

Intercultural Bilingual Education: Education and Diversity

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Interculturality and Education

The discussion concerning interculturality and its repercussion in education emerges simultaneously in Latin-America, Europe and the United States; however each area presents its distinct social phenomena. In Latin-America, the reflections have circled around the linguistic, cultural and political diversities of the indigenous populations and how these affect the identity, politics and educational systems of countries with native populations. In Europe and the United States, strategies have been considered for the education of migrant children. Thus, the approaches and challenges of intercultural education have moved through political and disciplinary landscapes that are determined by multiple historical and ideological contexts.

The notion of interculturality takes into consideration the processes of negotiation, knowledge interchange, and social co-construction, by valuing 'the other'. This paradigm should be present in educational policies, because such linguistic, social, economic and political features impact significantly on the reality and daily life of children and youngsters who are integrated

into educational systems with cultural diversity (García Canclini, 2004).

Within the contexts of migration, family life and childhood often face processes of destructuralization in a new and changing reality, not exempt from discrimination. On the other hand, resident citizens in the host countries, feel vulnerable because of the apparent changes in their environment. Facing this reality, the states are required to guarantee the rights related to migration, support the established resident citizens and carry out integral process of cohabitation and valuation of diversity. In this context, interculturality should focus on the relations 'between cultures', with the aim to address the tensions and promote coexistence.

In Latin-America and the Caribbean, diversity in education has circled around approaches such as the cultural and linguistic homogeneization, which emanates from the colonial period, up to the periods when interculturality was assumed to be an opportunity; precisely because it gives sociocultural identity to the multilingual and the pluricultural countries. From an equity perspective, it is conceived as an interchange between cultures in equal conditions, which implies a permanent

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construction that aspires to form reciprocity, growth, and learning undertaken by people who live in territories with diversity.

The equity dimension included in the notion of interculturality implies the construction of societies without the hegemony and domination of one culture over another. It also involves the acknowledgement of previously excluded identities; with the purpose of establish social relationships in the daily life. From this perspective, it is part of the construction of a new social reality that implies actions of democratic coexistence and recognition.

Thus, it includes the search for consensus as well as the acknowledgement and acceptance of the disagreement (López, 2010).

In turn, diversity considers legacies that show rooted characteristics and forms of living learned, transmitted and agreed by a group. This creates an identity that is not static or monolithic, but multiple and dynamic, depending the degree of discrimination or integration among groups. Finally, the power of the culture, and the value of the political and cultural dimension that each society has, also affects diversity.

The Notion of Interculturality

- Emerged at the beginning of the XXth century and tried to provide answers concerning the education of migrant children in Europe, and to the indigenous populations in Latin-America and the Caribbean.
- Considers the indigenous as relevant actors in social and political vindication processes.
- Its origin questioned the role of the State-Nation, nominally its structure and functioning in diversity contexts.
- It uses internal state capabilities (which are opened or limited), via law promulgation and linguistic/educational policies; varying according to agreements, negotiations with indigenous populations, international conventions, and the administrative and economic changes of the countries.
- It has allowed education to promote cultural and linguistic aspects, leaving behind monolingual and monocultural conceptions.

What is intercultural bilingual education?

Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) is an educational model which attempts to provide pertinent education to migrant and indigenous children. Such education sustains cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversities adding foundation and support to individual identity and national identities where citizens of different origins coexist.

The approach of Intercultural Bilingual Education is to support and foster the processes of social and political transformation, by giving valuation and appropriation of the cultural and symbolic legacies that the indigenous population contributes to society. This project develops the construction of citizenship to conceive strategies to address the conflicts and opportunities raised by diversity.

In the context of multicultural or pluricultural countries/areas in Central and South America, IBE has been shaped by the active participation of the indigenous people, traditional authorities, indigenous masters, antropologists, sociologists, linguists, among other professionals. Resultantly, they have helped develop proposals and educational/linguistic policies that have seen increasing presence in national agendas and international organizations, particularly from a “rights” perspective.

In some countries of Europe, actions have taken place to promote successful integration of migrant children into the school systems; promoting the socialization of culture, the learning of the language and the general integration in the host countries. In Germany, after implementing such

integration models for migrant children, the intercultural education is currently understood as a type of teaching that all the students should receive, focused on principles like equality, respect for difference, and intercultural dialogue. (Riedemann, 2008).

According to Brimbaum’s study (2013), levels of student performance, by children who either descend from diverse ethnicities or are immigrants themselves, are not uniform, although typically they show lower results compared to the French students. This difference has been attributed to the low schooling of the parents, and also to situations of vulnerability and social instability. Thus, Turkish girls showed lower results and higher dropout rates, because in Turkey, male education is favored over female education. Also, a feeling of injustice is noticeable, regarding the discrimination the maghrebi students (north of Africa) usually receive. According to Moro (2007), the invisibility of the diversity in the French educational policies are subject to criticism, because it is not conceived as part of a process oriented toward an intercultural society.

In Latin-America, the IBE exists as an educational model which is in constant change, with emphasis on linguistic aspects and the systematization of cultural and territorial aspects. The historical itinerary has moved around proposals of assimilation, as diversity was seen as a difficulty when facing the homogeneization of Independence processes.

Typically, even when the Republics stated equality in the law, there was exclusion

of indigenous children and youngsters, basically because the teaching was given only in Spanish; and so they faced early exclusion from the educational system. Thus, the alphabetization in the mother language was used only as a bridge to teach Spanish, and thus to ensure the learning of the contents prescribed in the national curriculum. This methodology, known as transition bilingualism, or subtractive bilingualism, reduced gradually the deepening use of the indigenous mother tongue, to give way to “castellanization” and thus, to monolingualism (López y Sichra, 2008).

These approaches determined that the speakers abandoned their languages and adopted Spanish as their daily communication language. The phenomenon of “linguistic disloyalty” occurs when the contact languages acquire different status or valuations. Thus, Spanish was associated to power and prestige given by the consolidation of the national culture; from this reductionist perspective, monolingualism and monoculturalism were established as desirable and normal, triggering the integration of the indigenous into the dominant culture, with the consequent loss of language, traditions, and cultural legacy.

The advances and positioning of IBE in countries like Mexico, Guatemala, Paraguay, Ecuador, Argentina, Colombia, Venezuela, and others, have allowed the promulgation of

linguistic policy laws ², and the incorporation of cultural contents into study programs. This has led to the deepening of language teaching methods, creation of texts and pertinent teaching materials, teacher preparation and creation of university undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in IBE. Some programs and curricular adaptations have expanded with contents and indigenous old legacies, both of which complement the conceptual and cultural frameworks that promote the official school organization.

From a linguistic perspective, this process has developed certainties like verifying the link between learning and teaching language, supporting the vindication of the indigenous languages as means of education and as “windows’ towards another vision of the world and cosmogony (López & Sichra, 2008).

The indigenous presence has been best captured in the constitutions that recognize the ethnic, pluricultural, and multilingual features of their societies (Argentina, Bolivia, Brasil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela are some examples) - with repercussions found in the social and political actions of the indigenous population, in addition to the protection of their individual and collective rights. This political dimension is an important influence on the educational statements of the Nation-States, because

² Generally, linguistic policies regulate the recognition of indigenous languages as national languages, promoting and preserving their use, giving them the same value as the majority language, by including it in public management, services and public information.

of the need to guarantee cultural heritage, and the rights of the children and the young belonging to the indigenous population.

In this sense, the intercultural education is conceived not only as a compensation practice, but also allows the indigenous population to achieve learning goals that are related to their social, cultural and linguistic contexts, together with showing the need to form generations with dialogue skills, knowledge and valuation of the differences - to their own benefit and for the others. This allows reflection upon the identity and culture as a dynamic phenomenon, from a perspective situated in the production of new knowledge.

Thus, the course of the interculturality paradigm faces the challenge to relinquish the vulnerability of indigenous and migrant children –a situation that influences their educational performance, school completion and potential professionalization. Additional issues addressed are as follows; the need to reconcile education, linguistic and cultural promotion within their own territoriality, and protecting the construction of communities. It is a keen suggestion to maintain study, research and organization of the sociocultural content, so that IBE continues to complement the educational systems for the formation of intercultural citizens.

International Conventions and Education in Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

The action framework of Dakar ‘Education for All’ 2015 included the aim of ‘universalization of primary education’, highlighting the education of ethnic minorities:

“Goal 2. Ensuring that by 2015 all children - particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities - have access to complete compulsory free primary education of good quality”. A decade after the commitments stated in Dakar 2000, the course of the IBE has had important ramifications for education policies; by considering diversity as a value and assumed as a right³. Therefore some regulations have appeared to fix and provide compensation for past discriminatory policies, collecting important data for the organizations of cultural legacies, rearing patterns and educational experiences. Some specific examples are:

- UNESCO (1960) proposed the protection of the rights of minorities, promoting education in their own language, promoting quality education, whilst assuring learning of the majority (or dominant) language and culture to prevent exclusion.
- International Labor Organization, Convention N° 169 (1989), established autonomy and self-determination of indigenous populations. Subject to viability,

³ For a revision regarding the advances in this issue in Latin America, see Bellei et al. 2013.

that reading and writing in their language - or in the language that is commonly spoken in their group - will be taught. It set demands for indigenous consultations in the design and implementation of public policies affecting territories in economic and environmental areas, in addition to health and education interventions.

- The General Assembly of the United Nations (2001) approved the Declaration on the “Rights of Indigenous Peoples” and specifically mentioned indigenous children in the fulfillment of their rights. Since 2002, special mention appeared with respect to indigenous reality and to end discrimination, translated into the educational field as quality and respect for cultural heritage.
- UNESCO (2002), the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity expressed the relevance of protecting humanity’s linguistic heritage. It determined that national curriculums should have relevant proposals for diversity and technical resources will be required (e.g. pedagogical, teaching materials, teacher training, among others).
- United Nations(2007), the Declaration of United Nations to empower communities, to position them to actively participate and control their systems and teaching institutions to provide education in their own language. It states the right to all levels and forms of State education without discrimination.
- UNICEF (2009), the general observation N° 11 established rights for indigenous children and promoted the use of language, culture, and religion. It urged the mass media to consider the linguistic and cultural features of children. It analyzed

the difficulties that complicate the guarantee and exercise of these rights, highlighting the special measures and the good practices of the participant states to accomplish these regulations.

It has not been easy to incorporate such directives in the field of education, particularly within this region, as interculturality in Latin-America and the Caribbean is not exempt from conflicts and tensions related to diversity, considering the generalized inequality within situations that affect the indigenous peoples, and the conflicts between regions and national states, concerning territory and policy demands.

The Education of Indigenous Populations in Latin America

The Latin-American and Caribbean context is currently progressing through problems which obstruct the initiatives of intercultural bilingual education, the main problems encountered can be listed as such; high levels of poverty, malnutrition, child mortality, territorial conflicts, water usage and possession, misappropriation and illegal sale of territory, rural/urban migration, inconsistencies with access and administration of justice, conflicts with the national states, low levels of opportunity to access education and professionalization (Bello, 2000).

The diagnoses corroborate that, in the region as a whole, the level of schooling within indigenous populations and Afro-descendants is low compared to the non-indigenous population. According to

UNESCO data, there are significant factors acting against the permanence of indigenous students in primary school, compared to the non-indigenous peoples. Regarding school completion, UNESCO showed the parity indexes indigenous /not indigenous, vary (in 2010) between 0.70 and 0.81 in the population aged 15 to 19 and 0.52 and 1.03 for the groups of 25 to 29 year olds. Regarding the regulations that affect school attendance, the school calendar overlaps with socioeconomic processes in which children participate; thus, in zones like Bolivia, Perú, Ecuador, Guatemala, the absenteeism of students is related to the agricultural calendar. Also, there is a lack of articulation between initial and primary education, taking into account the geographical location of some indigenous communities (Bellei et al., 2013).

Additionally, according to the SERCE 2006 report, indigenous children show lower performance in standardized tests. This outcome may be connected to vulnerability situations, counter-alphabetization (which disfavors standardized testing), or little previous schooling within their families. Thus, indigenous students scored lower on average on Language, Maths, and Science in 3rd and 6th grades, and had higher dropout rates in secondary and higher levels compared to non-indigenous children. None of the countries of the regions show a positive relation between learning performance and indigenous children, they always show lower results compared to non-indigenous populations (Treviño et al., 2010).

Even when advances occur in the implementation of linguistic and education policies, often teachers have insufficient knowledge of the indigenous language; also, the school texts are decontextualized by nil presence of children of those populations in the curriculum, or in the school discourse, for example, in the case of the Peruvian population. For instance, according to Zúñiga (2010), in southern Andean Peru, only 6% of students who participate in IBE acquire the expected reading skills in their indigenous mother tongue; in the Awajún and Shipibo area, around 3% of the students achieve reading competence in Spanish. Furthermore, 60% of the teachers in the indigenous communities of the Amazonia are Spanish-speakers, or they speak an indigenous language that is different to the one spoken in the area in which they teach.

According to a study of textbooks carried out in Chile (Duarte et. al.2010), the social representation of indigenous people, migrants and national population, did not reflect the images or situations of interculturality. The curriculum and the school texts tended to obscure the indigenous presence in the urban sectors, presenting a static reality that is rural and centered on the past, without recognizing and valuing the participation of indigenous people as ambassadors, politicians, writers, or researchers. This reinforces the perception of the indigenous as marginal participants of the historical and social construction of the country.

Main topics and advances of IBE in the Region.

- Incidence of indigenous and peasant movements in decision making regarding education in the frame of the educational reforms. Occurring since the 1970's in the Peruvian Amazonia, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, where the indigenous have lead educational movements.
- The Community Education project and the IBE, within the Programs and Life Plans of "Own Indigenous" educational systems. This experience emerged in Colombia since 1971, with the creation of the Regional Indigenous Council of the Cauca, initiating an educational movement that is promoted by the 102 indigenous peoples in the country.
- The experiences of education starting from their very own, together with the increasing territorial and educational autonomy, has been expanded since the 1990's in indigenous contexts in Guatemala, Nicaragua and Mexico, with the support of non-governmental organizations, and university researchers.
- Since the 1990's, there has been an attempt to consolidate the "teaching couple" and "indigenous culture counselors", promoting the shared work between teachers and representatives of indigenous peoples elected by their communities. These projects have been promoted and financed by the education ministries (of Argentina, Chile, Colombia).
- Teacher preparation for the IBE postgraduate and specialization degrees (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Mexico, Peru, Venezuela).
- The IBE has been expanded into secondary education during the last decade (in Peru, Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, Bolivia).
- The proposal of "Interculturality for all" has been set up in almost all Latin American Countries; promoting the enrichment of national curriculum via cultural and linguistic content, in order to extend them to all students, indigenous and non-indigenous.

The IBE and its linguistic dimension

Depending on the linguistic vitality of the context where implemented, the IBE considers the promotion and teaching of indigenous language, and also the transmission of curricular contents using indigenous language. One of the emblematic cases where the indigenous language is used for teaching is in Paraguay, where Guaraní has the administrative status of national and official language, with a high percentage of speakers, determining significantly the identity of the country. However, the complexity of using this approach arises from the linguistic and cultural plurality found in Latin-America and the Caribbean. Regarding this issue, the sociolinguistic atlas developed by Unicef (Sichra et.al., 2009), characterized the region in geo-cultural zones ⁴, with an approximate number of 29,500,000 indigenous peoples, with 6.1% of regional representation (with varying percentages among the 23 countries involved), and including 665 languages with different degrees of usage, vitality, vulnerability, risk, diglossia and displacement.

This multilingual reality is even more complex in the schools of Amazonia and Orinoccia, often with students who are trilingual from birth. In the region of Vaupés in Colombia, children start school speaking many languages, but such richness is not furthered in the school because of the monolingual teacher, the lack of multilingual textbooks and because the prioritized use of

Spanish as the language of instruction and schooling (López & Sichra op. cit.).

In zones of higher indigenous population and without teachers who are native speakers of the indigenous language (examples include Argentina, parts of Ecuador, Chile and Colombia), the co-participation of indigenous cultural counselors or traditional authorities has been considered, with a view to teaching the language through cultural contents. The main difficulties, in this regard, are; the lack of knowledge for teaching language, resistance, cultural devaluation from some teachers, and lack of educational materials for teaching languages with a lower percentage of speakers in the country.

In Mexico, the education systems have prompted study programs for courses about Indigenous Language and Culture. Additionally, some materials have been developed to support teachers and students in the nine languages most commonly spoken. In the case of Chile, the subject entitled “Indigenous Language” can be implemented voluntarily into participating schools, but it is compulsory in schools with 20% (or higher) indigenous children enrolled. In Peru, the Ministry of Education has made official a total of 21 languages, together with implementing revitalization processes for writing in schools and communities. Such processes have been promoted in order to give some functional use to the languages, and allow contribution to the systematization of knowledge, cosmo-vision, and oral tradition, by revitalizing the languages from

⁴ Amazonía, Mesoamérica, Antioquía, Andes, Chaco ampliado, Caribe continental, Baja Centroamérica, Oasisamérica, Llanuras Costeras del Pacífico, Patagonia, Isla de Pascua y Caribe insular.

the school, the family, the community and the public spaces (Carbajal, 2014).

Gradually, in Latin-America and the Caribbean, indigenous language topics have

been structured into relevant issues, as they are vehicles of culture which act to reinforce the identity of the speakers and the countries of origin.

Educational Benefits of Bilingualism

- Bilingual experience not only increases linguistic competence, but is also advantageous to processes of cognitive control in non-linguistic tasks requiring intellectual conflict resolution (Bialystok, 2011).
- Early bilingual children use more brain areas in a linguistic task, and have more neural connections than monolingual children, due to the constant use of both languages (Bialystok, 2009).
- Early bilingualism generates advantages in the cognitive abilities that allow the control and regulation of behavior (executive control). It also influences working memory, allowing development of information storage, use and transformation to higher capacities , often in more creative ways (Bialystok, 2007).
- Migrant bilingual children have better results in the second language, if they know how to read and write in their first language (Di Meo et. al., 2014).
- Indigenous bilingual children that read and write in their first language, have better possibilities to develop reading comprehension in their second language (Zalapa y Mendez 2003; Gottret, 1993).
- Having enough oral skills in the second language helps children to understand what they read (López, 1998).
- Promoting early bilingualism generates benefits for the mental and social health of children of multilingual societies - or societies with high inward migration - positively influencing their identity formation (Moro, 2010; Loncón, 2002).

The IBE and its Cultural Dimension

Linguistic promotion facilitates the transmission of cultural aspects. Therefore, within the indigenous communities and institutions, efforts have been made to systematize knowledge. Developments in the western Caribbean area of Nicaragua – with miskitu (Del Cid, 2008), Sumus, Mayangnas and Ramas population (David y García, 2009) - showed the need to consider the protagonism of the elderly - and families in general, by reconstituting traditional learning spaces, prompting schools to rescue the oral tradition and “owned” or homegrown learning strategies that are part of the indigenous childhood. They highlight the role of families in the transmission of cultural contents, rituals, and intergenerational cultural acquisition, generating a link between the community and the formal education.

In the time spanning from the 1970’s, indigenous cultural knowledge has been organized and systematized in different ways (school texts, children’s books, radio shows, language and cultural study programs, method guidelines, teaching materials, educational software); all containing knowledge associated to the cosmogony, concepts of time, science, and elements of the natural, symbolic and religious universe of the indigenous peoples. Moreover, such knowledge also pertains to systems of classification, oral traditions, description of the social, familiar, and political organization, protocols and rituals related to nature, child rearing, justice systems, ethical norms, feeding, and rituals related to abundance, systematization of artistic, musical and literary expressions. This approach has been implemented with the aim of strengthening

the value of diversity and the expansion of this knowledge into national education systems.

The Inductive Education Network of Chiapas Mexico has produced materials from “ethical and territorial alphabetization” perspectives and have developed “live maps” and drawings that express situations and activities in Maya language, which favors -thorough a constructive bilingualism- the promotion of contents that integrate community and nature, in particular the knowledge of the territory (Bertely, 2014).

However, in relation to the curricular contents that schools should promote, there are some criticisms (mainly from Mapuche peoples in Chile, Guambiano and Naza en Colombia, Awajún in Peru) which refer to national curriculum as not giving information in compliance with the needs of the communities, and also that the given education is not coherent to the economic, productive, and political potentials, which young people could provide to the territories after finishing school; on the contrary, the current system would contribute to outward migration and the subsequent weakening of the communities.

The influence of curricular educational policies has shaped the IBE course in many countries of the region. The collaborative curricular construction, presented as a constant demand of the communities, has sought to define a structured body of culturally organized goals and contents, that complement the formal education system, whilst favoring the knowledge of the students in intercultural contexts, aiming for

a significant and situated learning (López, 2010).

Main Challenges of IBE in the Region

Broadly speaking, the IBE in the region is both sustained and strengthened by many factors, often those which constitute the practical foundation upon which to build the post-2015 agenda in the region:

- Indigenous agency, favorable international law and national law changes, from the constitution to the education laws and less hierarchical decrees.
- National and international research results that show the cognitive and affective advantages of using mother tongue, community participation, and cultural equity in teaching discourse.
- Need to learn indigenous language, value the early bilingualism and its link with cognitive development.
- Value of diversity in the conformation of the intercultural societies.
- Participation of families, community and indigenous elders in the management and development of IBE programs.
- Contrary reaction of some parents when the educational orientation is not bilingual and only emphasizes the development of indigenous languages in the face of a potential marginalization of the life of the country.
- Creation or adaptation of curricular

programs, discussion about texts and pertinent assessment instruments.

- Knowledge generation about teacher preparation in diversity and bilingualism.
- Creation of educational material to support relevant teacher performance.

Looking to the future, a critical point of approval for these policies is found in the IBEs coverage process and implementation: interculturality for all? To advance in “interculturality for all” as a policy of identity conformation in the countries, it is suggested to also advance in the systematization of the knowledge and indigenous practices, with the aim of a non-biased approach towards any one segment of the indigenous population. This is because, the aims and contents of the national curriculum could be complemented by adding knowledge related to numerical systems, calendars, space-time conceptions, communicative approaches to teach language, among other factors.

Regarding the national curriculum, school textbooks and teaching materials; and considering localized linguistic vitality, it is possible to increase the offer. Many times over, one language with higher numbers of speakers is standardized to the detriment of other small linguistic groups, for which there is insufficient budget to create the adequate/pertinent material. This challenge needs to be taken into account in addition to the high indigenous migration towards the cities, and the need for speech and iconography of textbooks

and classroom materials to consider the diversity in urban areas, all of these in order to reduce linguistic and cultural displacement, protecting its transmission to further generations of indigenous children. In the same vein, the processes of teacher preparation and curricular organization of tertiary education should include explicitly interculturality concepts, along with teaching and learning strategies referring to contexts that are culturally diverse, which is a feature of current societies in all the countries of the region.

In summary, some of the main challenges of the IBE in the region, encountered when applying comprehensive programs of multicultural and intercultural education are:

- From an equity perspective, positioning the IBE with respect to the rights related to other indigenous demands: territory, natural resources, political participation, identity, language recuperation.
- To know and consider an education proposal that is endogenous or autonomous, that allows for cultural and territorial self-sustainability .
- “Interculturalization” of higher education and accompanying management of indigenous universities, over the foundation of systematized ancient knowledge and professional training.
- Continuous teacher preparation, in the face of emergent demands of curricular reforms regarding teaching languages and interculturality.
- Compensatory policies that address

the more evident factors of educational exclusion encountered by the indigenous population (e.g. the lack of opportunity, poor resources, child labor).

- To promote the idea of intercultural education for all. To create the conditions that make the project of intercultural bilingual education viable in some countries and geographical areas, systematizing the indigenous languages, creating curricular design and appropriate educational materials, and training teachers in bilingualism and interculturality. Moreover, to structure norms and design policies that impact education as a whole and advance towards interculturality for all.

Intercultural Bilingual Education in the Post-2015 Agenda

The year 2015 is emblematic for the world’s agenda. This year, the countries will report the progress they have made regarding the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and also regarding the goals of the Education for All (EFA). The United Nations agencies are contributing to organize the world debate for a pooled agenda to direct actions towards human development. Fighting inequalities in all the dimensions is becoming the center of worldwide efforts in all development areas.

UNESCO, as leader of the world agenda towards Education for ALL, has followed the goals systematically. Thus, in the recent meeting organized in Muscat, Oman, in May 2014, the suggested goals to be pursued for

the advancement and promotion of the “right to education” post 2015, in all countries, were defined.

Ministers, Delegations chiefs, servants of multilateral/bilateral organizations, representatives of civil society and private sectors, declared in Oman, that the future priorities of Education Development should reflect the important socioeconomic and demographic transformations that have been produced since the approval of the EFA Goals and the MDG. Together with the changing needs regarding the type and level of knowledge, skills and competences for the knowledge based economies. They also confirmed that education is a fundamental right to each person. It is an essential condition for human fulfillment, peace, sustainable development, economic growth, decent work, gender equality, and responsible global citizenship. In addition, it contributes to the reduction of inequalities and towards

eradicating poverty, by offering conditions that generate possibilities to create fair, inclusive and sustainable societies.

Additionally, the Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG) with its Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) - created by the United Nations in January 2013 - adopted a proposal of 17 goals and 169 targets. The proposition was presented to the General Assembly (GAUN) in September 2014, and then processes of intergovernmental consultation were initiated, making a continuous contribution to the development agenda post-2015.

Within the proposed framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (subject to approval by the General Assembly of the United Nations 2015) and the educational goals to be pursued by UNESCO, the issue of Intercultural Bilingual Education strongly emerged as a key concern.

Final Declaration of the World Meeting about EFA 2014: the Muscat Agreement

Global Objective: To ensure equitable and inclusive quality education and lifelong learning for all by 2030

Goal 5: By 2030, all learners should acquire knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to establish sustainable and peaceful societies, including global citizenship education and education for sustainable development.

Goal 6: By 2030, all governments should ensure that all learners are taught by qualified, professionally-trained, motivated and well-supported teachers.

Goal 7: By 2030, all countries will allocate at least 4-6% of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or at least 15-20% of their public expenditure to education, prioritizing groups most in need; and strengthen financial cooperation for education, prioritizing countries most in need.

Open Working Group Proposal for Sustainable Development Goals

Objective 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

4.5 by 2030, to eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for vulnerable populations, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and at-risk children.

4.7 by 2030, to ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills required to promote sustainable development, including, among others, education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development



The World Forum adopted the Declaration for the future of Education (Incheon, Republic of Korea, May 2015), which established a transforming approach to education for the next 15 years. The Declaration urged countries to provide a quality education for all, which is inclusive and fair, and to provide lifelong learning opportunities.

The vision is inspired in a humanist conception of education and development, based on human rights, dignity, social justice, inclusion, protection, cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity, responsibility and shared accountability.

The inclusion and equity in education, and through education, are the cornerstones of a transforming education agenda, and consequently the declaration states a commitment to address all forms of exclusion and marginalization, disparities and inequalities with respect to access, participation and learning results.

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