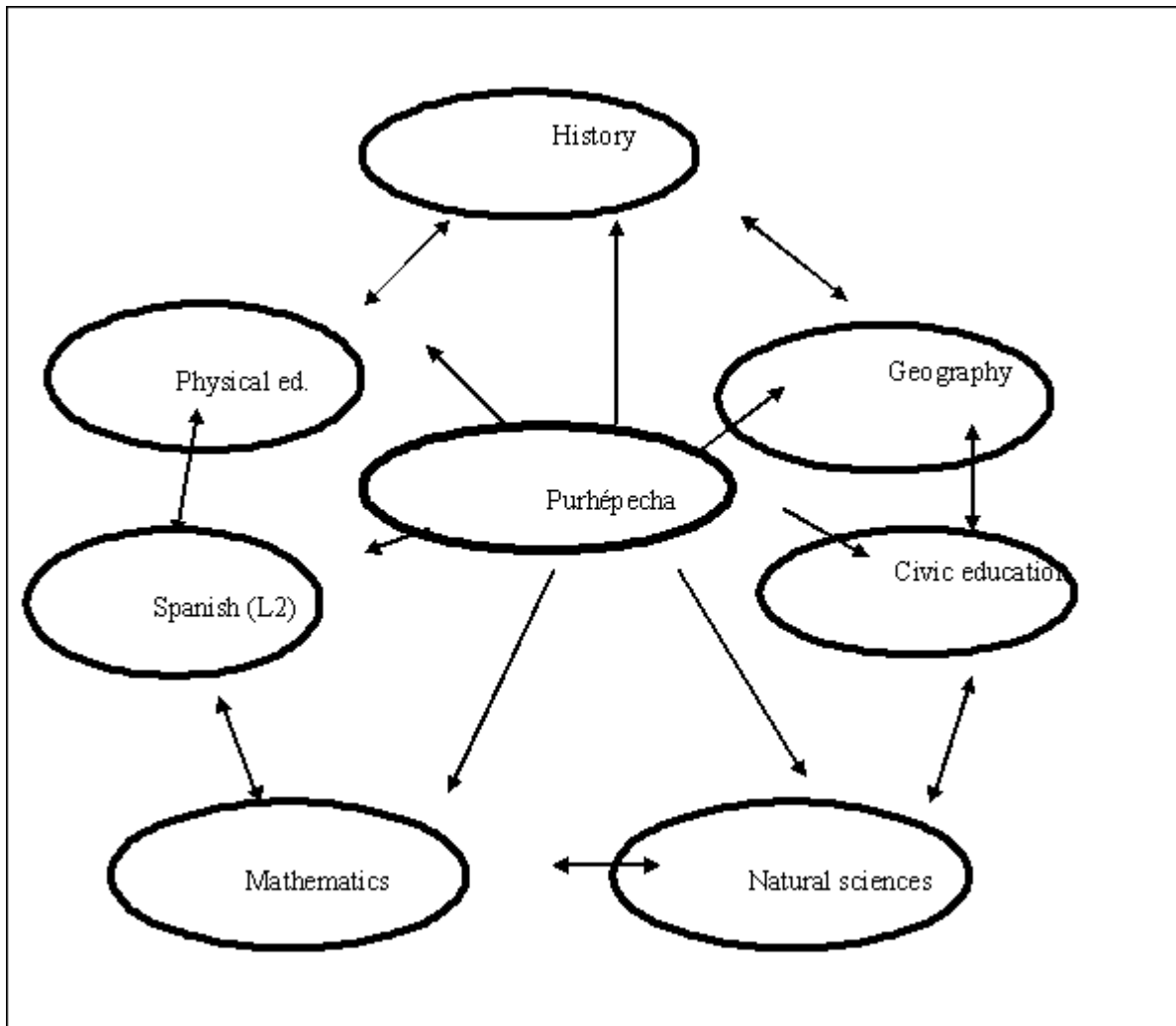

Figure 11. P'urhépecha curriculum (taken from Alonso and Nieto, 2006 p. 9)

The San Isidro-Uringuitiro project is mainly a literacy program in the native language. Although learning Spanish appears as part of the project, it is subordinated to the development of linguistic skills L1, and achieved through transference from the mother language. Intercultural education appears as a sort of requirement whose purposes include coordinated bilingualism. Because the teachers have mentioned the intercultural model so little in their writings, they may

see intercultural education as an afterthought. Bilingual intercultural education appears in the project's documents as the last change in methodological approaches, but also as the change that acknowledges the importance of cultural and linguistic elements in the teaching-learning process. Intercultural education also appears within the legal framework of the 4th constitutional article that grants indigenous individuals the right to develop their cultures, languages, customs and forms of organization. In this sense, the teachers' project fits within the official parameters set by the constitution itself, and with the objectives of the Secretariat of Education regarding the "formation of citizens from their social and cultural reality, and with a full knowledge of the national and universal values, so that [they] respond to the interests and needs of their community in particular, and [those of] the nation, in general" (Historia, Sociedad y Educación III: Antología UPN-SEP, cited in Alonso, Cano, Alonso, Diego, and Cotés, 2000, p. 11)

The teachers established the objectives that were necessary for their project and tried to modify the curriculum as needed. These actions correspond to the Discourse of intercultural education, and show the diversity of projects that are expected within a system that respects independence and diversity. However, the educational system still establishes official goals that have to be covered. For instance, at the time of the data collection, official examinations sent out by the Secretariat of Education were written in Spanish despite the knowledge that indigenous children would not be able to answer them correctly because of their limited proficiency in the language.

The San Isidro-Uringuitiro project, as I stated above, is about developing literacy in the P'urhépecha language. The remaining question is whether the San Isidro-Uringuitiro project is intercultural. I posed this question to the teachers and they answered "yes." Tending to the linguistics and cultural needs of the children are the components that teachers identify as the

intercultural element in their program. In the long term, it is expected that children will be able to achieve "universal" knowledge through the knowledge of their own culture. In addition, acquiring literacy skills in their own language not only will improve children's academic achievement, but also will have effects on their motivation and likelihood to stay in school. The use of the mother tongue as a means of instruction also elevates its prestige as a language suitable for academic purposes, which propitiates the preservation and development of it. The acquisition of literacy skills in L1 will facilitate their acquisition in L2 as well. Finally, these elements will help to create balanced bilingual citizens who are secure in their identities as indigenous individuals. At the methodological level, the modification of the curriculum to anchor it on the knowledge of the culture will modify the pedagogical practices of the teachers, making such practices more suitable for the indigenous children's learning styles (e.g., cooperative as opposed to individual learning) and less authoritarian. At the curricular level, the plan of studies is organized around the cardinal values (i.e., solidarity, tolerance, respect, loyalty) that the community itself has identified as the ones that the children should know and preserve. This is what constitutes an intercultural education project from the indigenous point of view.

However, I think that there are two elements that pose major questions about the intercultural aspect of the project. The first one is the issue of the relationship with the Other. As I have discussed before, the teachers are aware that talking about the "Other" is not equal to being able to interact with him or her, particularly when there is a relationship of domination between the parties. A field trip to a neighboring Spanish-speaking town showed that despite their knowledge of the language, children were both unable to use it fluently and not willing to interact with the merchants of the town, who took advantage of the children's lack of knowledge

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of Spanish and their position both as adults and mestizos by imposing extremely low prices for the children's merchandises (i.e., herbs, wood chips).

The other element is the political dimension of intercultural education, which was also perceived by the interviewees from the Cherán school as one of the factors that impeded the exercise of intercultural education (beyond the official Discourse). The indigenous actors are aware of the need for a political education with both the children and the teachers themselves (particularly student teachers). Although it is not clear how this education should proceed, the teachers do indeed talk about "values" such as democracy and conduct democratic activities in the classroom, such as taking votes and electing team leaders.

The way the P'urhépecha project is structured right now shows "glimpses" of interculturality, as Alberto (UPN) pointed out. In any case, what the P'urhépecha curriculum illustrates is that despite the teachers' fears about intercultural education being a sophisticated form of assimilation, they have appropriated the legal and discursive space that the model has opened to create their own educational project. In this sense, as in other cases in the past, the indigenous actors have learned to take the Discourse of the institutions and use it in their favor. The existence of this type of project allows the system to legitimize its Discourse by tolerating the presence of alternative "innovations" that are tending to the needs that the system itself has not been able to satisfy.

Since this section explored "macro" curricular issues in the construction of the intercultural model from the indigenous point of view, in the next section I will concentrate on "micro" elements. That is, the design of intercultural lesson plans.

9.6 INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN THE CLASSROOM: HOW SHOULD AN INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION LESSON LOOK?

At the time of the data collection, no official textbooks that incorporated new intercultural contents had been edited; rather, since intercultural education is an approach and a methodology, some suggestions about how to use current textbooks were developed in a manual (see SEP, 2005[55]). An example of such work is "Exploring our materials of elementary [school] for intercultural education" (CGEIB & SEP, 2005). The main objective was to provide teachers with ideas about how to use their every-day classroom materials to achieve their learning objectives (including attitudes) within the framework of intercultural education.

In order to implement interculturally-oriented lessons, teachers need to change their lesson plans to incorporate the objectives related to both content and intercultural education, which refers mainly to values, attitudes and identities. The proposed lesson plan format is quite traditional:

1. Content of the subject matter: Which can be thought as "hard" knowledge
2. Objectives related to the subject matter: the general objective of the lesson
3. Objectives related to intercultural education: attitudes, opinions, self-identification, respect, appreciation, tolerance and other value oriented goals.
4. Activities
5. Time table for activities
6. Materials
7. Evaluation
8. Suggestions to improve the implementation of the lesson.

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[55] It is important to point out that the Manual is presented as a source for teachers whose classrooms are increasingly diverse due to social phenomena (e.g., immigration), not for indigenous teachers.

Intercultural objectives are not the main focus of the lesson; rather, they are introduced side by side with "knowledge" goals, which bestow a complementary character to intercultural education. That is, an additional knowledge aimed at social and attitudinal issues. Special emphasis is placed on developing a relationship with the others:

> In summary, through the practice of the proposed activities based on the school materials, it is sought that children develop abilities for dialoguing with those whose cultures, origin, or features differ from the [children's] own, being aware that through such exchange it is presented to them the opportunity to grow and learn (CGEIB & SEP, 2005 p. 9)

Dialoguing in this context implies a higher complexity level than interaction, because dialogue is aimed at the resolution of problems and the development of critical abilities that allow children to reflect about their own culture and the importance of it in the life of people "different" from them. The view of using intercultural communication as a tool to achieve understanding and conflict resolution is present in the didactic materials just as it was present in the policy documents and interviews. Certainly, it is assumed that in any interaction conflict may arise, but having a somewhat romantic view on the powers of intercultural communication while inequalities are set aside does not help to promote the desired outcome of societal change. As Apple (1996, [1975]) has pointed out, curricula tend to present a vision of society as a cooperative entity in which everything and everybody works to achieve consensus to maintain the established order. The elimination of the very existence of social conflict in the curriculum contributes to the maintenance of the status quo by giving the students a view of a harmony and conformity. If conflict should arise, then it should be treated within the boundaries established by the system. Thus, by deflecting away conflict or framing it under the parameters of institutions, intercultural education reinforces the system that has contributed to the disadvantaged position of the minority groups.

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The way in which conflict is deflected away in the lesson planning is subtle. Certainly, the Discourse of intercultural education embraces the idea of diversity and the consequent right of minorities to claim respect and to address the misfortunes of the past. As I have explained before, framing problems in terms of cultural differences – potentially solved by communication – is one strategy to approach conflict. The lesson plans presented in the manual unveils another one: focusing on the characteristics that have been used to discriminate against certain groups and giving them a positive spin. For instance, the first example suggested to third grade teachers uses the short children's story "Pretty Girl" (Machado, 2003) as a way to teach children respect and appreciation for racial differences. The following are the objectives posed by the manual:

Materials	Intercultural purpose	Observations
Spanish [i.e., language arts], third grade. Readings [book], lesson 2: "Pretty girl." Spanish, third grade: [book of] Activities	The purpose of this lesson is to favor the knowledge of the individual (self-concept) and the acknowledgement of differences.	I chose "Pretty girl" because among my students are cases of discrimination because of physical appearance.

SEP, 2005, p. 12, my translation

Although this activity is only an example of how to pick contents that may fit the intercultural approach, I think it is very telling about the kind of values and approaches to discrimination (and other problems) that are seen as suitable within the framework of intercultural education. Certainly, it is arguable that teachers may address materials in the way

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they wish, but the official suggestion of certain examples reflects what is expected from them and their students.

The story is about a white rabbit that falls in love with a black girl. The rabbit is so entranced by the beauty of the child, that he asks her why she is so beautiful and dark. The girl – who as no idea why she is so dark – tells the rabbit to do things (i.e., paint himself with dark ink, drink lots of coffee and eat black grapes) in order to become black. When she is about to suggest one more outlandish action, the mother of the girl tells the rabbit that the girl's grandmother was black. The rabbit understands the message and marries a black rabbit, producing several children of all hues of black and white. I doubt that anybody could object to the message of the story, but what are the implications of this story in the major scheme of things?

Although stories have been used to teach both children and adults about morals and values, since they belong to the story world they may be seen only as such. Thus, the existence of a white bunny (that is, a white person) enamored of someone black may be seen by children as only possible in an imaginary world. In a racialized society such as Mexico, the ideal type of beauty is not that of black or Indian people, but white European. Thus, despite the teachers' best efforts to show children that beauty comes in all colors, children just have to look around to find that that is not the case in their immediate context. Indeed, mass media in Mexico is an example of the embracement of white beauty and the marginalization and stereotyping of people of indigenous or African descent. The curriculum then does its job by presenting to children the "right" moral value of appreciating difference and diversity, but I believe it is necessary to ask why this story was chosen instead of one focusing on racial conflict.

Since the manual is aimed at teachers whose student population is mixed, it would have been more productive to read a story in which racial discrimination was at the center; for

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instance, a written testimony of indigenous authors (i.e., Rigoberta Menchú, Domitila Barrios de Chungara). In addition, children may be given the opportunity to tell their own stories and come to their own conclusions. That is, instead of receiving the "right" values and attitudes, teachers may guide readings and discussions to help children to develop their own. Under these circumstances, the question comes back; why is conflict avoided? As I said above, I believe the answer is related to a non-conflictive view of society. By spinning issues that may be cause of discrimination into positive values, the school avoids addressing racial and social conflict, and also other factors related to it such as social and economic injustices. Instead, racial difference becomes aestheticized (i.e., black is beautiful). Although not addressing racial problems in a more direct or even confrontational way deflects away possible conflicts, it also deprives the students of opportunities to develop critical thinking skills and really develop their argumentation skills (certainly, these should be put to the test when openly addressing conflict). Contradictorily, the idea of addressing social conflict in the way it is presented (i.e., positive emphasis on difference) may have as a result the legitimation of the very same structures that caused it.

Throughout the manual, a consensual, non-conflictive view of lesson planning is presented. The model lesson plans explained in the manual address four subject matters: Spanish (i.e., language arts), mathematics, social and natural sciences at different grade levels. Although the manual is aimed primarily at teachers whose students may be of mixed linguistic and cultural background, only a few suggestions about using the official textbook exercises to teach Spanish as a second language are provided. Most of these exercises are grammatically oriented and were created having in mind children whose first language is Spanish, which limits very much the teachers' resources.

Below, I am summarizing a model lesson plan on "Taking care of our nutrition," which forms part of the curriculum for natural sciences in fifth grade (CGEIB & SEP, 2005, p. 31-33):

Content of the Subject Matter:

- Different types of food
- The food pyramid and a balanced diet
- The productive process of food

Purposes of the subject matter:

- To know food diversity based on the diversity of ecological niches and cultures
- To appreciate the importance of a good and balanced diet to preserve health
- To understand how ecosystems are modified due to food production

Purposes of intercultural education:

- To respect and appreciate diversity in food as a cultural component
- That the student investigates [culinary] aspects of his/her family culture and consider them valuable
- To promote among the students interest to know the culinary costumes of his/her family and make them public
- To value eating different foods to achieve a balanced diet
-

Activities:

The manual proposes to use a variety of textbook activities related to food production and culture. It also suggests teachers to ask the students to do research about food production and preparation in places other than Mexico, and to do research in their communities and families to document food production and preparation. The students are also encouraged to produce a cook book, set up a culinary fair and design other materials to show the products of their research and

learning. The performance of these activities is distributed over five class sessions.

Evaluation forms:

The evaluation of the sessions focuses on the students' attitudes (i.e., participation, respect, effort, and interest), improved achievement and respect to linguistic and cultural diversity.

This lesson models how "hard" content can be addressed in such a way that the goals of intercultural education can be introduced through everyday classroom activities and materials. However, the evaluation of its goals deserves a second look. First, it is yet to be proved that intercultural methodology oriented to values has an effect on achievement. Nonetheless, it is likely that activities that are not traditional may improve the children's' interest and participation, which can be observable in the classroom. But there are other evaluation objectives that are not easily accessible, including behaviors such as respect and appreciation of cultural and linguistic diversity. Indeed, one of the basic rules of writing the objectives is to establish them in observable, measurable terms or indicators that describe how individuals are to exhibit the desired outcomes. And even if indicators are given about how respect towards other cultures could be evaluated in the classroom context (e.g., children may overtly express their respect to other people's cultures), one thing is to say it and another thing is to behave accordingly. As I have explained in Chapter Four, one of the main criticisms to multicultural education is that it does not necessarily change behaviors or attitudes. Rather, it teaches students to produce the socially acceptable responses to issues such as racism and respect to minorities.

A second problem constitutes reaching attitudinal and value-oriented goals through the teachers' practices and discourse. Although learning does not depend 100% on the teachers' discourse, the way in which teachers interact with students and model behaviors set an example

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for the students. Research has shown that teachers tend to follow their own interpretations of the textbooks they use no matter the curriculum or the author's purpose (Sunderland, Faustian, Leontzakou, Shattuck, 2001). This discourse may be considered part of the hidden curriculum in the sense that it may not follow the official written rules, but forms part of the background that sends messages to the children about the tacit rules of the system. Within intercultural education, it may be extremely important to help teachers to become aware of their own discourse and practice and how they contribute to support the hidden curriculum, particularly when talking about values or what Johnston, Juhász, Marken and Ruiz have defined as "morals," that is, "judgments about what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is bad" (1998, p. 162). Following Jackson (1993), Johnston et al. see teaching as an activity that deals directly with teaching morality, which renders teachers into moral agents whose discourse and actions convey values in the classroom through mechanisms both conscious and subconscious. Among these mechanisms are found classroom rules, the curricular structure and the overt expression of morality in the classroom. Carbonell (2003) cautions against the "trap of good will" into which teachers may fall. In their interest of teaching what is correct about interacting with others, teachers may in fact reinforce children's prejudices. As I have shown in this project, even in training sessions conducted with professionals, misunderstanding and clashes may arise. The story of Pedro and a mestizo teacher who had little tact to show her surprise about the existence of indigenous groups shows that dealing with values and ideologies in the classroom may have unintended results.

In view of the problems that designing an intercultural lesson may carry, training becomes a necessary element if teachers are to acquire the teaching skills for an intercultural approach and become role models of intercultural coexistence for their students. Critical

language awareness (Fairclough, 1992) would be especially important in an educational context when domination of minorities is naturalized and invisible.

Summing up this section, the type of lesson plan designed by the DGEI is consistent with the model of intercultural education proposed by the same institution. That is, it incorporates intercultural objectives as part of the overall knowledge that the children should acquire. This knowledge has to be anchored on the children's immediate experience and environment to gradually include "universal" knowledge. Furthermore, the lessons are oriented towards the development of values and attitudes leading towards appreciating and (arguably) communicating with the other. In the following sections, I will analyze how indigenous teachers develop their own intercultural lessons and most importantly, how such lessons are implemented in the classroom.

9.7 AN INTERCULTURAL LESSON AT THE SAN ISIDRO SCHOOL

In order to understand the differences and overlaps between the indigenous and the official lesson plans, I will analyze an indigenous lesson plan carried out at the San Isidro school. I will finish the section by studying actual classroom interaction to explore how intercultural education – or rather the indigenous actors' interpretation of intercultural education – is played out in the classroom.

The lesson plans described by the Secretariat of Education propose a model about content and pedagogic approach. Although the teachers do not have to follow them (there is academic autonomy regarding how to address specific learning objectives as long as general ones are

covered), undoubtedly, they are approved models that best represent the intercultural approach, or at least the version of interculturality that would be desirable for the educational system.

According to the CGEIB, an intercultural lesson should include, besides objectives related to "hard" knowledge in the subject matter, those related to values, attitudes and, objectives aimed at cultural reflection in general (both the children's own and the Other's). However, as I showed in the previous section, indigenous teachers have appropriated the intercultural model and have redefined it under their own terms. Thus, it becomes necessary to explore how intercultural education is being laid out in the indigenous teachers' lesson plans and practiced in their classrooms.

Despite the teachers' innovative approach to teaching in the mother tongue, there are concerns about the didactical implementation of the P'urhépecha program and the "traditionalism" of the teachers in the classroom (Lucía, DEGI Michoacán, personal communication, July 17th, 2004). As I have pointed out in the previous sections, adopting an intercultural approach implies the transformation not only of the curriculum and plan of studies, but also the ways of teaching and the very relationship between students and teachers, and particularly the way in which teachers teach.

An area of the teachers' pedagogical repertoire that should undergo transformations is the teachers' discourse. In traditional classrooms, the teacher is the central authority who regulates the interaction, delivers the curriculum and evaluates the students' performance. These functions are carried out by the basic participation structure in the classroom known as I-R-E/F. The teachers Initiate the interaction (for instance through questions), the students Respond to the teacher's request and the teacher Evaluates the students' contribution and can even Follow up on their answers to provide further information. This structure has been identified by some scholars

as the basic unit of (traditional) classroom interaction (Wells, 1990; Cazden, 2001). Mehan (1985, p. 128) argues that this structure has been found cross-culturally and in different economic systems, which indicates schooling is a partially autonomous system with its own rules of interaction. In intercultural education, teachers not only have the task to deliver knowledge, but also to model for children the kind of attitudes, skills and knowledge that would be necessary in intercultural communication. Thus, classroom discourse and classroom practices may play a significant role.

The lesson plan that I will analyze in this section was taught by Carlos (Uringuititro school) to his fifth grade class. As part of their program for teaching Spanish as a second language, the teachers decided to integrate both language instruction and content learning − that is, teaching content-area subjects through Spanish. As part of their curriculum, the teachers decided to introduce Spanish as a distinctive subject matter from first grade. Once a day for an hour, children in grades 1 through 3 receive instruction in Spanish. The focus of such classes is the development of oral and listening skills. From grades 4 through 6 children are supposed to develop their writing and reading skills. Although children encounter reading and writing tasks in Spanish before 3rd grade, it is expected that the literacy skills that they developed in their mother tongue have reached a threshold (Cummings, 1981) that allows the students to transfer such skills and learn in the target language. Content teaching fits these objectives because it permits the students to learn through the language and exercise it at the same time. Although this step puts the program at the vanguard in language teaching, it also raises the issue of using Spanish as the medium of instruction in contexts where the students' proficiency is low.

The lesson plan was selected for analysis among a group of similar video recordings because Carlos is one of the most accomplished teachers within the program, having special

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interests in teaching natural sciences. In addition, since the lesson was carried out in Spanish, it was easily accessible for analysis. Although a P'urehépecha lesson would have been better to analyze, the difficulty of getting a translator made it impossible to study interaction in the native language. Because this lesson is on the natural sciences, it serves as a point of comparison against the one presented as a model by the CGEIB (2006, showed in the previous section), even though the topics are different. Finally, the lesson has been used as a model for other teachers and has been presented at academic conferences as an example of what the teachers have achieved so far.

The lesson was embedded within the topic, "life in the country and the city," and its objectives were defined as follows:

Objective: [the child should] classify daily activities of the rural community

Know and use the concepts of mono and poly crops.

Adequately use personal pronouns

Communicative skills: Listening comprehension, answering questions in a dialogue, descriptions of community and family activities, and reporting indirect speech.

Grammar and vocabulary: Possessive, interrogative and personal pronouns. Words related to crops: corn, beans, squash, oats, faba beans, *chilacayote,* etc., mono and poly crops.

The lesson plan is structured around subject matter content and language objectives but there is no mention to any intercultural objectives (i.e., values, culture, respect, relationship with the other, etc.); however the lesson is directly related to the children's immediate experience. Furthermore, the content of the lesson has relevance in the children's life because it may have

applications in real life since they live in a rural community. From the very beginning, it is obvious that it is not an intercultural lesson plan, at least in the sense described by the CGEIB; but some intercultural goals may emerge during classroom interaction. Indeed, Bailey (1996) has shown that teachers deviate from their established lesson plans to suit the needs of their students and to accommodate content, so it is likely that some intercultural objectives may emerge during interaction.

9.8 INTERACTING IN THE CLASSROOM

As Mehan (1985) has argued, the basic unit of classroom interaction − I-R-F/E − can be found cross-culturally, and Carlos' class was no exception. Carlos used his speech to elicit information from the students and to provide feedback or to evaluate the students' answers:

(61)

C: Then, the plant takes nitrogen, where from Gustavo?/
S: through the roots/
C: Through the roots Gustavo says/

S: Entonces la planta toma el nitrógeno, por dónde Gustavo?/
S: Por las raíces/
C: Por las raíces dice Gustavo

Although Carlos does not evaluate his student's answer openly (through words such as "good" or "excellent") he repeats Gustavo's answer and states his name to signal the correctness of the child's response. This pattern of interaction was quite common in Carlos' lesson, where he uses the I-R-E/F pattern to check on the students' (as a group) comprehension:

(62)

C: If a man plants every year, only, only corn, it is going to run out, what is it going to

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run out?/
Ss: Nitrogen/
C: What is nitrogen?/
Ss: the food of corn/
C: then is it good to plant beans too?
Ss: yes/
C: Why? [looking at child sitting in front row]
S: Because nitrogen is not going to run out

C: Si un señor siembra cada año, nada más, nada más maíz, se va a acabar, qué se va a
　　acabar?/
Ss: Nitrógeno/
C: Qué es el nitrógeno?
S: el alimento del maíz/
P: entonces es bueno sembrar frijol también?
Ss: Sí/
C: Por qué? [mirando alumno en primera fila]
S: Porque no va a acabar nitrógeno*

Carlos uses his speech (and other contextualization cues) to explore and evaluate the

students, but also to regulate interaction. In the transcription of the lesson, the majority of

movements are initiated by the teacher, even in cases where children were supposed to do

independent practice, the teacher interrupts, gets the floor and poses questions to re-direct the

children's interaction and to evaluate it. In the following excerpt, the teacher asked the children

to question each other about the meaning of the words "infertile," "fertile" and "nitrogen." The

children comply with the teacher's instructions but then switch to P'urhépecha, Carlos

approached them and re-directs the students to the task by asking the question: What is nitrogen?

and uses the marker "well," which in this context functions as "enough":

(63)
C: Well, what is nitrogen?
S1: nitrogen is the food of the corn plant/
S2: What does infertile mean?/
S1: it means that the ground does not have food anymore/

C: bueno, qué es nitrógeno?/
S1: Nitrógeno es la comida de la planta de maíz/

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S2: Qué significa infértil?/
S2: Quiere decir que ya no tiene alimento el suelo/

Carlos' method is quite traditional in the sense that he manages interaction, controls the classroom talk and actively evaluates the children's answers. The students are constricted to following the rules and expecting the teacher's cues to intervene in the conversation. For instance, in the transcript it is common that Carlos raises the pitch of his utterance, which children see as a cue to complete what he was going to say. Cullen (2002) argues that the F movement within the unit I-R-E/F serves two functions: a) evaluative: to indicate the correctness of the student answer and b) discursive: to provide additional input and create new contexts for learning using the very same students' answers. The second function of the F movement also gives the students feedback about their answer, and models the correct answer. In example (16) Carlos asks a child why planting beans was good. The child's answer is correct but makes a grammatical mistake by omitting the reflexive pronoun se: "Porque no va a acabar nitrógeno". Carlos recasts the child's answer modeling the correct form: "Porque no se va a acabar el nitrógeno." Such recasts are common in classroom discourse, but also in parent-child interaction (see Leeman, 2003). Unfortunately, Carlos' use of the I-R-E/F movement is quite rigid and concentrates mostly on evaluative aspects. Indeed, in Carlos' discourse, the most prominent feature is using questions. Teachers use interrogatives to focus the students' attention, to find out what they know, to move the lesson forward and to control the limited communication resources of the classroom. In addition to these functions, it is through questions that teachers deliver curricular content and regulate the students' learning opportunities, which ultimately may affect learning. Research has shown (see for example Morine-Dershimer and Tenenberg, 1981) that the type of questions that teachers ask have differential effects on learning. Questions that require the students only to show information that they already know (display questions) have the lowest

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effectiveness in keeping the students' attention and yield low performance. On the other hand, authentic questions (i.e., those that require the students to find out unknown information) produce more involvement and learning. Carlos' questioning pattern relies overwhelmingly on display questions. In fact, 100% of his questions during the lesson are display questions which elicited yes/no or short answers from the children. In addition to raising questions about the possible effects that such patterns may have on learning, Carlos' method also poses questions about the communicative value of the exercises carried out in the classroom.

During the lesson, children were restricted to answering the teacher's direct questions, or to ask each other display questions (e.g., What is nitrogen? What does infertile mean?). No tasks for real interaction were offered, although certainly, it is likely that the information that they learned may be part of a conversation in their town (which is mostly P'urhépecha speaking), but not in the urban context. Seedhouse (1996) has argued that classroom interaction cannot be a reflection of the real world outside. Rather, it has to be understood in terms of institutional goals and regulations; therefore, "real communication" is a construct that may not apply to discourse in foreign language classrooms. Certainly, Carlos' class is an instance of institutional talk. Children have learned the rules of interaction in the classroom (e.g., turn-taking, timing and sequencing, getting the floor, understanding contextualization cues, etc.,). Children are also learning the type of behavior, and most importantly, the language that is appropriate in academic contexts. In this sense, children are acquiring what Cummings (1981) has called CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency Skills). CALP refers to the language of academic subjects that involves more abstract (as opposed to concrete) vocabulary and concepts. Learning such skills is in fact an important goal in schooling; however, a more important objective within a language class, and specifically within an intercultural program, is to develop the skills that allow children to interact

in every-day conversations with the other. The development of these skills seems to be "backwards" in the case of Carlos' students, who are learning academic skills before they can manage themselves at conversational levels.

After analyzing Carlos' class, is it possible to conclude that this is an intercultural lesson? I think the answer oscillates between "partially" and "no." Leaving aside some methodological problems, the lesson lacks the core of any intercultural program. That is, the values, attitudes, knowledge and communicative skills that will allow students to develop their intercultural competence. Indeed, Carlos does not use his discourse to socialize children into values or cultural norms. On the contrary, the focus seems to be learning the concepts related to crops, vocabulary and practicing the formulation and answering of questions. Despite these problems, the lesson fits within the objectives that have been defined for the P'urhépecha project. In this sense, the project is intercultural, or rather addresses some important principles in intercultural education. Ultimately, this appropriation of the model is what matters.

9.9 CONCLUSIONS OF THIS CHAPTER

The research question that guided this chapter focused on exploring how the indigenous actors have rejected, transformed or appropriated the model of intercultural education. One theme that emerged through the interviews with the indigenous actors was the rejection of the intercultural model due to its imposition by the educational authorities, which in turn created a sense of lack of agency. However, agency was played out in diverse and complex ways. Through their discourse, the participants positioned themselves as patients that underwent the actions of the educational authorities, but also as active agents that resisted them and appropriated the

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Discourse of intercultural education. They have taken advantage of the discursive space created by intercultural education to design and connect their own educational project.

The San Isidro-Uringuitiro project is a model of indigenous education created from the bottom-up. After decades of failed policies, the indigenous actors have endeavored to create a curricular proposal around the children's native tongue and culture, which from the indigenous point of view is the core of intercultural education. In this sense, the indigenous project conforms to the standards established by the educational system, although what is conspicuously missing is the value-oriented/attitudinal dimensions that are emphasized in the official model.

Indeed, the analysis of the discourse and practices in Carlos' classroom shows that the elements that make a class "intercultural" in the official sense are absent. Carlos' discourse reflects the goals of the indigenous program by emphasizing language learning and the knowledge that children need to interact in their environment.[56] The indigenous teachers are creating a program that in the end may not be intercultural, but instead responds to the needs of their students.

The conflict between classroom discourse, curricular design and institutional goals poses an interesting question about the institutional structures (i.e., the school system) that constrain human agency. The system may require teachers to address specific content in a certain way, but in their linguistic and instructional practices teachers may exclude such content or present it under a different perspective that may eventually transform into authentic counter-hegemonic Discourses and practices.

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[56] Certainly, the official model of intercultural education acknowledges the importance of these two elements in the teaching-learning process. In fact, they have been part of the official programs of bilingual indigenous education for decades, but as Hidalgo (1994) has argued, in practice bilingual education has been non-existent.

CHAPTER 10: GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

10.1 INTRODUCTION

This project set out to describe and explore the multiple voices that conform to the Discourse on bilingual-intercultural education in Mexico. By examining how a community of practice in institutional settings used language and other practices to create stances that positioned them with respect to the official policies, it was possible to unveil the consistencies and contradictions in the Discourse of bilingual-intercultural education and the ideologies that underlie it.

As Tollefson (2002) points out, linguistic and educational policies are a way to manage social unrest and political conflict. Furthermore, they also represent cultural policies that are related to governance and broader moral and political issues (Pennycook, 2002, p. 93). The ultimate goal of these linguistic and educational policies is the creation of citizen-workers who fit into the wider National project. As the history of indigenous education has shown (see Chapter Three), educational policy has had the goal of incorporating or integrating the indigenous population to the national life through acculturation and the teaching of Spanish. Both *mestizaje* and *indigenismo* guided the actions of the educational system to try to unify the ethnic groups of the country. Under the ideology of a unified "race" in which the best traits of the indigenous and European races would be united, economic, social and political imbalances were effectively deflected away while the State kept its hegemony.

After decades of indigenous education controlled by the Mexican State, the results were not positive, at least for the native populations. The cultural characteristics of the indigenous groups were blatantly ignored in most of the educational interventions, and the linguistic component – despite the claims of the bilingual character of education – was nonexistent. However, these linguistic and educational policies were effective in both creating a shift to Spanish and instilling the dominant linguistic ideology. That is to say, Spanish became the only acceptable language for schooling and social mobility. The interviews of my informants showed the prevalence of such linguistic ideologies in their struggle to gain awareness about the relationship between language and their identities, and in their efforts to convince the parents and the educational authorities about the importance and feasibility of incorporating the indigenous languages in the school curriculum.

Although the intercultural model was introduced to the Mexican educational system in the early 1990s, it is not until recently that a shift in the educational paradigm took place. Indeed, just as in the case of other educational projects, the intercultural model was introduced at the formal level, while no changes at the institutional or pedagogical level were carried out (see Gigante, 1994). But contrary to other indigenous education models, interculturality is immersed in a global and national context that has caused it to have greater effects (albeit incipient) than other educational efforts. This has been acknowledged by the informants of this project. I believe that there is a shift in Discourse in the educational system in general and in the indigenous counterpart in particular. Throughout this project I have shown that such Discourse is not a monolithic entity. On the contrary, it is a heteroglossic body where different agents (or actors) use speech and other practices to position themselves and create ethnic and professional stances

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that emerged during interaction and which either conform to or challenge the official policies of bilingual-intercultural education.

The ultimate goal of this project was to explore how language structure and practices (re)create social and power differences. Therefore, by looking at discursive practices it was possible to shed light on the processes of social structuring. Adopting a critical perspective ultimately allowed me to link talk about intercultural education to broader concerns of racial/ethnic differences and social inequalities that are at the core of the notion of interculturality, which in turn, are related to the educational and linguistic policies established by the Mexican State.

As van Dijk (1997) has argued, Discourse is both action and social practice. Ideologies and power imbalances are stamped and constructed in talk and text; therefore it is necessary to explore how discourse is connected to ideologies and greater social practices. In this sense, this project has implications at linguistic and pedagogical levels. I will address each one separately.

10.2 DISCOURSE, EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND LANGUAGE

Discourse is the product of social interaction. It is the product of groups of people engaged in communication in social settings. As such, discourse is also a form of social action; discourse is purposive as well. In this project, the participants used their talk to accomplish discursive strategies that positioned them with respect to intercultural education. However, the goals of the participants were different.

The official Discourse's (i.e., that held by policy brokers and other participants working at CGEIB) goal was to construct a Discourse that is inclusive of the whole Mexican

population without regard to cultural or linguistic differences. In an attempt to counteract the *indigenista* actions and the Discourse of mestizaje – which aimed at the linguistic and cultural assimilation of the indigenous groups – the new official Discourse attempts to be respectful and tolerant of linguistic and cultural differences. The subjects to be constructed by intercultural education are citizens who are able to fulfill the demands of the market and participate in the economic and democratic transformation of the country; however, the inclusive and tolerant Discourse of intercultural education has some cracks that reveal the underlying ideologies that guide actions and the discourse of the informants of this project.

The tolerant character of the Discourse of intercultural education comes to doubt when analyzing the themes that emerged during the interviews and the analysis of text in documents. Even though intercultural education is by no means a consolidated field, there are some principles that should be at the core of any definition of intercultural education. As an educational policy, it should not be imposed, but rather negotiated. The interviews of the indigenous actors reveal that intercultural education, at least during the time of the data collection, was perceived as yet one more imposition without real changes or conditions to implement the new educational project. The answers and stories narrated by the indigenous informants showed how the informants used their linguistic resources and discursive strategies to explain their stance towards intercultural education. In particular, they produced stories that were mainly structured as complaints that showed the imposition of the model and their lack of agency and even the ignorance and symbolic violence of the authorities and mestizo counterparts. The pronominal choices of the indigenous informants, the syntactic position that they took (i.e., as objects of a sentence) the structures that they used (i.e., passive voice) as well as modal verbs and expressions helped them build themselves as patients undergoing the actions of the

educational authorities and the State. The type of speech acts used by the participants also showed the indigenous subjects' lack of agency because they referred mainly to emotional reactions and commands rather than actions that positioned the indigenous participants as agents making their own decisions. Interestingly, the stories narrated by the indigenous informants tend to have an evaluation part and a coda that shows both the adaptability and the willingness to participate in the national and global society. Indigenous groups have been intercultural by necessity since long time ago, as opposed to their mestizo counterparts, who refuse to learn about the Other.

The discursive strategies of the indigenous participants overwhelmingly focus on showing their lack of agency and skepticism towards the model. For instance, the metaphors they utilize reflect power imbalances that depict the dominant relationship of the educational authorities over the indigenous teachers and communities in general.

The same power imbalances are reported by the indigenous and academic informants in other research questions that this project explored. For instance, even though there is some overlap as to the objectives of intercultural education – at least in the linguistic and cultural issues – the indigenous actors perceive intercultural education as the ultimate form of acculturation. The examples of reported speech (although imaginary) and its constituent indirect speech acts (suggestions working as commands), unveil how the indigenous actors position themselves against the adoption of the model of intercultural education because of its potential effects on children's identity and language and ultimately, on the survival of the indigenous communities and ways of life.

Thus, throughout the study the recurrent theme is the power imbalance between the educational authority and the indigenous teachers and population. Certainly, the academics

involved in the discussion also report a lack of knowledge about the motivations and even the definition of the intercultural model, but their experience of the implementation of intercultural education is related more to skepticism than to suffering an exercise of power. In their discourse, academics resort to modal expressions to express their skepticism towards the model and to point out the inconsistencies of it, but certainly, their answers are professional explanations – mixed with personal opinions – of the problems surrounding intercultural education. As part of the educational system, they have to follow the new rules and policies established by the Secretariat of Education, but certainly, there are no reports of discrimination or blunt imposition in their interviews. Their goal is to be the "critical" or evaluative actors of the intercultural model.

The question then becomes, why a supposedly democratic educational project ends up being a form of symbolic violence exerted by the educational authority? I believe that the answer is related to deeper issues that connect to underlying ideologies and the exercise of power by the State. Even though the official educational Discourse advocates for diversity, an analysis of text and speech uncovers the ideological threads – so to speak – that create tensions and contradictions between the tenets of interculturality and the actual practices of control and domination of the educational system. Between the cracks of the intercultural education Discourse managed by the Mexican State oozes an impulse to accept difference as long as it fits under the State's plans, and limits. In this sense, following Žižek (1998) I could argue that interculturalism is used by the State as a way to maintain its hegemony by promoting a respectful attitude towards ethnic groups, and yet its attitude continues being ethnocentric. Thus, even though on the record diversity is accepted, the underlying ideology is one of uniformity.

In Chapter Two, I adopted van Dijk's (1995; 2003) definition of ideology as an organized system of beliefs that control the actions of a group. The social function of ideology is

to organize a group and to coordinate its actions and goals, but most importantly, to protect and control access to resources. For these reasons, ideologies are structured in oppositional terms: US versus THEM.

Intercultural education is not an exception to this rule, but the form in which such opposition occurs is rather hidden under the ideas of acceptance and diversity. The research questions posed by this project precisely focused on exploring how intercultural education addressed potential tension points in which oppositions may emerge; for instance, how the purposes, recipients and directionality of intercultural education were defined by official and unofficial policy documents and informants (research question #2).

An analysis of policy documents showed that there is an attempt to construct an inclusive Discourse by explicitly pointing out the need to implement an intercultural approach in the whole educational system; however, the objectives described by CGEIB show that although the whole population is mentioned, the indigenous groups continue being of special interest, but only as part of other minorities with no specific rights or history. This created a major problem for the indigenous teachers to the point that they originally rejected the intercultural proposal. This "homogeneous" diversity was a strong point of disagreement because contrary to the authorities' objectives, the indigenous teachers were interested in discussing cultural and linguistic rights specific to ethnic minorities.

The official Discourse also qualifies and excludes the indigenous population in very subtle ways. As van Dijk (1992) points out, discrimination is not performed bluntly these days, but it exists nonetheless. I think that my interviewees from the educational authorities realize the contradictions of the intercultural proposal. In their discourse there is mitigation (carried out mainly through hedging) and off-the-record answers to explain the problems of the model's

implementation and the teachers' claims about the authoritative and potentially acculturating character of intercultural education. However, despite the acknowledgment of the problems of the project, there is a special emphasis on the personal responsibility of the indigenous groups in their own education and relationship with the dominant majority. The use of modal verbs as well as narratives about encounters between mestizo and indigenous teachers emphasized such personal responsibility. For instance, contrary to the indigenous teachers' stories where the evaluation and coda part show the ignorance of the Others and their unwillingness to interact, in the encounter narrated by Jorge (CGEIB) it is the indigenous teacher who is reticent to interact with her mestizo counterpart, and it is the latter who is open to interact and show the indigenous teacher that she was to be trusted (see Chapter Seven).

The deflection of responsibility is a common strategy used by the educational authorities both in policy documents and discourse. As I have argued in Chapters Seven and Eight, the Discourse of intercultural education explains away any social problems on communication and cultural differences. Even though it is acknowledged that economic and political imbalances are involved in the precarious circumstances of indigenous populations, the main emphasis is on providing cultural and communication explanations, where any responsibility of the State, mainstream society or ruling elites is erased. This is accomplished at the linguistic level by the use of impersonal sentences in which the grammatical subject is removed. This strategy has the double objective of hiding potential actors, and at the same time, naturalizing the knowledge or the acts that were performed upon the indigenous population. In addition to using impersonal expressions to deflect away responsibility, the use of words that index ideologically laden meaning (e.g., mestizo) is avoided, both because of the effects it has had throughout the history

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of the 20th century, and because it does not fit within the current Discourse of diversity and globalization of the modern State.

I believe that the Discourse of intercultural education is one of the clearest examples of how Discourse both creates domination and hides the ways in which such domination occurs. By stating on the record that the educational system (as part of the ideological apparatuses of the State) accepts, promotes and even praises diversity, the State legitimates itself. Tending to the "special" needs of minorities (including ethnic ones) the State appears to be creating consensus, which in turns maintains its hegemony. As van Dijk (1993), Foucault (1980) and Gramsci (1971) have pointed out, power is not unidirectional or monolithic but negotiated or persuaded through mental conditions of actions such as ideology, discourse and knowledge; however, ruling elites are powerful, and their power is based on resources that are socially valued (e.g., SES, money, cultural and symbolic capital) and access to resources such as the mass media. In the case of this project, the educational authority controls intercultural education, its objectives, contents and even access to it – as the case of the Cherán normal school shows. Through the idea of interculturality, the State imposes a sort of hegemonic interculturalism that attempts to create a symmetric relationship between the dominant and indigenous population, while in reality it functions as a symbolic mechanism that continues and naturalizes the domination of the ethnic minorities.

However, there is a catch in this scenario: in order to be consistent with the ideas of its own educational plan, the educational authority and the State have to allow a certain degree of freedom to the ethnic communities. As I showed in Chapter Four, there are international laws and decrees to which the Mexican government has subscribed and that constitute the legal foundation of intercultural education. Because of these laws, Mexico is obliged to comply with

the requirements of participation and attention to indigenous communities. Between the cleavages created by the law requirements and the tenets of the intercultural model of education, the indigenous groups have found space to act.

Comboni (2003) argues that intercultural education represented an opportunity to get rid of policies that controlled education, but most importantly, promulgated the State ideology of *mestizaje*, which emphasized linguistic and cultural assimilation. I agree with her as to the potential of intercultural education of being an alternative, but at least for the setting analyzed in this study, it is still a project tightly controlled by the State. Despite its democratic pretensions, education in Mexico still suffers from the some of the problems that affected *indigenista* policies. This brings up an important question that has lingered about in the history of indigenous education in Mexico: Why are educational policies aimed at the conservation of linguistic and cultural diversity set to fail? In addition to the problems reported in this project, the citizen observatory of the indigenous peoples (2005) reported that the budget for the CGEIB was cut significantly between the years 2002-2005, and that such reductions had remained in place, which affected the ability of the institution to continue developing programs. The indigenous sector as well as governmental officials and educational critics have acknowledged the need for implementing intercultural education in the Mexican school system, and certainly it is part of the national educational Discourse. But still the CGEIB does not receive the funding or support that it needs. I believe the answer to this paradox is rooted on the purposes of education as creator of citizens and workers that are needed for the economic project of the ruling elites and the underlying ideologies that push towards homogeneity.

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10.3 TOWARDS AN INDIGENOUS MODEL OF EDUCATION

In this project, the indigenous teachers built through their discourse and practices a rather ambivalent stance. On one side, there is a perceived lack of agency; on the other, there is a sense of empowerment and independence. This paradoxical combination shows the way in which agency is manipulated in the relationship between the indigenous agents and the dominant educational authority. In the interviews with the indigenous informants, there were narratives which showed their experiences both as professionals and as individuals in the educational system. As I mentioned above, these narratives very often take the form of complaints (see Günthner, 2001) and emphasize their lack of agency and domination. However, these narratives also work to show the "moral grammar" (Leyva, 2005) that justifies their actions and opinions, and show the collective agency of the teachers.

The policies enacted by the State are never implemented as they were intended; rather, they are always negotiated and transformed by the people involved with them. The intercultural education project is a very good example of such transformation. The discursive and legal space opened up by the introduction of the intercultural model allowed the indigenous agents interviewed in this study to design their own projects. Certainly, they have been heavily regulated, and as in the case of the Cherán normal school, rejected on numerous occasions; however, the indigenous individuals have not received orders passively. On the contrary, they have used the "weapons of the weak" (Scott, 1985) (i.e., pretending to follow instructions, making superficial changes), but most importantly, they have learned to speak the language of the Other.

In the interviews with the indigenous teachers, they constantly broke the frame of the interview and changed their footing, particularly in their stories. From reporting episodes of discrimination or dominance, they transformed themselves into knowledgeable individuals who had the academic knowledge and moral authority to criticize their mestizo counterparts and the educational system. More importantly, there were also reports in which the teachers founded their arguments not only on their academic knowledge, but also on the cultural and linguistic rights that they have as citizens and members of ethnic minorities. In this sense, there is empowerment.

As I showed in Chapter Nine, such empowerment comes from collective agency. Indeed, the indigenous informants create a collective identity and agency through their pronominal choices (i.e., "we" used inclusively), so it is not only an individual who is speaking, demanding or defining his identity, it is the whole collectivity embodied through the discourse of one its members. In this sense, there is also a split between "US" (indigenous) and "Them" (mestizo society). There is a clear ethnification of the discourse of the indigenous informants, which on one hand denounces ignorance or plain prejudice on the part of educational authorities and mestizo people, and on the other there is an explanation and justification of the indigenous experience. However, there is also an attempt to build solidarity with the rest of the population through their pronominal and lexical choices (e.g., we, us, Mexicans). This has the double objective of building solidarity and creating a double bind (Tannen, 1993) in which both social distance and power are reduced. It was beyond the scope of this project to explore in depth the implications of the ethnification of the indigenous educational discourse, but certainly this is an area that needs to be examined (see Bertely and González Apodaca, 2003b).

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The most relevant part of this study is the appropriation of the intercultural model by the indigenous educators. The implementation of intercultural education together with previous educational reforms has allowed the indigenous teachers to develop their own bilingual curriculum. As I explained in Chapter Nine, it is mainly a native language literacy program, with very little to no intercultural content. In real terms, it is an enormous advance to have a school curriculum in the P'urhépcha language, contextualized on the children's immediate experience and developed by educators from their very own community. Certainly, this is what constitutes the innovation of the project since it has not been done before.

Since one of the goals of Critical Discourse Analysis is not only to analyze the ways in which domination and inequalities are (re)produced by language, but also to provide possible courses of action, I will make some suggestions that may help the teachers with their project.

10.4 CURRICULAR ISSUES

The indigenous curriculum is clear as to what language of instruction should be used in the classroom and what cultural contents are to be incorporated. As part of their own school project, the teachers are continuously developing materials and incorporating content; however, there are two major areas that I believe should be addressed.

As I have mentioned in Chapters Seven and Eight, one thing conspicuously absent from the P'urhépecha curriculum is the relationship with the Other. Any intercultural education program – by definition – needs to address how the students should learn to interact with their counterparts. It is true that the teachers are still defining the character of their educational project, as Lucía stated, "the truth is that we do not know if this is going to be intercultural

bilingual education". Whether intercultural or not, it is necessary for an indigenous project immersed in a domination context to learn how to interact with the dominant majority and to learn the history of such domination.

Regarding the first part, students should learn Spanish. The teachers – correctly so – have emphasized the teaching of literacy skills in the native language with the hope that they would be transferred to Spanish. But children still need to be taught both the linguistic code and the pragmatics of the language. Otherwise, children will be dominated. It is obvious that despite the linguistic and pragmatic knowledge that the children may have abuses still will happen, but they might be less likely if at least children know the rules of interaction.

In addition to linguistic and pragmatics issues, teachers should address the problem of intercultural competence and the skills that it implies. The CGEIB (2006) has proposed some elements that will allow children to coexist in an intercultural society. Students need the skills to appraise their own culture and others'; to dialogue; negotiate; and tolerate. I think these skills are on the right track, but teachers' would benefit from a more developed framework to situate and implement such skills. It is beyond the scope of this project to develop such a framework, but Byram's model (1997) that I explained in Chapter Four may be useful for the teachers because it addresses linguistic, cultural, and sociocultural knowledge and the way they interrelate in L2 and interaction. Certainly, intercultural education is mainly education based on values, but it is important to learn about the linguistic, social, cultural and even attitudinal factors that are played out in interaction.

As I indicated in Chapter Eight, the teachers' opinions move along the lines of critical multiculturalism and even anti-racist education. If the teachers are to raise awareness in their students – and themselves – about their indigenous identity and the economic, social, cultural

and linguistic factors that have created their current conditions, it is necessary to bring conflict (that is discussion about conflict) into the classroom and the role one plays in the reproduction of domination through language and other practices (see Freire, 2005). In addition to such discussion, it is important to incorporate knowledge about "the rules of power" as Delpit (1997) has termed it; that is, by teaching children explicitly the codes of the dominant culture it may be easier for them to interact with the dominant population and to prepare them for eventually going to schools of the "general" system (i.e., non-indigenous).

But adopting a critical point of view also would imply that teachers should adopt a more politicized stance. In their interviews, teachers showed awareness about their role as political agents within the school system and the classroom; however, an analysis of classroom interaction showed that no intercultural goals were present, let alone open discussion about domination or political issues. Thus, teachers should assume their role not only as intercultural bridges, but also as political actors. Gasche (1997) has shown that teachers can be socialized within a framework that incorporates into the curriculum the demands of their ethnic group. This certainly would reinforce the social and egalitarian character of intercultural education, which according to Gorski (2006) has been lost because of the failure to connect action to actual practices. Indeed, educators may think progressively but they act as conservatives.

Obviously, it is the teachers and other indigenous actors who are best suited to decide what is best for them and their children. This is one tenet of intercultural education that should be preserved, but I hope these suggestions may be useful.

10.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND FUTURE VENUES OF RESEARCH

This study focused on describing and analyzing a unique setting at a particular time. Even though what I have presented here is corroborated by the historic background, interviews, texts, and class observations, there may be problems extrapolating the results of this study to other situations. Indeed, the circumstances of the indigenous teachers reported here are extraordinary because of the individuals involved in the project (most indigenous teachers do not have high levels of schooling), the community's support and the help they receive from other institutions and educational specialists; however, most of the problems faced by the teachers in their school project would be faced by any indigenous educator engaged in the creation of a bilingual-intercultural curriculum. Thus, the major contribution of the study is at the pedagogical level.

Another factor that limits the generalization potential of the study is the sample size. I am aware that the number of individuals employed by the study constituted a small sample, especially regarding indigenous student-teachers, who only answered a questionnaire. Their point of view is very important for any intercultural education project, but because of time constraints and availability of the informants I had to limit the data from this group to get written answers. Certainly, some of their answers reinforced the information obtained during oral interviews, but because of their unique position as the generation of teachers trained under an intercultural program, this is a population that needs to be explored. In the same way, more informants who are in the position of making decisions should be included in the data. I obtained the cooperation of Jorge from CGEIB, but during the interview of a representative from DGEI, I was explicitly asked not to take notes or tape the interview, which rendered the data from this interview as merely anecdotal and not suitable to be incorporated in the study. Later, I secured

the help from an informant from DGEI, but he was an academic and a teacher educator, not a policy broker. For this reason, my analysis of the contradictions between DGEI and CGEIB is limited to written documents. Lastly, in the analysis there are only two documents written by the indigenous actors, which is obviously an imbalance if compared with official texts. However, the amount of data produced by the analysis of these texts, oral interviews, classroom interactions and observations indeed is sufficient to triangulate the information and to appreciate the complexity of the problem. The use of social cartography in the analysis also helped understand and organize the different voices involved in intercultural education.

Because of the methodology employed in the study, it was quite difficult to manage the amount of data yielded by the interviews, texts and observations. Thus, I had to constrain my analysis to the research questions that I defined for the project. This meant that several themes that may be of interest (e.g., ethnification of the educational Discourse, indigenous knowledge) were left aside. Ultimately, these themes could be important to complete the whole picture, but I trust that what I have presented here answers the research questions that guided the study.

There are several lines of future research that emerge for this project, from purely pedagogical problems to greater issues of linguistic and educational policies. I will address two that got my attention because of their potential importance both for the study of Discourse and the development of indigenous education, and because they relate to a salient theme throughout the study: agency.

10.5.1 Indigenous teacher discourse and agency

During the interviews, many teachers reported narratives that were structured as complaints. Such complaints went beyond playing only expressive or emotional functions. Rather, they were used by the teachers to expose their "moral grammar" (Leyva, 2005) and to create new meanings

and identities for themselves and others. Through changes in footing, teachers went from victims to powerful agents, but most importantly, to collective agents capable of challenging the system. By exploring how teachers discursively manage their moral grammar, and create ethnic, professional and even national (i.e., Mexican) identities, it may be possible to study how this community of practice justifies and develops not only oppositional but even counter-hegemonic Discourse. Exploring this issue could also help understand how agency is created and distributed, which is one of the most discussed issues in the study of agency (Ahearn, 2001).

10.5.2 Curriculum, conflict and classroom Interaction

In the previous sections I have suggested that teachers need to incorporate discussions about conflict and domination in indigenous schools. Certainly, the official textbooks and the lesson plans developed by the CGEIB address the issue of inequalities and differences, but they are situated within a cultural or communicative realm. A critical perspective is definitely needed in indigenous education even though this is an area whose content may be difficult to implement but which is necessary in any educational project that has liberatory objectives. Analyzing how teachers present and interpret content, conduct class discussions and interaction, as well as looking at the students' answers may shed light on how children perceive their context and present themselves in terms of agency (or lack thereof) and how this could be used to teach them to think critically.

10.6 CODA

The study of intercultural education in the Mexican context has reinforced the findings of critical discourse analysts (see van Dijk 1992; Blommaert and Verschueren, 1998) as to how discrimination and domination is subtly performed even within the apparently most progressive and egalitarian of Discourses. The picture that emerges from the study is that of a badly cut out jigsaw puzzle, in which some pieces overlap, others face opposite directions and yet others lay outside of the frame. This is precisely the heteroglossic nature of Discourse, and between these voices, it is possible to glance at the ideologies that create tension in discourse, which in turn reproduces social domination. But I hope that what clearly emerges from this experience is the voice of the indigenous teachers whose resilience, creativity and intelligence have found ways between the cracks of the official Discourse to construct educational alternatives that may help preserve their cultural and linguistic heritage for the years to come.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW LOG FOR INDIGENOUS TEACHERS

1. General data: Name, years of experience, academic history, main theoretical approaches in the teacher's practice.

2. When did you hear for the first time about intercultural education?

3. How do you define interculturality and intercultural education?

4. What are the objectives of intercultural education?

5. Who is the target population (recipients of intercultural education)?

6. What are the advantages or disadvantages of the intercultural model in comparison to the bilingual model?

7. What are its' pedagogical characteristics? (i.e., epistemological and pedagogical basis, teaching strategies that it implies).

8. What competencies should be addressed in intercultural education?

9. Do you consider that you use this approach in your teaching practice?

10. How were you trained to use the intercultural approach?

11. What should be the role of the students' native tongue in intercultural education? What about their L2?

12. How do you use the students' native tongue?

13. How do you select the academic content that you teach?

14. How is/are the community/parents/students involved in the selection and implementation of academic contents in the classroom?

15. How do you modify the official plans and programs of study to address the needs of the children and the community?

16. Intercultural education is closely related to the teaching of values. What values of the culture should be taught to the children? Why?

17. What is the role of culture in intercultural education?

18. One of the characteristics of the intercultural model is its concern with diversity. How do you understand diversity in the classroom and at the pedagogical level?

19. Intercultural education supposes a dialogue among cultures. How should this dialogue take place? Is it possible to have such dialogue between the mestizo and indigenous culture(s)?

20. Why was intercultural education adopted in the National Educational System? What is your opinion about it?

21. In your opinion, what is the future of intercultural education?

INTERVIEW LOG FOR ACADEMICS, POLICY BROKERS AND SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATORS

1. General data: Name and current position
2. When was the term intercultural education first used in your field?
3. How do you define interculturality and intercultural education?
4. What are the objectives of intercultural education?
5. Who is the target population (recipients of intercultural education)
6. What are the advantages or disadvantages of the intercultural model in comparison to the bilingual model?
7. What are its pedagogical characteristics (i.e., epistemological and pedagogical basis, teaching strategies that it implies)?
8. What kind of competencies should be addressed in intercultural education?
9. Do you consider that this approach is used in schools?
10. How were you trained to use the intercultural approach?
11. What should be the role of the students' native tongue in intercultural education? What about their L2?
12. How is bilingualism addressed in intercultural education?
13. What academic content is included in the plans and programs of study?
14. How is/are the community/parents/students involved in the selection and implementation of academic contents in the classroom?

15. How are teachers being trained to use the intercultural approach?

16. What are the main problems in the implementation of intercultural education?

17. Intercultural education is closely related to the teaching of values. What values of the culture should be taught to the indigenous children? Why?

18. What values of the mestizo and "universal" societies should be taught to the children?

19. What is the role of culture in intercultural education?

20. One of the characteristics of the intercultural model is its concern with diversity. How do you understand diversity in the classroom and at the pedagogical level?

21. Intercultural education supposes a dialogue among cultures. How should this dialogue take place? Is it possible to have such dialogue between the mestizo and indigenous culture(s)?

22. Why was intercultural education adopted in the National Educational System? What factors prompted its' adoption?

23. How is intercultural education supported by the school system and the Mexican government? What are some of the problems that the implementation of the model is facing?

24. In your opinion, what is the future of intercultural education?

APPENDIX C

TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

Carriage ret.	Independent clause
| | | |	Bounds simultaneous speech
/,/	Short pause (½ to 1 second)
/…/	Long pause (more than 2 seconds)
?	Sharp intonational rise
"…"	Direct quote
:	Vowel or consonant lengthening
Underlined	Emphatic stress
((text))	Non linguistic data
(text)	Incomprehensible
[text]	Necessary words to make sentence grammatically correct in translation

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